

HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

Share your story

We are always looking to share stories of recovery and hope!

People with lived experience

We have written this information as a guide you may wish to use to write your article. We aim to keep all our lived experience content strengths-based. That doesn't mean it has to be all rainbows and unicorns (although – yay!) but it does mean that we try and see the positive changes that we have made from our struggles. Your story can be impactful for people still struggling with BPD and so we want to be hopeful and find the amazing things you have accomplished in your life!

BEFORE YOU SHARE:

Sharing your story safely is important!

- You should have a good support structure available before you share your story – it can be confronting and attract attention you might not expect! We highly suggest having a mental health professional you can work with available if needed.
- Many people are affected by key words and themes. These might include experiences of child abuse, sexual assault, self-harm and suicide. Whilst it is your right to name them, we ask that you do not go into details or recount actual experiences. These can cause distress to others and yourself. Re-experiencing trauma is common for people sharing stories – we need to keep everyone safe, especially you.
- If it doesn't feel right – don't share it. Not everything needs to be shared to make your story important, valid and impactful. Sometimes speaking about one part of your story well is better than telling it all.
- Our audience is largely people with lived experience, their carers and those who work with BPD – make sure what you are sharing helps them to move forward in a positive way. Many people with lived experience know what 'bad treatment' looks and feels like – what they might not know is what 'good treatment' is like – share what worked!

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- By sharing your valuable experience, you will be helping others and they may want to contact you about this – make sure you have strong safe boundaries and let us know if this becomes an issue.
- We may ask you to re-structure or focus your content to make sure your story is effective and strong.
- If you are feeling unsure, you can contact our team and speak to one of our experienced consumer or carer advocates, we are here to support you to have a voice.

Format for sharing your story:

- Word document or PDF
- About 250 words
- Please refrain from using profane language, naming clinicians or places of treatment / services / hospitals.
- Please remember to not include graphic details or traumatic or distressing experiences.

Things you need to know before sharing

- We will only share your first name, and how you identify. For example: Mahlie (Lived Experience Advocate).
- Nothing ever goes away on the internet – even if we try to make it go away, we have little control.
- Your story may be shared and re-shared – and we can't always monitor this!
- Your story is about you and should not mention other people in your life – if you are a carer this means you must not identify the person you support *without their expressed permission*.
- You will be asked to sign a disclaimer form before your content is shared and you have the final say in the content's editing.
- To read a great resource about telling your story – visit <https://wayahead.org.au/telling-your-story/>

