

Public invited to free screening in Taylor of 'Death is not the Answer' for Mental Health Awareness Month

By Sue Suchyta For The News-Herald Apr 24, 2017 Updated 2 hrs ago [Comments](#)

To launch Mental Health Awareness Month, Community Care Services will offer a free screening of "Death is Not the Answer" at 6 p.m. May 3 at Wayne County Community College in Taylor.

The documentary, made by 11-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Keith Famie, explores the roots of depression and suicidal tendencies and features the insights of recognized

mental health professionals, first responders and others whose lives have been impacted by suicide.

The screening, held at the Heinz Prechter Educational and Performing Arts Center, 21000 Northline Road, Taylor, will be followed by a question and answer session with Famie and others featured in the film.

In addition to Famie, post-film panelists include Cathy Radovich, founder of the Garrick Roemer Education and Awareness Team for the prevention of suicide; Gail Urso, founder of Kevin's Song, which aims to create awareness and understanding of suicide; Rabbi Daniel Syme, the film's producer and a suicide awareness advocate; Elyse Boyd, a Howell teen and suicide survivor; and Dr. Melvin McInnis, University of Michigan psychiatry professor.

Famie said that all the films he does are human interest, social conscious films that help people in some way.

"It's really a subject that needs to be told, and there has never really been anything out there that navigates through the complexities of suicide and depression and what a family goes through," Famie said.

After researching the topic, Famie decided to take it on.

"The goal was how do you dive into a topic like this and find a way to end on a positive, upbeat, inspirational, call-to-action note?" he said. "That was my biggest concern. After taking the audience on a journey through suicide and



depression and family members, how is this going to end?”

He said he spent a lot of time crafting the film’s ending so that people can be helped by it.

“While the film touches on the loss of somebody to suicide or individuals who have attempted to take their lives through suicide, we delve deeply into what is depression, how it’s different from sadness, what is the definition of depression and what is bipolar,” Famie said.

He said as the film unfolds, it also explores what happiness is, and what makes people happy.

Susan Kozak of Community Care Service said the screening was planned to bring awareness to the community about mental health issues during May, which is National Mental Health Awareness Month.

“We thought that a movie showing would be a great opportunity for the community to come in,” Kozak said. “I actually had a chance to go preview the film and thought it was an excellent film for anybody in the community, not just people working in the field.”

She said the film can also provide insight for anyone who knows someone who is depressed.

“Our ultimate goal is really to reduce the stigma of mental health issues and mental illness so people are more comfortable in reaching out for help,” Kozak said. “That is the number one reason people don’t get help, because they are ashamed or they think that means they are crazy or they are going to get locked up somewhere. There are a lot of misconceptions.”

Kozak said Community Care Services help people who are uninsured or underinsured see if they are qualified for the Michigan Medicaid plan Healthy Michigan. Most people do qualify if they are low income for something.

General admission tickets are free, but registration is encouraged. Go

to deathisnottheanswerccs.eventbrite.com and comcareserv.org for more information.