

Sedona Jamieson

Inspirational Story – Lived Experience

Sedona's mental health journey began at 14 after experiencing her first panic attack at school. As her anxiety worsened, she began restricting food and was placed on medication before accessing therapy, leading to further decline. Over the next four years, she was in and out of secure hospitals, diagnosed with depression, psychosis, anorexia, and borderline personality disorder. She experienced emotional and physical trauma, isolation during COVID, and missed out on key moments of adolescence. Despite this, Sedona independently completed her education and launched "Sedona's Care Packages" to support young people in mental health wards. In 2021, her recovery began at a specialist BPD and anorexia ward, where access to therapy and consistent support helped rebuild her confidence. She later moved to Ravenna Lodge with Choice Care, regained her independence, resumed playing tennis, and completed college. Now studying Biomedicine at the University of Bath, Sedona shares her story through social media and TEDx to inspire hope and change. Sedona's journey with mental health began at just 14 years old, when she experienced her first panic attack at secondary school. What followed was a rapid and distressing decline in her wellbeing, marked by frequent panic attacks, struggles with food, and a growing sense of losing control. Despite persistent efforts from her family and school to access support, delays in mental health services meant Sedona was placed on medication before receiving therapy — a decision that contributed to further deterioration. Within a year, she faced hospital admission with additional diagnoses of depression, psychosis, and anorexia. Over the next four years, Sedona spent much of her adolescence in secure hospital settings, often under section, experiencing both the isolating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and challenges within the care environment. Her early experiences paint a powerful picture of the urgent need for timely, compassionate, and person-centred mental health care for young people – the very same reason that she is now raising awareness and making a change to people experiencing similar situations .

After Sedona's first panic attack at secondary school, things escalated quickly, as she began to have frequent panic attacks resulting in her feeling a loss of control and struggling to attend school. In an attempt to regain some control over her life, Sedona began restricting her food, only eating when encouraged rather than through need and stopped playing tennis professionally.

During this time, Sedona's parents and her school really pushed for her to be referred to CAMHS, but due to lack of resources, the NHS were unable to make the referral. After continued efforts from the school and her parents, Sedona was eventually referred to CAMHS, but due to the long waiting list for therapy, and Sedona's rapid decline in mental health, it was recommended that she moved straight onto medication for anxiety and panic disorder.

The fast transition onto medication unfortunately steepened the decline of Sedona's mental health resulting in a traumatic admission to hospital later that year, due to additional diagnosis of depression and psychosis. This experience further impacted her controlling thoughts around food and nutrition and within a short period of time, Sedona was also diagnosed with severe anorexia and was being tube-fed.

Over the next four years, Sedona spent the rest of her childhood and early adult years in and out of medium to high security hospitals. Due to being under section and the medication and sedatives she had been prescribed, Sedona's independence and control over her life choices was limited and she experienced both emotional and physical abuse during this time from both other patients and the staff on shift.

Alongside the environment of the hospital wards, the COVID pandemic took place and due to restrictions Sedona was unable to see her family for an extended period and was also unable to access the physical reassurance she felt she needed from the care team, such as a hug. Over these years, Sedona was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder (BPD) and continued to display self-injurious behaviours often resulting in multiple surgeries a month to repair the damage caused, all whilst she tried to complete her GCSEs and A-Levels independently in hospital.

In 2020, Sedona launched 'Sedona's Care Packages' a fundraiser to provide care packages for other mental health patients on paediatric wards and bring brightness to those who are struggling. She collected donations that went towards stress toys, puzzles, inspirational quote cards and more to go into each care package. In 2021, following her diagnosis of BPD, it was agreed that Sedona would move to a BPD and anorexia specialist ward, and this was where her life began to turn around. She stayed here

for two and a half years and through the experienced support of a psychiatrist she was able to access therapy and eventually she no longer required the prescribed sedatives, her feeding tube was removed and her 'risk to self' was significantly reduced. The strong relationships she had built with her care team improved her self-confidence and gave her the motivation to change. These changes meant Sedona was now able to go to her family home regularly, with the support of her care team. This progression meant that in 2022, Sedona was ready to move on from hospital settings and into a more independent environment – Ravenna Lodge, part of Choice Care. Both Ravenna Lodge and Sedona's hospital care team supported her to transition slowly, building from one day, to a night to two days and so on. Sedona moved into Ravenna Lodge with a list of goals:

- To progress from hospital
- To go to university
- To live in her own house
- To play tennis professionally once again

- To continue posting on her social media to make others feel less alone and raise awareness for her journey
- To do a TEDx Talk on her experience

During her time at Ravenna Lodge, Sedona again had a great relationship with her care team which motivated her to continue transforming her life. Being supported by the team at Choice Care gave Sedona the independence and fresh start to grow, whilst knowing she had support if she needed it, something she felt she'd missed out on having been in hospital for most of her education.

Sedona was supported to go to college where she completed an access course in biology, chemistry and physics, preparing her for her next dream, university. Within the space of nine months, Sedona had completed her course and had been accepted into the University of Bath to study Biomedicine. Alongside these fantastic achievements, Sedona began

professionally competing in tennis once again and continued her journey on social media (TikTok and Instagram) to raise awareness about her experience with mental health and the support systems. Fast forward to 2025...she has now been at Bath University studying Biomedicine for two years and lives in her own flat and has recently spoken at a university TEDx Talk raising awareness of her experiences in a psychiatric hospital and the steps she's taken to rebuild her life since. She's spoken movingly about how common it is for people in hospital to miss out on education but that there are so many other options for them. Sedona has also been interviewed by many news platforms, again raising awareness of her experience in a psychiatric hospital.

Sedona's goals for the future include completing her degree and a placement year with a biomedicine company, moving into her own home and travelling to more places across the World.

Sedona's story is truly inspirational, not only because of her personal recovery but also the impact she continues to have on others. From years spent in psychiatric hospitals and battling multiple diagnoses—including anorexia, psychosis, and BPD—Sedona has emerged as a resilient and passionate advocate for mental health. Her determination to complete her education independently while in hospital, create "Sedona's Care Packages" for other young patients, and rebuild her life shows extraordinary strength.

Her TEDx Talk and ongoing social media advocacy have shed light on her experience of psychiatric care, especially the educational gaps and emotional toll it can take. Sedona's openness encourages others to seek help and believe that a different future is possible. Her journey has influenced not only her peers but also the people who supported her, and her story continues to shape conversations around youth mental health and the need for compassionate, holistic care.