



Doug takes a leading role on mental health

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Table Tennis England Board member Doug Livingstone is playing a key role in helping to end the stigma of mental ill-health in the workplace.

Doug has been nominated to join the InsideOut Leaderboard for 2020, an initiative under the umbrella of mental health action group InsideOut which consists of a list of senior workplace leaders championing mental ill-health issues in the workplace.

The list has been devised to help smash the stigma surrounding mental ill-health in the workplace and to recognise business leaders who are open about their own personal battles.

Individuals on the list were selected by InsideOut on the basis of nominations solicited from across the spectrum of business sectors and include senior leaders from Facebook, Barclays, Deloitte, PwC, National Grid, Starbucks and TUI Group.

Doug, who has had depression, said: "You spend a lot of time at work, which is why it's so important your workplace contributes positively towards your mental health.

"I think we're all talking about how we feel much more openly, which is great progress in the right direction, but it can be more difficult at work than with your family and friends.

"At Table Tennis England, we always aim to support staff with their health and wellbeing. Employees are encouraged to understand and talk about mental health issues, which in turn empowers them to support each other.

"This is particularly important now with many people working at home through the coronavirus outbreak. I've been impressed with the information that has been shared with staff and the support they have had, not just to be able to continue working but also sharing strategies to help combat social isolation.

"My main message is you're never alone – support is out there. Although it feels like the hardest thing to do,

sharing your struggles can be the first step to feeling better.”

InsideOut was launched by Rob Stephenson in 2017 following the Stevenson–Farmer report, which identified that every year more than 300,000 people lose their job due to mental ill-health, costing the UK economy £99bn.

Stephenson, who experiences bipolar disorder himself, said: “The InsideOut LeaderBoard aims to show that a significant number of people who’ve experienced their own struggles with mental health exist at all levels within our workplaces.

“The most effective way to reduce the stigma is to be open and honest and to encourage a more open environment around these issues. I am delighted to see the list grow from 42 role models in 2019 to 68 with lived experience this year.”

For more information visit www.inside-out.org

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