In Our Own Words
UK doctors talking about our own mental health

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Doctors’ Support Network

1996 started

2001 Support Forum

2013 Committee – family names and photos added to website
‘I experienced two years of pretty florid physical symptoms of anxiety/ depression (weight loss, early morning wakening, panic attacks) before attending my GP for help, mainly because I really wanted to be able to cope, and everyone around me seemed to be coping fine. I didn't want to admit to failing.’
Dr Angelika Luehrs

• Consultant Psychiatrist in General Adult Psychiatry since 2010
• Specialist Advisor for complex mental health cases NHS GP Health Service, 2017
• Diagnosed with Bipolar Affective Disorder in 2004
• Very hesitant to get help
• Years of finding the right medication, being off sick, postponing exams...
DSN and me

are there any others?
– signposted to DSN in 2005
• Joined DSN Committee in 2005; Vice Chair 2007; Chair 2012
• DSN Co-Chair since 2018

Drive to raise awareness but always mindful of: once it is out there you can’t take it back
Factors to consider

Friends and family

Support system including health professionals

Own mental health

Raising awareness always leaves me feeling somewhat raw and vulnerable regardless of how often I’ve done
Factors to consider

Employer
Medical Colleagues including junior doctors
Non-medical colleagues
- how self-conscious might you feel in a senior management meeting
Patients
Advantages

It is not a secret & safety is in numbers

Employer

Positive feedback from numerous sources including colleagues, patients

Being part of something bigger, important
&me anti stigma campaign
Doctors’ Support Network

website  www.dsn.org.uk

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