

Suicide from the Inside Out: Attempt Survivors Speak Out

Two attempt survivors, Dese'Rae L. Stage and Jennifer Haussler Garing, share their experiences as both attempt survivors and suicide awareness advocates. This session promises to bring a greater understanding of how someone arrives at suicidal thinking, what helps and what doesn't help in terms of providing support, and how attempt survivors are mobilizing to be a part of the conversation about suicide awareness and prevention.

JENNIFER HAUSSLER GARING



Jennifer Haussler Garing is an epidemiologist with the Center for Health Statistics at the Texas Department of State Health Services, where she has worked for the past eight years. Prior to coming to Texas, Jennifer worked with the Virginia Department of Health and the Richmond City Department of Public Health.

Jennifer is a repeat contributor to the blog attemptsurvivors.com and a participant in livethroughthis.org. She recently spoke as part of a panel at the American Association of Suicidology national conference in Los Angeles. She is currently working on a means safety program for Texas based on the New Hampshire Gun Shop Project and an international advocacy program of attempt survivors called The Survival Project.

Jennifer is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She is a native of New Hampshire and now lives in Austin.

DESE'RAE L. STAGE



Dese'Rae L. Stage is a photographer, writer, and suicide awareness advocate based in Brooklyn, NY. She is the founder of *Live Through This*, a suicide awareness initiative that pairs the portraits of attempt survivors with stories of their experiences, in their own words.

Dese'Rae is a survivor of nine years of self-injury and a suicide attempt catalyzed by an emotionally and physically abusive relationship. She was also diagnosed with Bipolar II Disorder in 2004. It is these experiences—coupled with the losses of friends and a lack of resources for attempt survivors—that prompted her to start her work on *Live Through This*.

In 2013, she raised \$23,000 (via Kickstarter) to take the project on the road. Since then, she has collected the stories and portraits of 102 attempt survivors in 11 US cities.



Live Through This has been covered by the *New York Times*, *Associated Press*, *NPR*, and the *Boston Globe*, among others. Dese'Rae has spoken about the project at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Texas at Austin, as well as at the American Association of Suicidology's 47th annual conference in Los Angeles in April 2014. She has provided commentary for BBC World Have Your Say and HuffPost Live. She has written for *XoJane*, *Huffington Post*, and *Cosmopolitan*.

Dese'Rae holds a BS in Psychology from East Tennessee State University. She is also trained in ASIST and QPR. As for photography, she is self-taught. More of her work can be found at <http://deseraestage.com>.

ATTEMPT SURVIVOR RESOURCES:

- **Live Through This**
<http://livethroughthis.org>
- **The Way Forward: Pathways to Hope, Recovery, and Wellness with Insights from Lived Experience**
<http://bit.ly/wayforwardsp>
- **A Voice at the Table**
<http://bit.ly/voiceatthetable>
- **What Happens Now?**
<http://attemptsurvivors.com>
- **Talking About Suicide: Because It's Not Taboo**
<http://talkingaboutsucide.com>

- **The Survival Project**
<http://thesurvivalproject.org>
- **New Voices of Attempt Survivors (AAS Conference 2014)**
<http://bit.ly/aasnvsaspanel>
- **Now What Do We Do?**
<http://bit.ly/nowwhatdowedo>