



Amen Dhesi

IMAGINE Bradford Director International Mental Health Activist

At the age of 13 Amen became a young carer due to his father being diagnosed with a mental health condition. Transitioning from primary school to high school was tough. Periods of self doubt led to dark depression and resorting to self-harm as a coping mechanism. Despite significant set backs during 6th form such as bullying, poor body image, being overweight with a face full of acne Amen persevered displaying significant fortitude and studied a BSc. in Sport and Exercise Science at Leeds Beckett University.

The first two years of university threw Amen from a guided routine into complete freedom which negatively impacted his mental health. He evolved the self harm into more severe forms of alcohol and substance misuse. An outgoing personality and a boisterous charisma masked this. However, the short-lived escape provided no tangible personal development, and failed to fill a void which was growing larger. A decision made by Amen and his Mother to move home for 3rd year was the turning point for success. Amen found it difficult to regulate his behaviour whilst at university which led to quite extreme behaviour, nevertheless successfully completing the BSc. and embarking upon his MSc.

Whilst studying the Masters Amen has founded IMAGINE Bradford, become a Bradford Community Champion, spoken at the 2017 NHS EXPO, engaged in interviews with the Healthcare Leader, and appeared on the front of Choices; a magazine sent to carers. Amen has a distinct passion for shaping the future of Bradford's younger generation, all the while a huge sport fan.

Aged 22, born in Bradford, Amen Dhesi has evolved into a global activist. His most accomplished achievement being recently accepted to attend the Youth of United Nations international conference in Tanzania. Aligned with the theme *Innovation and Creativity for Sustainable Futures* the youth model works towards the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, he recently challenged Theresa May on Sky News to increase the training and awareness surrounding Young Carers; as well as an increased amount of mental health leads in schools.

| Sectors worked in and routes taken. | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Sport Science and Exercise Psychology | MSc (Hons) Psychology of Sport and Exercise: specific research with regard to exercise, lifestyle and a holistic approach to wellbeing or mental health in 18-24 year old students. |
| Fitness | A qualified personal trainer, sport massage therapist, and FA level 2 football coach seeking to bridge the gap between fitness education and the general populations mental health. |
| Mental health and voluntary sector | Created IMAGINE Bradford which focuses on the impact university research has on young individuals lives, with respect to exercise and mental health. |

Bradford Community Champions



| What I would like to get involved in (Please tick) | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Inspirational Talk | Visits to my place of work | Mentoring / Coaching young people | Other (please state) |
| ✓ | | ✓ | |