

MEET

Olaidé



A VOLUNTEER ON SAMARITANS' SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE

1. What three words would you use to describe yourself?

I am patient, cautious and creative.

2. What is your favorite way to spend your free time?

I love walking around Manhattan with my iPod nano on shuffle. I can easily walk over 40,000 steps in a day just taking in the city while listening to my favorite songs.




3. What's something people would be surprised to learn about you?

English is not my first language. I grew up in a home where my parents mostly spoke Yoruba, some Arabic, and rarely English. I picked up English and became more fluent once I started school.

Later on in school, I started to learn Latin & Spanish which complicated things a little bit. Sometimes when I spoke Yoruba I'd find myself mixing in some Spanish out of habit.

Eventually it just became easier to answer my parents in English while they spoke to me in Yoruba.

I love learning new languages and I hope  to add American Sign Language and fluency in Arabic to my list.

4. What superpower would you want to possess and why?



The ability to let other people read my mind and so they can really understand the intent and emotion behind my thoughts.

Sometimes I find it it hard to convey all of the subtleties that underpin my thoughts. It'd be so much easier to grant temporary access to my mind.

5. What brought you to Samaritans?

The early stages of the COVID 19 pandemic made it really hit home how important my support network of family and friends were. It made me think of how people with few community ties were coping with the isolation. I wanted to do something to help.

Once I felt that I was in a stable enough place, I reached out and then applied to join the next volunteer training class.

6. What have you learned about yourself that you didn't know before you became a volunteer?

I can connect and empathize with people that I have never met or seen.

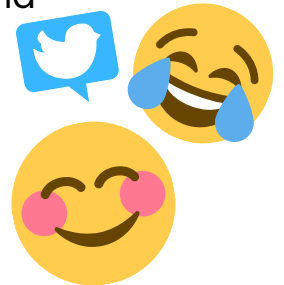
Before joining Samaritans, I would say I probably relied on my facial expressions to show that I cared. I did not think of myself as someone that was particularly good with words. Volunteering with Samaritans has made me rethink this about myself.

7. How do you decompress after a shift?

My iPod! Catch up on The Real Housewives (Beverly Hills is my favorite, but I truly love them all!)

Scroll through twitter and

laugh at all the viral tweets. Share said tweets with my friends and family. Sharing tweets is absolutely my top love language.



8. What have you taken away from this experience?

When someone is hurting, in crisis or feeling overwhelmed sometimes the best way to help is not by offering solutions or by trying to "fix it".

Sometimes the very best thing you can do for someone is to just provide for them a space to express their thoughts and feelings. I have learned not to underestimate what simply listening can mean for another person.