



PRESS RELEASE

SELF-UK

If you are struggling with your mental health, do you know where to go?

Research suggests it is an absolute minefield and more needs to be done to make accessing support in the most vulnerable state as easy as possible.

That's why two friends have set up a new Not for Profit organisation which centralises all mental health support services in one place.

SELF-UK (Supporting Every Life Forward) is putting together a UK Map of mental health support services in the hope that accessing support can be easier for all.

The community interest company has been set up by broadcaster Kady Braine and musician and author Catherine Lawless who have been working together for the last 2 years to film a documentary about living with Agoraphobia.

Catherine has suffered with mental health challenges for over 40 years and agoraphobia meant she was often trapped inside her home, too scared to leave over the thought that something terrible might happen. The documentary follows Catherine's journey during lockdown when she felt that everyone could finally understand and relate to how she has to live her life.

Kady filmed the documentary herself whilst on maternity leave, often with her baby strapped to her chest. It was during this time that Kady and Catherine's friendship grew and they knew they both wanted to help more people.

Kady has close family members who have struggled to find mental health support. She says "as a busy person myself it took me a while to understand how difficult it can be for someone with mental health problems to get out of bed in the morning let alone log on to a computer and search for help and advice. The NHS is inundated and this isn't going away. People need more support and they need a better way of accessing services at the click of a button".

Kady has had experience dealing with her own mental health in recent years following the loss of her father and finding herself a newbie to panic attacks. "I walked in to a room and they asked my name, my partner stared at me but I couldn't breathe, I couldn't speak, I made no sense at all. I didn't know what was happening to me, but after I was physically and mentally exhausted".

The documentary hasn't yet been released but it follows Catherine's journey as she tries to get back on stage to perform. CAT was the band that Catherine toured with across Europe when she was in her 20s with hits including Mind Games and Forgiveness.

Catherine says:

“Never in my wildest dreams did I believe I could get my music career back. I was living in a black hole and no matter how hard I tried to get out, I couldn’t. I was suffocating and just when I was out of air, I discovered the Thrive Programme. This coincided with a call from Kady. Kady and my coach Mary, dragged me from the hole and we embarked on an extraordinary journey together. Several months later, Art my dear friend and previous music manager got in touch and suggested we had a relaunch. Tiny step after tiny step and by the end of last year I signed two publishing contracts. To be part of a band again and to sing and write is just unreal. SELF was born from our passion to help others who too are struggling with their mental health” .

As well as creating a UK Map of services, the team want to help support other charities close to their heart who all have the aim of improving one’s self.

They want to support people who have been made to think they are not capable or have had their confidence shattered through life changing events. This could be for a variety of reasons including, bullying, PTSD, domestic violence, coercive control or bereavement.

The first project they are helping to raise funds for is St Albans and Hertsmere Women’s Refuge to help build a safe space where adults and children can start their journey of recovery.

You can find out more information at www.SELF-UK.com

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To request interviews please email hello@self-uk.com or call Kady on 07880220225