

Extra Extra! Read SOME About It!

Saul Malek and Mike Sciandra

National Council on Problem Gambling
National Conference

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Karaoke Time!



Imagine...

- ★ *Experiencing anxiety even thinking about singing in public*
- ★ *Singing a very embarrassing song. The most embarrassing song you have ever had to sing.*
- ★ *Singing a song you have never sang (or even heard) before.*

This is what it can feel like telling your recovery story to a stranger. A stranger who will then interpret and retell your story to the masses.

Mike Sciandra

Bet-free since December 15, 2020 (Day 1312)

Education and Outreach Coordinator, Choices Treatment Center, Lincoln and Columbus, Nebraska, since November 2021.

Previous educational and career background in business (sales management, marketing, management consulting, entrepreneurship)

Certified Peer Support Specialist, Disordered Gambling Counselor Certificate, LADC program

Main Objective of My Role and My Passion:

- ★ Inform Nebraskans about free outpatient problem gambling treatment services
- ★ Use my addiction and recovery story to inspire others to walk the road of recovery

Future Goals:


- ★ Use my gifts to help as many people as possible embrace recovery on a national, worldwide platform
- ★ Stay tuned for exciting news coming soon!

Saul Malek

Last bet: July 18, 2019

Trinity University (2020) BA in communication and human communication

Public speaker on problem gambling, speaking engagements include:



“Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity.”

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, author



Build Relationships with Local Media!

- ❖ Media members are always looking for stories
- ❖ Do not be afraid to reach out
- ❖ Create, send press releases
 - NCPG creates valuable templates
- ❖ Find reasons to communicate
 - Super Bowl, PGAM, March Madness, Kentucky Derby, start of football season, holiday season, Gift Responsibly, relevant news stories
- ❖ Compliment good content
- ❖ Media members are people also!
 - Be nice!

Own Your Story!

You cannot deliver your story with the power it deserves without...


- **Reflection**
- **Processing**
- **Reconciliation**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Practice**

Consistency in Your Story!

- ❖ **Know your...**
 - **Timeline**
 - **Key dates**
- ❖ **Write things down**
 - **Talking points**
- ❖ **Practice makes perfect!**

Know The Facts!

- ❖ Statistics can add meaning to your message
- ❖ Use credible sources (NCPG website)
- ❖ Do not embellish
- ❖ Do your research
- ❖ Regularly fact -check and update as needed



Pertinent Facts and Info
+
Thoughtful Story
+
Righteous Intentions and Mission
=
POWERFUL MESSAGE!

Stay Within Your Scope!

While it is good to be viewed as an “expert” in a variety of subjects, do not hesitate to say that you are not comfortable commenting on a subject.

Only Share What You Are Comfortable Sharing!

- ❖ Own your triggers and trauma
- ❖ Do not let anyone make you uncomfortable or make you overshare
- ❖ Do not let the “gory details” minimize your mission and message

Know The Angle!

Media professionals usually know the angle they want to take with a story prior to speaking with you.

Be ready to adjust your message accordingly.

- ❖ Facts to match the message

Helping Versus Personal Gain

- The Abandoned Steakhouse principle (can't pay rent on charity)
- Personal gain + help: not mutually exclusive

Common Media Questions

- How did you start?
- When did you realize it was a problem?
- Most amount of money you lost/ “bottom”?

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Temper Expectations

- Avoid savior mentality
- Slow and steady wins the race
- Your favorite boy band reinvented (MANY Directions!)

All Requests are NOT Created Equal

- Trust but verify
- No thank you is enough
- Leverage appearances

Protect Anonymity

- Protecting the 16 year old kid
- “Is this necessary?”
- Family, friends, fellowship

Conclusion

- ❖ Media are people too!
- ❖ Own your story
- ❖ Consistency in your story
- ❖ Know the facts
- ❖ Stay within your scope
- ❖ Only share what you are comfortable sharing
- ❖ Know the angle
- ❖ Do it for the right reasons
- ❖ Know the common questions
- ❖ Temper Expectations
- ❖ All requests are not created equal
- ❖ Protect anonymity

Contact Us!

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