

# Mental Health Month Community Ambassadors



## Rose Clifford

My name is Rose and I live with and manage general anxiety and during my 2nd, 3rd and 4th year of university I was diagnosed with and recovered from an eating disorder, Anorexia Nervosa (2014-2016). Since that time I have completed my double degree in Arts and Psychology, honours year in Psychology and commenced a PhD in psychology in 2018 (at the ANU), with a focus on eating disorders.

When I'm not studying I spend my time working at the university as a psychology tutor and teaching assistant for several undergraduate psychology courses and volunteering her time with several mental health organisations in Canberra.

In 2020 I was named the Young Canberra Citizen of the Year for my work and advocacy in mental health. I volunteer with Mental Illness Education ACT, sharing my lived experience story and Lifeline taking calls on their crisis line. I have co-designed a number of mental health education programs currently being delivered to youth in the ACT and delivered a program to develop Mental Health Empowerment and Leadership for youth. I have used my lived experience to help inform research proposals and grant applications and have assisted in the education and professional development of Occupational Therapists, Counsellors and Psychologists in the ACT.

I believe in the power of lived experience story sharing as a way to inform, educate and connect our community in mental health. This is in part what motivates me to get involved with being a Mental Health Ambassador, so that I can continue to use my lived experience to help guide those in our community to navigate the mental health landscape and develop the confidence to take charge of their own mental health journey.

When I am not trying to change the world through mental health advocacy, I love learning about anything and everything, spending time with my husband and our dogs, reading, baking, listening to podcast or doing crafts. Making sure I am practicing self-care is key to ensuring that I am managing my mental health and staying well. It wasn't an easy habit to develop and took a lot of trial and error to find out what works for me. But the key is to not give up, no matter how hard the journey may seem, it will always be better than the alternative