



2024

IMPACT

REPORT



A movement to end diabetes stigma

with laughter!

dStigmatize

A letter from the dStigmatize Director



Dear allies of the movement to end diabetes stigma,

Thank you for supporting our work.

Our mission at diaTribe has always been to improve the lives of people with diabetes and their loved ones through education and advocacy. Since 2016, we have convened leaders from every corner of the diabetes field to identify the greatest barriers to progress. One barrier that has consistently stood in the way of progress is **diabetes stigma**.

Nearly 80% of adults living with diabetes report experiencing negative social judgments, stereotypes, and prejudice – day in and day out. This stigma impacts not only the mental and emotional well-being of those living with diabetes, but also their physical health, reducing the ability to effectively manage their condition. On top of that, it obstructs vital awareness and prevention efforts that could help those at risk as well.

At diaTribe, we know that addressing diabetes stigma is an essential missing element of effective diabetes care. That's why we launched dStigmatize in 2022.

Eliminating diabetes stigma will require diverse solutions from a wide range of stakeholders. Fueling those solutions is the basis for our initiatives to expand research efforts, educate healthcare professionals, create an informational hub, and influence larger narrative change around diabetes.

Our latest initiative, **Spoonful of Laughter**, is designed to cut through the noise. As a disruptive, out-of-the-box campaign co-created with comedians, artists, advocates, and industry partners with and without diabetes, Spoonful of Laughter uses comedy to educate about diabetes and push back against stereotypes and stigma.

As we reflect on the first phase of Spoonful of Laughter, we're thrilled by the progress and excited for what's to come. We are deeply grateful to Insulet, the maker of Omnipod, and the Truman Heartland Community Foundation for their generous support, which made this groundbreaking campaign possible.

We invite you to continue this journey with us. As we work to end diabetes stigma and discrimination, your ongoing support is critical. Together, we can create a future where people with diabetes are empowered, not judged—where health, hope, and dignity prevail for all.

Thank you for being an integral part of the diaTribe community and the dStigmatize movement.



Matthew Garza
dStigmatize Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Garza', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Spoonful of Laughter: Creating a Movement



How do you solve a problem that is widely underestimated, often perpetrated by people unknowingly, and deeply entrenched in our society?

You laugh at it.

No, seriously.



Diabetes stigma has become embedded in our current cultural narratives. It's why jokes like "Wow, that dessert looks like diabetes on a plate" have become so normalized. To eliminate diabetes stigma, we have to replace the current narratives with more accurate, respectful, and empowering ones.

Research shows that an unlikely, but extremely effective strategy for doing this is to use comedy to propel your messaging. That's because comedy can:

- Increase attention and awareness
- Lower resistance to persuasion
- Make complex social issues accessible and break down social barriers
- Stimulate sharing and discussion.

This strategy works. For example, it's hard to imagine a world where the same level of progress in LGBTQ+ rights was achieved without the cultural influence of sitcoms like *Will and Grace* or *Modern Family*.

This was the spark that ignited *Spoonful of Laughter*, a national initiative to use comedy as

a tool for educating about diabetes and pushing back against stigma and stereotypes. We wanted to emulate the success of other movements while trying something that few have attempted in the diabetes field – cracking jokes about a serious condition!

We assembled a powerhouse team of creative talent, including rising comedians with and without diabetes, influential advocates, visionary artists, industry leaders, and top television producers. Together, we brainstormed, scripted, and filmed six dynamic comedy sketches which demonstrate that we can tackle the complexities of diabetes in a way that both entertains and engages audiences. We shared these videos across diaTribe's social media platforms to shift the narrative – moving away from fear and judgment and toward curiosity and empathy.

We don't want to lecture people into changing their stigmatizing behavior. We want to lead people giggling into a kinder, more respectful, and more joyful future for all those affected by diabetes.

Meet the Spoonful of Laughter Comedians



Spoonful of Laughter is possible because of the amazing comedic talent we brought together to craft the content that formed the backbone of the campaign. Meet our five featured comedians!

Kelsey Bascom

American filmmaker and diabetes advocate best known as the creator, writer, and lead of the web series MONDAYS. She is in post-production on her feature film, QUARTER, a coming-of-age comedy about a young woman living with type 1 diabetes who is navigating her blood sugar levels and the ups and downs of turning 25.

@kelseybascom



Kesha Carter

Kesha Carter blends her unique talents as a comedian, personal trainer, advocate, and flight attendant to inspire others living with diabetes. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at a young age, Kesha has never let her diagnosis define her. Instead, she has turned it into a powerful motivator for her advocacy.

@instakeesh



Justin Eastzer

Also known as “Diabetech,” Justin is a storyteller and content creator. After a type 2 diabetes misdiagnosis, the support and knowledge of the diabetes community helped lead him to a correct diagnosis (type 1.5). With his background in Hollywood productions, Justin now shares his journey and insights through his Diabetech YouTube channel, podcast, and social platforms.

@diabe_tech



Ashley Monique

Ashley Monique is a San Francisco-based comedian who delivers wry and sometimes dark humor with a disarming, earnest energy. She is a regular at the San Francisco Punch Line and Cobb’s Comedy Club, and she has opened for Melissa Villaseñor, Josh Johnson, and Roy Wood Jr.

@trashleymonique



Samuel Morrison

In 2023, Sam made his television debut on Late Night With Seth Meyers, performed on Comedy Central, and his solo show *Sugar Daddy* played Off-Broadway for 14 weeks. He performed in the 2024 Netflix is a Joke Festival and has performed in the New York Comedy Festival five times, headlining in 2023.

@samuelmorrison



A spoonful of impact



In the campaign's first 30 days, Spoonful of Laughter has reached hundreds of thousands of people, transforming the way we think about and discuss diabetes.

"Keep this rolling. So on point, our oldest is T1D. This stuff is so hard, but humor and relatability HELP!" – Evan

"As someone without diabetes, these videos helped me take a step back and say, 'Wait, am I [contributing to stigma]? How can I change that if so?'" - Megan

"Truly appreciate what you are doing. Would have been a bit easier growing up with something to bring laughter and light to the invasive and dark times!" – Brendan

650,000

Video views across all diaTribe and Spoonful platforms



31,000

Engagements

21,000 likes
800 comments
6,100 shares
1,500 saves
1,600 clicks

4,100



New followers

across all diaTribe and Spoonful of Laughter accounts

51%

Increase in mentions of diabetes stigma online

150% increase in potential impressions*

Instagram Spotlight:

130,000 accounts reached by diaTribe & Spoonful of Laughter, 121,000 of which were not followers (93%).

8,100 accounts engaged by diaTribe & Spoonful of Laughter, 5,700 of which were not followers (70%).

300,000 total views and **64,000 video replays** on Instagram.

*based on social listening compared to previous month

A spoonful of impact continued



With a near-zero budget for paid marketing opportunities, we amplified the reach of Spoonful of Laughter by leveraging partnerships, organizing events, and earning web traffic.

Matthew Garza and Kelsey Bascom delivering a talk back at *Sugar Daddy*, Sam Morrison's one-man show at The Wallis in Beverly Hills.

75

Organizations and individual amplifying partners

6,100

Video shares on social media

48,000

Spoonful of Laughter website views

320

New email list sign-ups

8,000

Press views & engagements

diaTribe News

Press release featured on AP, Yahoo Finance, and more

Additional press (view count unknown)

T1D Exchange

Children with Diabetes Newsletter

7

Launch events & appearances

Sugar Daddy with Sam Morrison

IG Live Launch Party

IG Live with Justin Eastzer

IG Live with the Diabetes Link & Kesha Carter

"Brown Bag" with DPAC

"Insulin Inclusive" with Diversity in Diabetes

diaTribe Exclusive with Kelsey Bascom

Thank you to our sponsors & team





We want to express our deep gratitude to our sponsors, Insulet, the maker of Omnipod, and the Truman Heartland Community Foundation. Spoonful of Laughter would not have been possible without their generous support.



We also want to thank the entire team that helped create Spoonful of Laughter.

Kelsey Bascom
Irene Canuti
Jim Carroll
Kesha Carter
Tommy Crawford
Justin Eastzer
Brian Fitzgerald
Morgan Fluhrer
Matthew Garza
Ben Jehoshua

Clare Kenny
Ashley Monique
Sam Morrison
Eileen Opatut
Theresa Parsons
Santiago Paulos
Shae Puckett
Kat Savage
Beth Strachan
Carrie Van Horn

-  SpoonfulofLaughter.org
-  [@ASpoonfulofLaughter](https://www.instagram.com/ASpoonfulofLaughter)
-  [@ASpoonfulofLaughter](https://www.tiktok.com/@ASpoonfulofLaughter)
-  [@thediatribefoundation](https://www.youtube.com/@thediatribefoundation)



Want to support the diaTribe Foundation and help make Spoonful of Laughter possible? Scan the QR Code.

And thank you to the extended teams at Dancing Fox and ImageLine Productions, as well as all of the amazing staff at diaTribe.