



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Dundee Author To Host a Virtual Book Reading for Mental Health Awareness Week

A DUNDEE author is hosting a virtual book reading event to get people talking about mental health, for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week.

Tina McGuff, who wrote *Seconds to Snap*, on her experiences of an eating disorder, psychosis and her time in a psychiatric ward will be sharing her story to "give hope" to those who are going through a tough time with their mental health, especially during the current COVID 19 crisis.

She is co hosting the event with the national programme to end mental health discrimination, See Me, and will be encouraging people to be kind to each other, and themselves, to try and tackle the stigma around mental health.

Kindness is the theme for this year's mental health awareness week, which has been set by the Mental Health Foundation.

The reading and a Q&A with Tina will be going out live on See Me's Facebook page on Thursday 21st of May.

Tina, 50, first experienced mental health problems when she was a teenager when she developed an eating disorder. After struggling for a few years and reaching a point where her life was at risk, she was sectioned under the mental health act.

Tina was put on an adult ward, which was quite intimidating at first, but helped Tina to have a better understanding of mental illness. Tina continued to be hospitalised on and off for the next four years.

When she was in her twenties Tina experienced psychosis, which she eventually found out was brought on by unresolved childhood trauma.

For a long time she did not want anyone to know about her illnesses, she was “ashamed” and “scared” to tell anyone for years, worrying what people would think about her.

But she is now open about her experiences and wants to use the event to encourage others to be more open.

She said: “I would like my story to help people in the same way that other people’s stories helped me. That is by always giving hope that recovery is possible. I know everyone is different and everyone’s circumstances are different but the only thing that kept me going was the fact that I could make a recovery.

“I truly believe that seeing people’s journeys and what people have gone through really makes a big difference. It’s like anything, if someone had any other illness and no one ever spoke about it, you would never know what to expect, or the outcomes, or managing expectations of what would happen.

“Being judged from other people, or stigma from society in general is a huge, huge barrier. I can’t express how hard it can be for someone to seek help or speak out.

“Hopefully one day this will be a thing of the past and we will be able to talk about what we’re going through without any stigma.

“I think kindness is one of the most amazing things anyone can have, or give you. Being kind is so important and it has helped me so many times.”

Wendy Halliday, See Me director, said: “We’re delighted to be working with Tina in helping share her story of hope, kindness and recovery.

“We all have a role to play in using kindness to overcome mental health stigma and discrimination.

“If someone is struggling with their mental health, a call, a video chat or a message asking them if they are okay and showing you care can make all the difference.

“For someone struggling with their mental health, experiencing stigma and discrimination can make it so much worse, but a simple act of kindness, like reaching out and asking how can you help, could help someone in their recovery.

“Don’t struggle alone with your mental health, be kind to yourself, find someone you trust and speak about how you’re feeling. You deserve help and support.”

You can watch the virtual book reading at 7.30pm at www.facebook.com/seemescotland.

ENDS...

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. See Me is Scotland's National programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination, enabling people who experience mental health problems to live fulfilled lives.

We do this by:

- Mobilising people to work together and lead a movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination
 - Working with people to change negative behaviour towards those with mental health problems
2. Follow See Me on Twitter or Instagram @seemescotland or find us on Facebook: Facebook/seemescotland, or at www.seemescotland.org
 3. See Me is managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation and funded by Scottish Government and Comic Relief

