



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***TMI Project and MHA Present the Documentary Short  
“Vicarious Resilience”***

***Film about Mental Health and the Transformative Power of True Storytelling to be Released  
at the Rosendale Theater during Mental Health Awareness Month, May 29th, 2018***



**HUDSON VALLEY, NY** -- (Wednesday, May 2, 2018) Local Hudson Valley storytelling nonprofit [TMI Project](http://TMI Project), in partnership with The Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc. (MHA), will present the debut of its documentary short film: [Vicarious Resilience](#) at the Rosendale Theater in Rosendale, NY on May 29th at 7:15pm. The documentary follows three Hudson Valley residents over the course of a 10-week TMI Project storytelling workshop. Along the way, the participants experience the transformative power of true storytelling; they face mental illness, childhood neglect and addiction head-on; and, ultimately, share deeply personal stories about love, loss and triumph. The debut of the film will include two live storytelling performances by additional workshop participants as well as a panel discussion about about storytelling and mental health with representatives from MHA and TMI Project. *Vicarious Resilience* was filmed and produced by Hudson Valley’s own [NorthGuild Production](#).

**Vicarious Resilience Documentary Release**

Tuesday, May 29th, 7:15pm

The Rosendale Theater

408 Main Street, Rosendale, NY

*Tickets are \$20 in advance/\$25 at door*

For more info & Tickets, visit: [tmiproject.org/vicariousresilience](http://tmiproject.org/vicariousresilience)

Since 2012, twice a year, TMI Project has offered 10-week memoir writing and true storytelling workshops specially tailored to meet the needs of the Mental Health Association of Ulster County's (MHA) population of adults with mental illness. TMI Project's partnership with this peer-based organization—where a portion of the staff are people who have recovered from mental illness—is designed to help destigmatize mental illness, while also empowering participants to imagine and work toward the possibility of their own recovery.

“Bringing TMI Project’s work to our organization has had wonderful results,” says Ellen Pendegar, chief executive officer of the Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc. “Participants, who have faced mental health challenges, have become eloquent storytellers of resiliency. Their stories eliminate the stigma and discrimination that can be felt within one’s self, one’s community and the mental health system. I am proud of what TMI Project and MHA have accomplished together.”

In 2016, the documentary about this partnership, *Vicarious Resilience*, was shot by North Guild Films. The short film highlights the experience of three TMI Project workshop participants: Morris Bassik, Barbara Stemke and Hayley Downs. These three participants were followed as they went through the workshop, from the first session, where many expressed doubts and trepidation, to their final storytelling performance before an audience of over 100, and a final follow-up session where they voiced the ways in which they experienced positive transformation.

A number of recent studies suggest that writing and sharing stories of trauma can be therapeutic. According to the [American Psychiatric Association](#), “When people share their stories of coping with mental illness or substance use disorder, it can provide inspiration and hope and be a welcome reminder that you are not alone in your challenges.”

“Through *Vicarious Resilience*, TMI Project aims to provide audiences the opportunity to listen, expand their awareness, and eradicate stigma around mental illness so all those who are living with mental illness are free to share their truth. Our hope is the film will inspire mental health professionals to incorporate our storytelling methodology into their group work and private practice,” said Eva Tenuto, TMI Project’s Co-founder & Executive Director.

For further information, press passes, or for an advance copy of the film, please contact TMI Project Marketing & External Affairs Director Sara DeRose at [sara@tmiproject.org](mailto:sara@tmiproject.org).

More information on TMI Project & Vicarious Resilience can be found at: [www.tmiproject.org/vicariousresilience](http://www.tmiproject.org/vicariousresilience)

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## **ABOUT TMI PROJECT**

TMI Project offers transformative memoir workshops and performances that invite storytellers and audience members to explore new perspectives. TMI Project envisions a world where true storytelling is an agent of change; where, through the sharing of radically candid, true, personal narratives, everyone—storytellers and listeners alike—can become empowered, release shame

and stigma, and replace old understandings with new ones. We aim to incite social, legal, and political change by arming activists with the skills needed to be captivating storytellers, and by amplifying the voices of populations whose stories often go unheard.

Through true storytelling, TMI Project focuses the spotlight on stories told by people from marginalized populations, humanizing issues often overlooked by mainstream media. They also focus on the work of emerging and veteran activists and leaders, to document the way they are changing the world; stories that may not be recognized in history books but need to be heard and recorded for future generations.

Since 2010, TMI Project has led approximately 65 workshops and staged performances by nearly 1,400 participants, which have been presented to audiences of over 13,000 people in schools, colleges, prisons, mental health clinics, theaters, community centers, and the United Nations. Their workshops and performances are tailored to women and men of all ages and backgrounds.

## **ABOUT MHA**

The Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc. (MHA) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit agency. MHA is an education and advocacy organization raising awareness about mental illness and advocating for people here living with a mental illness. MHA has been operating in Ulster County for over 50 years and began offering services in Delaware, Otsego, Chenango and Sullivan Counties beginning some 30 years ago.

The MHA mission is to engage all people in achieving their optimal mental health by providing innovative and compassionate services that educate, advocate, prevent and heal. To achieve its mission, the MHA sponsors a variety of educational, advocacy and service programs, including mental health education, rehabilitation, residential services, family and youth support services, and therapeutic foster care.

## **CONTACT**

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