

My name is Patrick Ma. I am a Dermatology Physician Assistant and a mental health consumer. I have been dealing with depression, suicidal ideations, and the associated stigma since the age of 13. As a human being, I also experience the not-so-subtle discrimination for being an ethnic minority (Vietnamese), for belonging to a lower socioeconomic class of immigrant, and for being a gay man. As I strive to move forward with my life, those experiences gear me toward becoming a motivational speaker. I share my struggles with others in hope that at least one person will be touched every time I speak. I related not only with those whom I share similar experiences, but also to those who are touched by mental illness because their loved ones are going through the same recovery process. It is my intention to shed light on the truth about mental illness, the recovery journey, and how unkind the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness can be. I hope that my story will offer hope for those who are affected by mental illness and help others understand that individuals with mental illness can still be successful and active contributors in our community.