

ANONYMOUS REAL EXPERIENCE

FINDING STRENGTH THROUGH ANDYSMANCLUB

Walking through the door and discovering he was not alone

SHARED ANONYMOUSLY • SHAPED COLLABORATIVELY BY MAGGIE LEAROYD



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"For years, I genuinely believed that dealing with everything on my own was what being a man was all about. I worked hard, supported my family and kept telling everyone I was fine. Inside, though, I was exhausted. I wasn't sleeping well, I was becoming irritable and I found myself avoiding friends because pretending everything was okay took too much energy.

One evening my wife showed me information about ANDYSMANCLUB. I ignored it at first. Walking into a room full of strangers and talking about my feelings was probably the last thing I wanted to do. It took me several weeks before I finally went along.

What surprised me most was that nobody pressured me to speak. I could simply sit, listen and realise I wasn't the only person carrying difficult thoughts. Hearing other men describe feelings that I had never been able to put into words made me realise I wasn't weak and I certainly wasn't alone.

Over the following months I found myself talking a little more each week. The group didn't solve all of my problems, but it helped me realise I didn't have to face them on my own. I also spoke to my GP and later accessed talking therapy, something I would never have considered before attending the group.

Looking back, the hardest part wasn't talking. It was walking through the door for the first time. That one decision changed how I think about strength, and it reminded me that asking for support is one of the bravest things I've ever done."

A Note About This Real Experience

This is a real person's lived experience, shared anonymously in their own thoughts and feelings. The contributor spoke openly about what happened, and Maggie Learoyd shaped the piece collaboratively, preserving their meaning and voice. They want their experience to be heard and understood but have chosen not to be named. Some identifying details may have been changed to protect their privacy.