# Documentary filmmaker sparks connection through tea and stories



Will Sheers, a 28-year-old documentary filmmaker from Kentish Town, London, has garnered significant attention on social media for his unique approach to storytelling through casual conversations over cups of tea with strangers in parks. Since launching his project, A Mug Of Life, on 31 January this year, Sheers has achieved millions of views across his social media channels despite having released only a small number of videos.

In each video, Sheers approaches individuals in various London parks, inviting them to share their personal stories over tea. He describes the resulting conversations as leading to "the most amazing stories." Speaking to the PA news agency, he remarked on the distinctive nature of his project, stating, “There are lots of people talking to strangers on TikTok, but no one is learning their stories. In a three-minute video, you can really delve into people’s lives.”

Among his interviewees are diverse individuals, such as an American man named Brian, who shared anecdotes about his friendship with actor Robin Williams, and an elderly British man, Peter, who reflected on "his most memorable cup of tea." Other stories include themes of familial estrangement and personal loss, as seen in the experiences of a participant who spoke about losing contact with his father and another who discussed the sudden death of her husband and her passion for travel.

Since initiating this project, Sheers has been “overwhelmed” by the positive feedback he has received, with many viewers commenting that his videos have brought them to tears. These heartfelt reactions highlight the emotional impact of the narratives shared within the series.

Educationally, Sheers studied politics at the University of East Anglia before shifting his focus to documentary filmmaking. He encountered difficulties securing commissions for feature films, noting that the film industry often prioritises celebrity stories over personal narratives. He expressed his belief that the success of A Mug Of Life demonstrates a public interest in ordinary stories. “People see so much negativity online but here’s a chance for them to see something that is encouraging,” he explained.

With aspirations to expand his project across the UK, Sheers aims to create a comprehensive “tapestry of Britain” that includes representation from all communities and backgrounds. “Everyone has a story, and it’s about finding a way to tell those stories in the right way,” he stated. This approach, he believes, reflects an innate human curiosity and connection to storytelling.

In a bid to maintain integrity and respect for his interviewees, Sheers communicates with them after their conversations, ensuring they are satisfied with how their stories are portrayed before releasing any videos. His project continues to challenge social norms around interacting with strangers, addressing the pervasive belief in Britain that such interactions may be perceived as unusual.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL is the source of the article about Will Sheers and his documentary project, A Mug Of Life, which involves storytelling through casual conversations over tea with strangers in parks.
* <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/eastman-dental-institute/news/2023/jan/tea-and-conversation> - Although not directly related to Sheers, this URL discusses the therapeutic benefits of conversations over tea, which aligns with the emotional impact of Sheers' project.
* <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/degrees/politics> - This URL provides information about the University of East Anglia, where Sheers studied politics before transitioning to documentary filmmaking.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-64825311> - This URL could potentially discuss social norms around interacting with strangers in Britain, which Sheers' project challenges.
* <https://www.tiktok.com/@will_sheers> - This URL could be where Sheers shares his videos, although it is not confirmed in the search results. It would support the claim about his social media presence.