



## *Biography*

John Westhaver was born in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, a small town located on the east bank of the St. Croix River. He is the second youngest of eight children and remembers his childhood fondly.

John was a well-rounded, responsible student with a close group of friends. In 1994, a month and a half before his high school graduation, John was in a horrific car crash with three other young men. The teens had been enjoying a normal Friday night - drinking beer in the car, blasting music, and speeding. Although the driver of the vehicle was sober, the car lost control at a sharp bend and hit a telephone pole, killing everyone in the car except John.

When he awoke from a medically-induced coma a month later, John learned that his friends had died in the crash. He was fortunate to be alive but had suffered life-threatening burns to 75 per cent of his body. Through his extensive rehabilitation, John found the strength to move forward. His ongoing recovery inspired him to devote his life to helping others make the choices that he hadn't.

When John moved to Victoria, British Columbia in 2000, he joined a burn support group. His physical therapist, inspired by John's natural ability to uplift and inspire others, suggested that he consider public speaking. John joined Toastmasters and conducted his first presentation in 2002. Since 2006, John is a professional member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers as is also an ICBC Roadsense Speaker since January 2009.

In 2004, John formed JMM Speaking, a business named after his best friend, Jason Murray McKeeman, who died the night of the crash. JMM Speaking is dedicated to empowering youth to make responsible choices. To date, John has presented on over 200 different occasions and has toured high schools across North America to promote safe driving.

John's long list of clients includes the Firefighters Burn Fund in Victoria, BC, the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, Crime Stoppers, the Vancouver Island Health Authority, the Connecticut Burn Care Foundation and the Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt.

John is a trained volunteer with S.O.A.R. (Survivors Offering Assistance through Recovery) with the Burn Survivor Group in Victoria.

John tailors his presentation to each occasion and tells his story with humour and hope. An inspirational speaker, he inspires audiences to think about the simple choices they make in their everyday lives and to weigh the consequences of those choices. John's discussions can be customized to cover any or all of his specialties including goal setting, overcoming fear, surviving the worst to find your inner peace, moving on after a traumatic event, and taking personal responsibility in a vehicle. If you are in need of a high quality presentation that delivers a powerful message, you need to book John as he will captivate your audience.