“Queen Sugar” Star Kofi Siriboe Releases Film About Black Mental Health [VIDEO]

The actor works to spark honest conversations about anxiety and depression in the Black community.

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Kofi Siriboe doesn’t want the topic of mental health to be taboo in the African-American community any longer, so he’s taking action. The 24-year-old actor released a short documentary titled WTF Is Mental Health? that explores mental health issues among young Black people, reports HuffPost.

“I feel like with mental health, people always react negatively,” said the star of the family drama Queen Sugar on OWN—The Oprah Winfrey Network. “We kinda have a lot of stigma in our community and in society general.”

In the film, seven young Black adults openly discuss their experiences with mental health challenges and the stigma they’ve faced. Siriboe directed and also makes a brief appearance in the film, which can be viewed below.

“Everybody doesn’t have that language and doesn’t understand that there is a community or world out there of people who are dealing with similar things, so I really want to explore what it is and what it means to us,” Siriboe told HuffPost.

The actor, who has undergone his own struggles with mental health, admits that he experienced anxiety, depression and unease at the height of his career. For him, making this film was a part of his healing process.

“I get to express [my feelings], but what about those people who don’t have that opportunity, they’re bottling up all this emotion and being told it’s not real then we wanna talk about mental health after there’s a reaction to what’s been bottled up…and it’s not gonna stop,” Siriboe said.

In an effort to help end stigma and invite further dialogue about the issue, Siriboe has called on young Black people to submit their personal videos discussing their understanding of mental health and the experiences they’ve had.

“If we don’t admit what’s going on to ourselves, we’re gonna keep hurting in silence, which is killing us twice as much as our Caucasian counterparts,” Siriboe said.

Click here to learn about the NBA player who recently sparked a discussion about mental health after he disclosed that he suffers from depression.

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