

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **TLLLF launches unique nationwide awareness campaign for World Mental Health Day**

Deepika Padukone, TLLLF Founder, urges mental illness survivors to share their stories using the #NotAshamed campaign hashtag

**Bangalore, 10 October 2018:** In line with its mission to spread awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, The Live Love Laugh Foundation (TLLLF) has launched a unique nationwide awareness campaign inviting survivors of mental illness to come out and share their stories.

The campaign features real-life survivors of mental illness.

Deepika Padukone, Founder, TLLLF, said, “Through our journey and experience in the last three years it has been proven time and again that the biggest barrier preventing those suffering from mental illnesses from seeking help is the social stigma attached to it. This must change. As a society we need to embrace the need of all those suffering from mental illness. Our campaign this year aims to ensure those who are suffering from depression or any other mental illness feel comfortable in sharing their story and ask for help.

“Starting today, I urge all survivors of mental illness to come out and share their experience using the #NotAshamed hashtag. We at TLLLF believe that this movement will only encourage and empower individuals suffering in silence to come out and seek help,” she added.

A TLLLF survey undertaken in 2017 across 8 Indian cities revealed that more than 75% of those surveyed, displayed fear and would like to keep a safe distance from people perceived as having a mental illness. 42% of those surveyed said that they may display anger 'sometimes' or 'always' towards those with mental illness while almost half of the participants in the survey, used words such as ‘Retard’ or ‘Crazy/Mad/Stupid’ while describing people with mental illness.

Due to this social stigma, lack of awareness and limited access to professional help, only 10-12% of people suffering from mental health problems in India seek help.

Anna Chandy, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, The Live Love Laugh Foundation, said, “Stigma stems from a general lack of understanding about mental health. This forces people to suffer in silence and further isolate themselves. Stigma excludes all who do not fit into what is deemed as proper.

“As an advocate for mental health I am encouraging individuals from every walk of life, including doctors and mental health professionals themselves, to speak openly about their mental health and not to hesitate to ask for help. We hope #NotAshamed will be a real game changer for mental health in India and will organically unfold into a movement”, she added.

## The campaign

TLLLF's campaign includes a teaser in which real-life survivors, whose identities are initially masked, pose relevant questions such as "I suffered from depression, should I be ashamed?" "I met a psychiatrist for my depression, should I be ashamed?" or "I suffered from a mental illness, should I be ashamed?". The audience is then prompted to respond with a simple NO or YES.

In the second stage, the survivors' faces are revealed and they boldly declare that they are "NotAshamed," to acknowledge their experience with mental illness.

Besides Deepika, other real-life survivors who are part of the #NotAshamed campaign include Vivek and Malvika, who are entrepreneurs; Sandhya, who is a journalist; Anovshka, who is a digital marketer; Muzzammil, who is a tailor; Anand, who is a businessman; Tara, who is a visual artist; Rindamma, a homemaker; Malavva, who owns a shop; and Thomas, who is a retiree.

The campaign covers Print, Outdoor, Radio, Television and Digital.