

Video Short Competition—It's Always on My Mind: Mental Health and Me

During Summer 2009 we are running a video-short competition on the theme of 'It's always on my mind: mental health and me'.

The event is supported by Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust who have kindly donated £100 prize money for the winning entry. The closing date for entries is Friday 4 September 2009.

Entrants are invited to upload a short (no more than 4 minute) video to our

special YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/group/SWUF

We are looking for videos which explore the person's mental health—either good or bad, their passions, their personal journey, their history, their current state of mind—any interpretation of 'Mental Health and Me'.

Technical knowledge isn't necessary—entries can be filmed on a camcorder,

webcam, digital camera or even on a mobile phone.

But remember—be innovative, be creative—the more interesting or unique the video, the better!

We're not looking for masterpieces, we're looking for something different, something that catches our eye, something that makes us think...

Up to the challenge?
www.stopstigma.org.uk



Submit your video short to our competition for the chance to win £100 and have your work showcased around Coventry and Warwickshire.

THE AMI PROJECT
South Warwickshire User Forum
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PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS!

The Awareness, Media and Information (AMI) Project is funded by Comic Relief and will run until Spring 2011. The project is mental health service user/survivor led. It aims to work with the local community and the media to challenge stigma and discrimination and to break down barriers caused by ignorance and misinformation.



South Warwickshire User Forum (Mental Health)



STOP STIGMA WITH SWUF

THE AWARENESS, MEDIA AND INFORMATION PROJECT—FIGHTING MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

Ways YOU Can Get Involved:

- **TalkBank**
- **Media Watch Group**
- **Arts Project**
- **TV & Radio Alerts**
- **Competitions**

Sign up for our **Mental Health TV & Radio Alert.**

Send your email address to: heather@swuf.org.uk

It's that easy!

We're a Year Old!

The Awareness, Media and Information Project (AMI) celebrated its first birthday in May 2009! And to celebrate, we've published this short newsletter to let you know what we've been up to and what we're planning to do next. And more importantly, how YOU can get involved.

As well as setting up a website and a blog, the AMI project produces a weekly TV and Radio alert which is emailed out to let people know which forthcoming programmes have a mental health theme or content.

The Media Watch Group meet fortnightly at the Community Arts Workshop to discuss mental health in the media, and look at specific diagnoses and issues. We're always looking for new members, so please get in touch if you're interested.

The coming year will see us develop video workshops, a video competition on the theme of 'you and your mental health', build on the work of the Media Watch



Project members take part in a Comedy Workshop at BBC Coventry & Warwickshire

Group, and hold an event to mark World Mental Health Week, on Thursday 8 October.

For more information contact Heather Payne On 01926 335569

What we've been up to....

- May 08— AMI Project Launch
- June - Media watch group fortnightly meetings began
- September – Photography workshop
- October – exhibition of photography at Open Up Exhibition
- November – Poetry Competition
- January 09 – Poetry into Waiting Rooms

- February - Media Training
- March – BBC Comedy workshop
- March – BBC Red Nose Day radio and TV appearances
- June—launch of the AMI Video Short Competition at www.youtube.com/group/SWUF



Heather Payne, Media Action Worker at South Warwickshire User Forum

TalkBank—Colin’s Story



Let’s join together to put an end to these sorts of headlines.... Tell your story—tell it like it is!

My name is Colin, a 67 year old male, twice married, twice divorced, father of three and grandfather of three that I know of.

When I had a breakdown I was lost and confused. My GP gave me valium and pain killers to try and relax me and help me sleep, but to no avail.

I had lost my job through redundancy as an industrial radiologist and being over 50 and a specialist had great difficulty getting employment. But because I was brought up to be the bread winner and my wife was only just building back up to full time work after the family and some further education, I still felt solely responsible for the house, the car and the family.

After being admitted to the Caludon centre for trying to kill myself no-one really had time to sit down with me and discuss my many problems. I was clinically depressed and having panic attacks also suffering from sciatica, hearing loss, a cataract, arthritis and undiagnosed diabetes.

I had an unsuccessful operation on my back and a cataract operation, which

took over a year to correct my vision. I was referred to the pain clinic but the waiting time was 2-3 years. I could not be offered talking therapies for the same reason—a long waiting list. I was offered ECT as an alternative but fortunately got advice from my peers at Depression Alliance so refused it as I already was suffering from lack of short term memory and for someone who used to have a photographic memory this was very frustrating.

My mental health notes did not include my physical health notes and visa versa. Some professionals, as soon as they knew I was a mental health patient, assumed I was imagining the other symptoms. This was taken on board by me with painful consequences when I refused my medication in the Caludon centre and tried playing badminton at the day hospital which meant I was then crawling around the floor in more pain for the next few days. Also the treatment for back pain at that time was bed rest which did no good as it meant the muscles of one's legs wasted away and you became wheelchair bound.

So I’m very happy now that

we are going to be treated as people rather than a series of unconnected conditions. The spread of the multidiscipline team has helped professionals better understand the social and other factors that produce some of our symptoms. It also assists with diagnosis of problems that exhibit the same symptoms.

Colin, 2009

Want to Share Your Story?

By sharing your story, you can help people understand what it’s like to suffer from emotional distress and to experience mental health problems.

We can offer you full support, guidance and training if you’d like to get involved in our TalkBank and share your experiences with others. The choice is yours!

**Contact Heather Payne for an informal chat. 01926 335569
heather@swuf.org.uk**



Colin

Get Involved... With our Arts Projects

Each year, we will run a different art-based project which will involve project members learning new skills (or updating existing ones!), sharing knowledge, and sharing their work with the public.

In 2008, we ran a photography workshop which produced some stunning photographs. These were then entered into the

Open Up arts exhibition, held at the Community Arts Workshop, an event which was staged to coincide with World Mental Health Day.

During 2009 we are concentrating on video work and video diaries. We are holding a series of Participative Video workshops and encouraging people to make their own films,

learning to use all the equipment and writing their own storylines.

The finished films will then be showcased at our World Mental Health Day event, which will take place at Bath Place Community Venture on Thursday 8 October.

Contact Heather Payne to find out more.



“Working with video diaries can help get the word out to a wider audience—and help to end the discrimination against people with mental health problems” DR

Get Involved... With our TalkBank

TalkBank is a group of people who have a story to tell about their experiences of mental health. The members are offered training to prepare them to talk to the media about their experiences. The people involved have received various diagnoses; bi-polar disorder, depres-

sion, anxiety, schizophrenia. The thing they have in common is the desire to tell the media what these labels really mean.

If you sign up to join **TalkBank**, we will provide media training to give you the skills and confidence to talk to journalists and reporters. We will

then work on your behalf to get your story into the media.

heather@swuf.org.uk

01926 335569 or 07552 161734 if you’d like to get involved.

You can do as much or as little as you feel comfortable with!

If you’d like to join the Media Watch Group, contact heather@swuf.org.uk 01926 335569 07552 161734

Get Involved... With our Media Watch Group

The **Media Watch Group** meets fortnightly in Leamington Spa and is open to all mental health service users/survivors.

The main purpose of the group is to monitor mental health and related stories in the press and on TV and radio. We have lively dis-

cussions around the reporting of mental health stories and how they affect the lives of the group members.

We also hold special events such as briefing sessions on mental health topics, media awareness training and visits to places of

interest.

We also received a visit from the Health Correspondent at the Coventry and Warwickshire Telegraph and talked to her about her role and the responsibilities of the media in reporting mental health issues.



“Joining the Media Watch Group has made me more aware of the issues surrounding reporting of mental health, and how we can help to change it.” OT