



Mental Health Networks of Those With Serious Mental Health Disorders

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Something new is happening in major corporations and institutions in this country. Successful individuals who have experienced such disorders as schizophrenia, depression, and bipolar disorder are forming networks to support and educate others. One of these is The Stability Network (<http://www.thestabilitynetwork.org/>). This particular network consists of over 30 individuals who will speak publicly about their mental health experiences. They are also successfully employed in all forms of employment. One of these people is Robert Boorstin who was a former director of public policy at Google. Another is Elyn Saks, whose experiences with schizophrenia are offered in the *LENS: Elyn Saks Describes Her Day-to-Day Experiences With Schizophrenia*. All of the people involved can describe their experiences and beliefs. One person thought she could walk on the Charles River in Boston when she was at the Harvard Business School. Another believed his hotel room was the *Starship Enterprise*. However, each has worked with professionals and developed routines for stabilizing his or her condition.

The Stability Network set as its goal the following:

We seek people who are

- **Successfully employed** in business, government, the nonprofit sector, academia, or the arts.

- **Successfully living with a mental health condition(s)**, such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder (per the National Alliance on Mental Illness definition).
- **Willing to openly speak out** about your mental health condition(s), using both your first and last name.
- **Committed to taking individual and collective action** to improve the lives of those living with mental health conditions.
- **Committed to staying healthy.**

We ask our leaders to make specific commitments to

- **SHARE** their stories.
- **IMPROVE** mental health in the workplace.
- **RAISE** funding for mental health.

We provide leaders with

- **A NETWORK** of peers to collaborate with on improving the lives of others with mental health conditions.
- **SUPPORT** to increase their impact.
- **MECHANISMS** for collective impact.

Mental health disorders often carry with them a stigma. However, psychological research tells us that actually meeting and talking with someone about his or her condition can change that stigma.

Thought Question: You've now read a lot of psychological research concerning mental health disorders: What specific actions would you recommend that your university or community take to reduce the stigma of psychological disorders?