**Minds Anonymous celebrates first anniversary**

**Website has helped thousands of people living with mental health problems,**

(6th October 2021) [Mindsanonymous.com](http://www.mindsanonymous.com/), the website that was created to give people a safe space to anonymously share their mental health stories, this month celebrates its first anniversary. The powerful stories, shared over the year, give a unique insight into the reality of living with a range of mental health conditions and has helped professionals better understand these conditions. In its first year the site reached thousands of people in over 60 countries.

32-year-old Woking resident, Louisa “Wizzi” Magnussen, who has herself suffered with mental illness, came up with the idea after being put on furlough, and later made redundant. Following an interview Wizzi did about her experience of bipolar and the isolation it creates she wanted to encourage others to write their stories for the benefit of challenging this isolation in a safe space free of judgement. Hence the writers remain anonymous.

Wizzi self-funded the website, with some crowd funding support. She explains: “We know that writing about your experiences helps a person experiencing anxiety and trauma. However, many people are reluctant to share the true reality of their condition for fear of judgement and stigma. By writing their experiences down on Minds Anonymous, sufferers are given a voice and a platform to be heard. One outcome, I wasn’t expecting, is that the site has helped educate others, including professionals, on what it’s really like to live with problems like bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia and anxiety. Clinicians have told me that this is the first time that a resource like this has been available to them.”

Gill Seaton-Jardine Counsellor/Psychotherapist from GSJ Counselling explained why the professional community has welcomed the initiative; “Minds Anonymous increases awareness, teaches readers about what are often misunderstood conditions and provides a space for people to share their experiences. If you have an understanding of a condition, you are better prepared to manage it.”

Erik “Yoda” DaRosa, Founder & Co-host: From Survivor to Thriver Podcast explained what it meant to him as story writer on the site; “I was so happy to be able to share my own personal journey. We must shatter the stigma around mental health so that others, who may be suffering, can realise they are not alone."

The website has received backing from high-profile mental health organisations including MyCognition, the NHS approved mental health app, a representative at Richmond Fellowship and the South of England Early Intervention in Psychosis Programme.

Wizzi, now happy and well, is working to develop the website further. Wizzi concludes: “At the end of this first year we have some powerful stories, plus supporting articles from professionals. The number of people viewing the site leads me to believe that the initiative is doing more than I hoped it ever would. I originally just wanted to help one person not feel alone. Now we have over 60 stories and multi-media content on the site, that truly explain what it is like going through mental health struggles. However, in order to continue, we need a small amount of funding to cover the growing costs.”

To share your story or read others’, visit Minds Anonymous at [www.mindsanonymous.com](http://www.mindsanonymous.com/). To contribute to the funding of the platform you can donate at <http://app.investmycommunity.com/MindsAnonymous>

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**Notes to Editors**

Minds Anonymous officially launched in October 2020. It provides a safe space to share mental health stories completely anonymously. Through true storytelling, Minds Anonymous aims to increase understanding of mental health conditions and abolish stigma. It was founded by Journalist, Radio Presenter and Producer, 32-year-old Louisa ‘Wizzi’ Magnussen from Woking who has herself suffered from bipolar and other conditions.

**MindsAnonymous is supported by:**

* South of England Early Intervention in Psychosis Programme EEIP - <https://epicminds.co.uk/>
* Way to Wellbeing - <https://www.waytowellbeing.co.uk/>
* GSJ Counselling - <https://gillseatonjardine.co.uk/>
* MyCognition - <https://mycognition.com/>

**About the Minds Anonymous InvestMyCommunity fundraising campaign**

InvestMyCommunity is the UK’s only digital fundraising platform dedicated to raising funds for community bodies rather than individual fundraisers. With our Premium Service, we specialise in helping organisations such as schools, places of worship, charities, sports and social clubs and businesses, to design, launch, manage and promote high impact crowdfunding campaigns in support of important community causes.

As the organisation’s Fundraising Partner, InvestMyCommunity is helping the Minds Anonymous team to crowdfund to expand the reach of its website and help many more people facing mental health challenges to tell their stories in creative, moving and authentic ways.

You can visit the Minds Anonymous InvestMyCommunity fundraising campaign page here: <https://app.investmycommunity.com/mindsanonymous>

And you can find out more about us at InvestMyCommunity.com

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