



Michelle Wheeler



Survivors Path
SUPPORT • CONNECT • FACILITATE

SPEAKER | EDUCATOR | MOTHER | TRAUMA SURVIVOR

Michelle Wheeler is a survivor of the Columbine High School mass shooting and has spent the last two decades focused on her mental health and recovery journey. She has tried various therapies to cope with her trauma and has been diagnosed with long-term C-PTSD, anxiety, and sleep issues. Over the last decade, Michelle has worked alongside other survivors to navigate their own journeys of recovery.

Michelle uses her experience of hiding for her life in the Columbine auditorium and coming face to face with one of the gunmen to help other survivor communities. She has led peer support meetings through a local non-profit and participated in survivor panels to share her story of that day and her life afterward.

With a background in Psychology from Metropolitan State University and Early Childhood Education from the University of Phoenix, Michelle spent 21 years as a teacher before becoming an Instructional Coach.

Michelle is available to facilitate trauma workshops and participate in panel discussions on various topics supporting trauma, survival, and recovery.

As Seen On



For More Information

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**“Moving on after trauma
does not mean you forget,
You just learn how to live.”**



SPEAKER TOPICS

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THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED

Facing my classmate -- the gunman

The 1999 mass shooting at Columbine High School is a significant event in the history of mass violence. That day, Michelle Wheeler came face to face with one of the gunmen and survived--physically. She suffered injuries, the kind that you can't see. Sharing her personal story of that day, Michelle recounts the experience of a teen girl, through the eyes of an adult survivor.

Michelle Shares

- 🌀 Her experience in the cross-fire
- 🌀 The impact, and realizing her life had changed forever
- 🌀 The importance of creating a safe space

THE LINGERING IMPACT

Silently suffering into recovery

As incidents of mass violence and shootings continue to make headlines, the impact on people's mental health cannot be ignored. While individuals may appear to have recovered from trauma, there is often a lingering impact. Michelle Wheeler, a survivor of the Columbine shooting, offers insights into her own mental health journey and the strategies she employed to achieve a state of emotional well-being.

Michelle Shares

- 🌀 The missed signs of needing help
- 🌀 Contemplating suicide
- 🌀 The importance of creating a "safe" space

AFTER TRAUMA AND TRAGEDY

Acceptance and Love

Sharing her personal journey of recovery after surviving the Columbine mass shooting, Michelle Wheeler uncovers the lasting impact of trauma on mental health. Discussing the coping mechanisms that aided her in dealing with depression and PTSD, she recounts the experience of accepting and loving the person she is today.

Michelle Shares

- 🌀 Discovering her new path after trauma
- 🌀 Embracing the twists and turns of tragedy
- 🌀 Creating a place that feels positive and safe

LOCKOUT AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Teacher & Parent: in a Lockdown Generation

Exploring the challenges of parenting and teaching in a world of school lockdowns and drills, Michelle Wheeler, a Columbine survivor, shares her personal experience of fear in the classroom, and ways to cope with this disruption to the foundational elements of parenting.

Michelle Shares

- 🌀 Strategies for parenting and teaching in a public school system
- 🌀 How and when to discuss school safety and mass shootings with children
- 🌀 Interactive Q&A