

## Media Alert

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## Community Access to Present 15<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Mental Health Film Festival on October 19 at New York City's Village East Cinema

**(New York, NY, 10/11/19)** – On Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup> Community Access will host the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Mental Health Film Festival (MHFF), presenting a day of inspiring films with messages focused on challenging stigma, breaking down misconceptions, and sparking meaningful conversations about mental health.

Established in 2005, MHFF is the oldest and largest film festival of its kind and proud to have a dedicated history of screening films with hopeful messages and real, positive portrayals of people living with mental health concerns. Since its inception, MHFF has screened more than 60 films (including several NYC and world premieres); welcomed over 5,000 audience members; and created a place where the community can come together to enjoy a day of thought-provoking, narrative and documentary films made by filmmakers from across the United States and around the world.

Says **Carla Rabinowitz, the festival's founder, and Advocacy Coordinator at Community Access**, "One in five people in the United States lives with mental health concerns, yet society continues to stigmatize people living with mental health concerns. Too often, the media and the filmmaking industry portray people living with mental health concerns as incapable, violent, and not part of mainstream society. This professional film festival shines a light on how mental health recipients, both children and adults, live our lives like everyone else, being silly, creating bonds, making positive contributions to the world, earning respect, and love."

### FESTIVAL INFORMATION:

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 10AM and 2PM

**WHERE:** Village East Cinema  
181-189 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
New York, NY 10003

**PRESS:** Media, video and photo coverage is invited.  
RSVP by 10/18 to [lynsey@anatgerstein.com](mailto:lynsey@anatgerstein.com)

**TICKETS:** \$20 to \$40

**WEBSITE:** [www.mentalhealthfilmfest.nyc](http://www.mentalhealthfilmfest.nyc)

## FILM SCHEDULE:

### **Morning Screenings: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

#### ***Paper Football*** (dir. Michael Torres)

On the cusp of sealing a business deal, Amado Sutil receives a harrowing phone call—his wife Bethany, under assault, screams for him to come home—their 11-year-old son, Steele, melting down violently.

#### ***Masks in the Aftermath*** (dir. Crystal Fortwangler)

A documentary about how the power of art helps people recover in the wake of hurricanes Maria and Irma.

#### ***David and I*** (dir. Vincent Leclair)

A hybrid documentary that explores two cases of A.D.H.D. within the same family, the coping mechanisms adopted and the complicated relationship between prejudice and self-acceptance for those with the undiagnosed condition.

#### ***Primal Therapy*** (dir. Cyrus Baetz)

When a young writer has his heart broken and can't seem to get back on track, his best friend thinks he knows just what's needed. He may say all the wrong things, but he might have one great idea.

#### ***The Date*** (dir. Derreck Roemer)

Rachel and Sami hit it off on Tinder and agree to meet for a first date. As the rapport builds, Sami decides to reveal a health secret that he rarely shares, with unforeseen consequences.

#### ***Image*** (dir. Petter Sjöstrand)

*Image* follows the trajectory of Sonja's relationship with Karl – from their first chance meeting to a serious relationship – over the course of which, she finds herself compelled to be honest about her emotions and work through her depression.

#### ***We All Believe in You*** (dir. Andrea Beça)

What started out as a portrait photography project has grown into a mental health organization that is saving lives and creating systemic change. Meet Blake Loates, the creator of *We All Believe in You*, as well as a diverse, resilient, courageous group of community members.

**Midnight** (dir. Jeremy Germain)

Before moving away and saying goodbye to her best friend, Ashley brings Jason to their old childhood tree-house, where a night of remembrance turns into something that changes Jason's life.

**Afternoon Screenings: 2 to 5 p.m.**

**&you** (dir. Claire Downey)

Taylor Autumn Herndon, and Tessa Lawrence. In the wake of the #metoo movement, a survivor at James Madison University becomes a powerful advocate on campus after her own assault case.

**My Toughest Battle** (dir. Suzy Mottram)

The story of Jamie, a young boxer who, as he is preparing for an upcoming fight, struggles with depression.

**Salience** (dir. Princess Bacani)

Jessie struggles while watching after her sister Jane, who lives with childhood schizophrenia.

**Dear Uncle** (dir. Amir Hossein Behbahani)

A nephew struggles to care for his uncle, who lives with mental health concerns.

**Stronger** (dir. Cameron Elkins)

Shortly after recovering from mental illness and one week before radical surgery to remove his cancerous prostate, bowel, and bladder, Chris decides to start riding his motorcycle again.

**Together, We Rise** (dir. Josh Burstein & Georgia Koch)

From the perspective of public school students across Los Angeles County, *Together, We Rise* explores a new cultural event designed to help youth confront mental health.

**Psych Nah, I Am Not My Mental Illness** (dir. Diandra Marie)

The stories of four black adults who have struggled with their mental health.

**Claire's Day** (dir. Lauren Unger)

Journey through a day of job coaching with Claire as she tries to help her clients to get a job.

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**FOR CALENDAR LISTINGS:**

**NYC Mental Health Film Festival (Village East Cinema, Manhattan)**

**SAT, OCT 19, 10 PM and 2PM**

*Tickets are \$20 General Admission for morning or afternoon / \$30 for All Day Pass / \$40 for All Day Pass + t-Shirt*

This year's 15<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Mental Health Festival will screen 16 short narrative and documentary films from around the world with hopeful messages about living with mental health concerns. More than a dozen filmmakers will be in attendance for Q&A's with the audience.

Village East Cinema is located at 181-189 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, New York, NY 10003. It is accessible by car, bus (M15-SBS at 14<sup>th</sup> St.), train (6 at Astor Place, 4/5/6/N/Q/R at Union Square 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave), and foot.

Access for wheelchair users and individuals with limited mobility is available.

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**About Community Access:**

Community Access' mission is to expand opportunities for people living with mental health concerns to recover from trauma and discrimination through affordable housing, training, advocacy, and healing-focused services. We are built upon the simple truth that people are experts in their own lives.

[www.communityaccess.org](http://www.communityaccess.org)

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