

Mission to break the silence

MENTAL HEALTH: ENTREPRENEURS' STRUGGLES ARE NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS, SAYS EXPERT

Citizen reporter

As we observe Mental Health Month this October, it is crucial to recognise that entrepreneurs are not immune to the mental health challenges.

While entrepreneurship may outwardly appear to be a path filled with innovation, success, and independence, the reality for numerous founders is far more complex.

They navigate a rollercoaster of stress, isolation, and pressure that can profoundly impact their mental wellbeing.

Alison Weihe, an entrepreneur, speaker, and identity intelligence coach, is all too familiar with these challenges.

"Entrepreneurs often wear many hats and feel as though they must constantly push forward, regardless of how exhausted or overwhelmed they may be," she says.

"However, struggles with mental health are not a sign of weakness. It is important to acknowledge them and seek support."

A hidden crisis

While entrepreneurs are often celebrated for their resilience and ability to overcome obstacles, research indicates that their mental health can suffer in the process.

A study from the University of California reveals that 72% of entrepreneurs experience mental health issues. This Mental Health Month, Weihe is on a mission to break the stigma and encourage her peers

to speak out and seek help.

"Entrepreneurs face unique stressors," Weihe explains. "Beyond the typical business challenges, they carry the weight of their employees' livelihoods and the expectations of investors and clients.

"The fear of failure can be overwhelming, leading many to neglect their own health in pursuit of success. But it does not have to be this way."

Weihe emphasises the importance of fostering a culture of self-compassion and balance within the entrepreneurial realm.

She believes that by sharing their struggles, entrepreneurs can cultivate a more supportive and resilient community.

"We need to build businesses that are not only profitable but also grounded in

kindness, both to ourselves and to others. The hustle culture is not sustainable if it costs us our mental wellbeing."

An urgent call to action

As a coach and mentor, Weihe's message this Mental Health Month is one of hope and action. She urges entrepreneurs to take small but meaningful steps to protect their mental health, from setting boundaries to reaching out for professional support.

Weihe's journey of transforming her business while managing her mental health is a testament to resilience. Her path from burnout to balance serves as inspiration to entrepreneurs who may feel isolated, demonstrating that it is possible to thrive in personal and professional realms.