

## **Personal Statement – Kathryn Goetzke**

*Application for Board of Directors, World Federation for Mental Health*

As a mental health advocate, entrepreneur, and person with lived experience, I have dedicated the past two decades to transforming personal tragedy into global impact. I lost my father to suicide while in college and navigated my own suicide attempt in silence for many years. That experience instilled in me a lifelong commitment to ensure others have access to tools, community, and education that support mental wellness and prevent suffering.

I am the Founder and Chief Hope Officer of *The Shine Hope Company*, where I lead development of scalable, evidence-based programs to build emotional resilience. These include *Hopeful Minds®*, *Hopeful Cities®*, and *Hopeful Mindsets®*, which are now used in more than 50 countries. These programs are grounded in brain science, emotional literacy, and lived experience, designed to equip individuals—especially youth—with the skills to navigate adversity.

Professionally, I also bring an extensive business and strategic communications background. I hold an MBA and have worked for major corporations such as **3M and American Express**, and I served as **Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Compass Marketing**, where I led national campaigns for Fortune 500 clients. I also launched my own company and brand Mood-lites, selling over 9 million products in retail, doing the first nationwide cause marketing campaign for mental health. This experience has equipped me with deep expertise in messaging, branding, campaign execution, and cross-sector collaboration—skills I believe are valuable to any high-functioning Board.

For the past two years, I have served as a **UN NGO Representative for the World Federation for Mental Health**, helping elevate global awareness of hopelessness and suicide risk. I led advocacy efforts that contributed to the UN officially recognizing **July 12 as the International Day of Hope**, with support from 161 countries. I am honored that WFMH supported this initiative, and I am deeply committed to strengthening our ongoing collaboration.

I am applying to join the WFMH Board of Directors because I believe this organization plays a vital role in the future of global mental health. WFMH has the history, reach, and credibility to lead transformative change—and I want to help advance its mission with passion, professionalism, and purpose.

## **My Advocacy and Board Experience**

I currently serve on the **Board of Hope Means Nevada**, a leading U.S. nonprofit focused on youth suicide prevention, and the **Advisory Board of the Global Mental Health Movement**. I was an advisory for **FundaMentalSDG**, working to get mental health incorporated in the SDGs. I've founded multiple mental health programs, collaborated with public and private stakeholders, and served on advisory boards for academic, nonprofit, and civic entities worldwide.

Throughout my career, I've led mental health education and prevention efforts across diverse sectors—from classrooms and community centers to recovery programs and reentry systems. I've built public health campaigns, developed curriculum, delivered keynote speeches, and cultivated long-term relationships with funders, governments, and UN-affiliated institutions.

## How I Will Contribute to the WFMH Board

If elected, I would contribute in the following key areas:

- **Advocacy for Children and Youth** – I will champion increased attention to child and adolescent mental health through prevention-focused initiatives, awareness campaigns, and global partnerships.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns** – I bring extensive experience in global campaign strategy and would support WFMH's efforts to build high-impact, culturally relevant public education movements.
- **Strategic Communications & Brand Visibility** – Drawing from my corporate marketing background, I can help refine WFMH's messaging, digital footprint, and communications tools to broaden engagement and influence.
- **Cross-Sector Partnerships** – My network spans the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. I can support WFMH in building new alliances that expand resources and reach.
- **Lived Experience Integration** – As a suicide loss survivor and someone who has personally faced hopelessness and depression, I bring a trauma-informed, empathetic lens to everything I do.

## Roles and Perspectives I Bring

I identify as a:

- **Person with lived experience**
- **Family member of someone lost to suicide**
- **Mental health advocate and curriculum developer**
- **Business leader and entrepreneur (MBA)**
- **Board member and NGO founder**
- **Youth-focused prevention leader**

These roles allow me to contribute strategically and empathetically across all areas of governance.

## Skills I Offer

- Global advocacy and campaign leadership
- Sales, marketing, and brand strategy
- Corporate partnership development
- Lived experience leadership and trauma-informed program design
- Curriculum development for diverse populations

- Board governance and nonprofit operations
- Fundraising, licensing, and sustainability modeling

## Membership and Availability

I have been an active WFMH member for two years and am fully willing and able to participate in all Board meetings, including in-person gatherings, virtual sessions, and email communications. There are no limitations that would restrict my availability to fulfill these obligations.

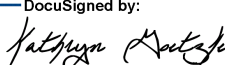
## Why WFMH—and Why Now

The global mental health crisis demands coordinated, innovative, and equity-centered leadership. The WFMH is uniquely positioned to advance the mental health agenda at a time when rates of suicide, depression, addiction, and trauma are rising—especially among youth. I believe I can help the organization scale its vision, sharpen its voice, and grow its reach in ways that are both compassionate and strategic.

It would be an honor to serve on the WFMH Board and contribute to its legacy—and its future.

## Optional: Executive Role or Lead for Lived Experience (150 words)

I respectfully express interest in being considered for a leadership role, including *Board Lead for Lived Experience*. I bring lived experience, an evidence-based lens, and a trauma-informed approach to global mental health. I have created successful programs, led international campaigns, and served as a UN NGO representative. My unique ability to bridge personal story with science and scalable strategy makes me well-suited to help ensure lived experience is embedded meaningfully at all levels of WFMH's work. I would be honored to serve in this role with integrity, inclusion, and impact.

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