EUROPEAN
HEALTH FORUM
GASTEIN

Niedersüß, Geraldine
AhA! Angehörige helfen Angehörigen (Family members help family members), Salzburg



Geraldine Niedersüß grew up in Britain, but has now lived in Austria for more than 40 years. She graduated from Bristol University with a BA (Hons) Degree in German and, after working for the IAEA in Vienna for 3 years, qualified as a Primary School teacher at the Institute of Education, University of London. After her marriage to an Austrian and the birth of her three children, two boys and a girl, she piloted a school experiment for intensifying the teaching of English to 6 to 10 year olds at Anif Primary School and also lectured at the Salzburg University of Education.

Her second son developed mental health problems at the age of 12 and, after the diagnosis of schizophrenia some years later, she became a member of the organisation AhA! – Angehörige helfen Angehörigen - Verein für pyschische Gesundheit (Family members help family members) in Salzburg. After the death by suicide of her son in 2005 at the age of 22, she took over a self-help group at AhA!, which offers support to people who have mental health issues with family members. Her oldest son also battled for many years with psychological problems, which unfortunately led to addiction and he died earlier this year after a cardiac arrest.

Geraldine Niedersüß lives with her husband in Hallein, near Salzburg.

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