

# Women's Rights Advocate Maya Hennessey to be Featured on Close Up Radio

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The Sixties was a turbulent time of upheaval and great transition for women fighting for equal pay, safety, and equality. It has been a long arduous battle and today women are still not equally represented. We have so much more work to do.

Nonetheless, we honor the struggles of women who came before us to change the course of history for the better.

Maya Hennessey is a consultant, trainer, and author who specializes in treatment and recovery of pregnant and parenting addicted women, interagency collaboration and cross training systems, to help families ravaged by poverty, trauma, malnutrition, and the stigma of addictions. Maya is also the author of *If Only I'd Had This Caregiving Book*.



"As a strong and outspoken advocate of women's rights, everything I accomplished were the results of being inspired by remarkable women I met on my journey. In the sixties and seventies, in Illinois, where I'm from, we struggled to pass laws against domestic violence and sexual harassment. Looking back, I am proud and humbled to see that we made a difference. Currently, I am writing my legacy stories to pass along the lessons I learned, mistakes I made, and the powerful and unforgettable women I met. I hope my stories inspire women to continue the fight. May the upcoming advocates for women's rights, help us achieve what we all deserve as proud, nurturing, intelligent, trailblazing women."

As a child, Maya was exposed to a toxic life environment of abuse and a painful broken upbringing. At only 11 years old, Maya began running away from home, by 15, she was gone for

good. Her youth was marred with the sting of teen pregnancy, sexual assault, and domestic violence. In the 1960s women who sought help from public aid, were turned away without assistance for married women. The patriarchal system back then offered no protection and no services for women. Yet, Maya's indomitable spirit kept her going.

"A pivotal seed was planted the day I attended my first march for women's rights. I experienced a surge of hope, spurred on by hundreds of women. We walked along Lake Michigan, holding signs and swapping stories of injustices we'd endured, gathering ideas about ways to speak out. I felt less alone with my heartache, and came away with greater determination and confidence to fight for women's rights."

In 1970s and 80s, as an alcoholism counselor, Maya pushed relentlessly for gender sensitivity in alcoholism treatment programs.

"I went up the ranks in the addictions field to supervisor, program director and Executive director of substance abuse treatment agencies, grateful for like-minded mentors and colleagues."

Maya became a powerful sought-after speaker on women's issues. In 1992 she was hired as the first women's specialist for the Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (IDASA). Requests came from other state agencies for Maya's help as a consultant, trainer and conducted compliance reviews and action plans to improve outcomes for women.

"My legacy stories will pass along my struggles, mistakes, epiphanies and triumphs, while striving for change so we can all live with harmony, comfort, safety and joy."

Another significant endeavor is Maya's book *If Only I'd Had This Caregiving Book* a must read for all of us who are struggling as caregivers, including single moms caring for children and aging parents, ill or disabled loved ones.

In the early 90s, Maya's husband was diagnosed with brain cancer. With help from friends and neighbors, she did her best to care for him. But the stress of long hours at work during the day, and nights caring for him, took its toll. Maya collapsed two months before he tragically passed away. While bedridden, Maya journaled about the relentless demands of caregiving. She found research showing that the immune system of caregivers deteriorates along with the patient. Maya created a model to help family caregivers, as one day we all face the inevitable reality of caregiving.

"My book is filled with exercises to help caregivers develop a network of support to sustain families through the advances and setbacks of caring for ill, disabled, or aging loved ones.

Maya says that women's rights woefully deteriorated in recent years. In the 1980s, with law makers and hundreds of volunteers in Illinois, the laws changed and services added for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Yet, today, there are states that won't fund rape kit

analysis, including Arizona, where Maya now lives and is pushing for change.

“The reversal of Roe Vs. Wade felt like a terrible setback, until I heard that voters in Kansas maintained the right to an abortion in their state's constitution. Thank you Kansas for being a great role model. May other states follow suit! Maya encourages women to run for political office and/or empower and support lawmakers, governors and mayors to change laws for a woman’s right to choose and protect a woman’s right to safety and privacy.

“Women working together across this great nation are unstoppable. Four years ago, to save the Affordable Care Act, we marched, protested, visited the offices of lawmakers, made calls, sent emails, letters and distributed handouts. We successfully saved the Affordable Care Act. So, let’s keep walking and talking until all women in every state can live in safety, dignity, respect, and love.”

Close Up Radio will feature Maya Hennessey in an interview with Doug Llewelyn on August 18th at 11 a.m. EST

Listen to the show on [BlogTalkRadio](#)

For more information, visit [www.mayahennessey.com](http://www.mayahennessey.com)

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