

September 2024

WE CARE News



WE CARE
COMMUNITY SERVICES

CHARITY CONCERT 2024

In collaboration with



REVERBERANCE

CHINESE WIND-PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE



**School Of The Arts (SOTA)
Concert Hall**

1 September 2024 (Sunday)

Matinee (2 PM) & Evening (7 PM)

Duration: 1hr 15 mins

Price: \$38

**(250% tax deductible
receipt available on
request)**

Tickets available exclusively at www.ticketmaster.sg

Chinese Wind-Percussion Ensemble Charity Concert 2024



For an addiction treatment centre located in Singapore, fundraising can be a tricky task because of the nature of our cause.

Despite our best efforts, addiction is still very much stigmatised by many, including a portion of the general public and corporate organisations. It is, however, gratifying to know that our cause still resonates with some.

It is because of their support that we have been able to hold successful fundraising events in the past, and can continue to do so.

Our latest iteration of fundraising events is the **WE CARE Charity Concert 2024**, to be held on **1 September 2024** at the **School Of The Arts (SOTA) Concert Hall**. Held in conjunction with *Reverberance*, a *Chinese Wind-Percussion Ensemble*, the concert promises to be an extraordinary experience, showcasing a rich tapestry of genres that highlight the versatility and skill of Reverberance.

Beyond their musical excellence, Reverberance is dedicated to nurturing young, upcoming musicians and consistently gives back to the community, aligning perfectly with the values of **WE CARE** Community Services.

Join us for an evening of memorable performances while supporting a noble cause. Proceeds from the concert will directly benefit **WE CARE** Community Services, aiding us in our mission to provide essential support and resources for addiction recovery and education.

If you are interested in joining us, you can get your tickets at www.ticketmaster.sg.

If you would like a tax deductible receipt, please email a screenshot of your ticket purchase receipt along with your full name and NRIC number or company name and UEN to tzaoshen@wecare.org.sg.

We hope to see you there!



WE CARE Community Services **17th Finisher Awards**

The 17th edition of our signature event, **the Finisher Awards**, took place on Thursday 11 July at the Lifelong Learning Institute. Together with 120 audience members, including invited guests, we honoured 16 recipients, who were celebrating 1, 3, 5 and 7 years of clean time and sobriety. In attendance for the first time were also our interns at **WE CARE**, who share their experience of the event.

“The auditorium buzzed with an energy that was both vibrant and serene, an unusual combination that seemed to reflect the journey of recovery itself. This was the setting for **WE CARE**’s 17th Finisher Awards Ceremony.

Throughout the evening, a strong sense of community was palpable. It was evident in the way that recipients supported one another, offering hugs, cheers and words of encouragement.

This camaraderie was not limited to those on stage; it extended to the audience as well. Friends, family members and fellow attendees all shared in the joy, and the atmosphere was one of collective celebration, where each individual’s success was a win for the entire community”.

- **Saumyaa**, currently studying Psychology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver

“This event showcased the power of perseverance and social support. Hearing people share their stories of recovery from years of addiction cemented a hope in me that every day is an opportunity to change and grow into who you want to be in this world.

One speaker shared the poem his mother wrote him as an expression of how proud she was of him. I heard others express their gratitude directly to loved ones and **WE CARE** staff, thanking them for their unconditional love and support that motivated them through their recovery. The support from family, significant others, friends, **WE CARE**, and sponsors was mentioned by the recipients as vital to their recovery, and they all reiterated the following: help is always available.

- **Mikela**, who is pursuing Health in Social Science at the University of Edinburgh



“My favourite part of the 17th Finisher Awards was listening to the inspiring and passionate stories shared by the honourees. Despite being complete strangers to me, they moved me with their stories of achievement and hope. If their stories managed to move me, an outsider with no brushes with addiction, then imagine how inspirational they must have been to friends and fellow recovery persons.

The fact that most of them had been battling with addiction for years but were able to stay clean for 1, 3, 5, or 7 years with the support of their friends, family, and **WE CARE** sends a powerful message that addiction can be treated, no matter how ‘far down the road’ one is”.

- **Sam** who is reading political science at UCLA

“In a society where addiction is often stigmatised, the Finisher Awards serves as a powerful counter-narrative, highlighting the possibility of recovery and the courage it takes to achieve it. It emphasises that recovery is not a solitary journey but a communal effort, where support and understanding are crucial. As I left the venue that evening, I carried with me a renewed sense of commitment to be more supportive of those in recovery”.

- **Saumyaa**

“It makes my heart happy that there is an event in Singapore that recognises and celebrates these phenomenal people who have turned their lives around through their own willpower, perseverance, and courage to seek help. I believe this event helps to crush the stigma associated with addicts by illuminating the efficacy of treatment programmes...”

- **Mikela**

“This evening demonstrates how vital it is to have events like these since they not only celebrate people who have overcome addiction and are now clean, but they also raise awareness that addiction treatment is worthwhile and that it is completely possible to achieve a goal of remaining clean no matter how long one has been struggling for.

The Finisher Awards itself is a sign of hope for other recovering persons and the audience witnessing the incredible people who have given it their all to become clean”.

- **Sam**

“What stuck with me was one honouree’s analogy that compared to decades of addiction, her seven years of clean time was like that of a baby learning how to crawl in her new life”.

- **Mikela**

The next Finisher Awards,
our 18th, will be in January 2025.

2 years on.....



Recovery stories are often about triumph, but what's not shared a lot (except in closed, 12 step meetings) is how painful some days can be. And how painful some experiences can be. I'd like to shed some light on that, and talk about the pains of recovery - not the pains before recovery, but during.

It's been a little more than 2 years, and people outside of recovery always ask me - do you miss it?

The instinctive answer is yes. I feel it every time I walk past people having some beer, or chance on a video of someone online in America or Europe smoking weed. I feel it every time I overhear my family talking about the Hong Bao Toto draw. I feel it almost every day.

How can you not miss something that's biologically designed to make you feel good?

Sure, I do get a little in my feelings, but the difference now that I'm in recovery is that the following thought is always: I won't be able to control myself. This is accompanied by thoughts of all the harm I've caused.

And it stops me.

This is one of the biggest benefits of being in recovery and going for counselling.

I've been made aware of all the bad things that my brain chose to discount when I was using and gambling. It's human nature to focus on the good things and forget the bad. This isn't exclusive to addicts, it's just basic human nature. It's just that addicts have an extra effective way of magnifying the good parts and an extra efficient way of suppressing the bad. Addicts want it turned up to 100 all the time, and don't know when to stop.

About the good things - there's a constant battle for supremacy in my mind. It's a daily tug of war between the rational and irrational, and when there's a trigger or urge - team irrational starts with a sizable advantage. In those moments, I fortunately have a bunch of tools I can use to turn the tables.

2 years on, it doesn't feel so much like a war anymore. In active addiction and the early days of recovery, however, it sure felt like I was fighting for my life. And that's what led me to recovery - a complete surrender in trying to win the battle on my own. I walked into **WE CARE** defeated.

Now that I've shared about what I miss, it would make sense to share what I don't miss. This is just one thing about the past that my brain automatically discounts every time there's a trigger or urge. Picture this:

I'm standing at a traffic intersection along Geylang Road, phone in hand, eyes on the online casino, praying for a 20 or 21 at the blackjack table.

There are 20 minutes left in my lunch break, and if I don't win the next two hands where I'll be going all in on both hands (quadrupling my money is the only way I'll have enough), I'll face going through the rest of the week with no money to my name. Worse - I'll also have to go through a few days of extreme opioid withdrawals (think a hangover, but 100 times more agonizing).

If I win both two hands, I'll have enough to cover things just for that day. I'll quickly take my winnings to the dealer down the road and get my supply for the day, and rush back to office.

Tomorrow is another day, another battle.

Now think about going through that 7 days a week, every week, for a few years. Sure, there are days where I'm "lucky" enough to be on a winning streak, but any extra money I gain doesn't last. Winnings from gambling goes to the pills, and with the pills: The more I have, the faster they finish. There's no sense of rationing because the goal is to turn things up to 100 every day, on two fronts. I am, after all, cross-addicted to drugs and gambling.

To the layman, this seems incredible and unrealistic, but that was my life. I'd always resolve to not repeat the same mistake. To be more prudent with my money. But every month, before I could catch myself, I'd be scrambling again at the same traffic intersection. I really knew better, but I just. Could. Not. Stop.

The cycle of stress, anxiety and depression was extremely exhausting - so when I look back at those times, then the answer is "No, I don't miss it."

This article, however, isn't just about the pains or how I miss the good times. It's also about how life has become more fun, and how I now have better times. I never thought I'd say it, but here I am.

It feels like I've unlocked a new level in life, and I'm achieving things I never thought I would. I recently got a second diploma (which I completed with a 4.0 GPA) and feel like I'm just getting started. I definitely never thought of doing a second diploma, and never thought the day would come where I'd have paid off my legal moneylender and credit card debts.

Well, these two things have become reality. My reality now, is beyond my wildest dreams and it's all because I'm in recovery. I'm more present in my loved ones' lives, and I'm in an incredibly fulfilling relationship.

I could go on all day about how life has become better but I won't - if you need more convincing, just flip the page and look at the smiles throughout this newsletter.

2 of the most important things I've learnt in recovery is that life is not perfect - it'll never be, and that the world doesn't revolve around me.

Believe it or not, for how imperfect my life was in the past, I was extremely perfectionistic. It was all or nothing, and I constantly wanted it all. Accepting that life was not perfect was tough, but with this refreshed perspective, my world isn't rocked so hard anymore when things go wrong.

I've gotten to a point in recovery where acceptance comes fairly quickly, and it all comes from the strong foundation I laid here in **WE CARE**.

2 years on, I've just turned 32, grateful for the 2 things I feel I've taken way too long to learn.

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by Jat

*Jat began as a beneficiary at **WE CARE** before joining our staff. He is currently part of the Comms team.*



If not for **WE CARE**, I may be dead somewhere.

When I first arrived at **WE CARE**, I recognised Scott by the sounds emanating from the piano in the pantry. He played with so much confidence that one would have been hard done to tell that he had (and still has) anxiety disorder.

This anxiety was part of the reason why he abused substances - they helped him cope and consequently gave him the confidence to go about life.

If this isn't your first time reading a recovery story, you might notice a recurring theme: substances are often abused because of their ability to give someone Confidence and to help them Cope.

Nevermind chasing the 5 Cs in Singapore. In active addiction, 2 Cs are the ultimate goal.

Scott was born into a hostile environment unfit for any child. His father was an alcoholic, and he would abuse Scott almost daily. As a result, Scott would be walking on eggshells, hypervigilant of any signs that his father would beat him.

"I'm always in a life or death situation, even today," Scott shares, highlighting the gravity his childhood had on the rest of his life. Fortunately,

despite his incomprehensible childhood pain and the decades-long substance abuse that ensued, Scott now copes with his anxiety in healthy ways and in recovery for six years.

When his parents got a divorce and sold their house, he sought refuge at a friend's house. "Nobody cared about me, so I did what I wanted.". From the age of 13, Scott started to hang out with other kids who did drugs, and it was then that he discovered their therapeutic value.

Sometime during the ages of 13 to 35, he resolved that he would use drugs until the day he died. They made him feel normal, and numbed him enough so that he didn't feel anxious constantly.

He first went to **NAMS** in 2016 and relapsed as soon as he was discharged. Prior to this, he had cut off his using friends while "white-knuckling" substances for seven months. He didn't make any more friends, as "no normal person would have wanted to befriend him". It was also during this time that his loneliness led to the realisation that without friends, recovery was impossible and that life was meaningless.



Fast forward to 2018, when Scott entered **WE CARE** straight after discharge and realised that there was in fact, a life outside of addiction. This life, however, demanded him to confront his anxiety, live alongside it and forge new connections.

He almost didn't make it to the doors of **WE CARE**, though. It was only through the medication prescribed to him on the day of his discharge that he could overcome his anxiety and take a leap of faith into recovery.

He no longer takes antidepressants, and during his time at **WE CARE**, has made countless friends. To Scott, friends are "the most important thing."

"From 13 to 35, I didn't learn a lot of things. I was just using drugs and didn't really grow up. It was only when I came to **WE CARE** that I matured and learned to grow up. Spending time with people who were more mature than me helped me learn to be more mature. If not, I don't know where I could learn to grow up." It's clear to see how having friends had helped him greatly in his recovery journey.

Scott doesn't believe there is a one-size-fits-all cure for anxiety, and he can't seem to pinpoint exactly what has helped him cope with his anxiety. The most important thing is that he has reached the point of acceptance when it comes to his anxiety.

He now knows that nothing bad will happen to him if he steps out of his comfort zone - despite the voice in his head constantly saying otherwise.

One habit he has stuck with is playing the piano out in public, regardless of who is around him or how anxious he feels. While it forces him to step out of his comfort zone, he does it anyway because he knows it'll help.

Scott has just completed his diploma in Social Services, with a focus on senior services, and is inspired to both give back to others and continue his studies. When he first arrived at **WE CARE**, he couldn't string two English sentences together. Now, during this interview, he was really proficient.

Scott is also a gym rat, and he's resolved to train for the rest of his life. A healthier activity to resolve to do for life, if you may.

He shares, "I love the gym. I'm 41 now. It's better to start exercising and build up your muscle because at this age you start to lose muscle. I'm not afraid of death; I'm afraid to grow old and waste my quality of life. I've used for a really long time, so I'm not going to waste any more time."

As the interview was coming to an end, I asked if he had anything else to add. Yes, he exclaims.

He says to me, gratefully -
"If not for **WE CARE**, I may be dead somewhere."

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by **Mikela** and **Scott**

Mikela is currently an intern at **WE CARE**, and studies at the University of Edinburgh.
Scott is currently a beneficiary at **WE CARE** and is a regular at our Drop-In Centre.



From Pills to Peace: Yasmine's Story

Yasmine's journey through addiction is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. Like many who have been through this struggle, it is a story of struggle, introspection, and ultimately, recovery.

It all started innocently enough when Yasmine began experimenting with prescription medication at the age of 20. Initially, it was just a casual indulgence once or twice a week. However, as time passed, this occasional habit soon escalated into an addiction, involving daily use by the time she turned 24.

To sustain her addiction, Yasmine resorted to unfavourable measures, including clinic hopping and sourcing for supplies from the black market. The vicious cycle seemed unbreakable, and Yasmine found herself trapped in a downward spiral of substance abuse.

Her life took a turn when she relocated to Australia in 2014. Faced with limited access to prescription medication, Yasmine turned to marijuana (weed) as a substitute to cope with the added challenges of adjusting to a new environment. Yasmine didn't perceive her substance use as an issue, and instead found solace in the camaraderie of friends who shared similar lifestyles.

Returning to Singapore two years later, Yasmine found herself introduced to methamphetamine by fellow using friends, as weed was not readily obtainable. Justifying its use as a means to cope with irregular work hours, she convinced herself that it aided her productivity despite the obvious potent and destructive consequence of the drug.

Despite the concerns of her family and the warning signs of her deteriorating health, Yasmine remained mired in her denial, convinced that she had control over her addiction – all while continuing to engage in reckless behaviours such as not sleeping for days, and driving under the influence.

It wasn't until her arrest and incarceration in the **Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC)** in 2016 that Yasmine was forced to confront the harsh realities of her situation. Although she attended individual counselling sessions during her 6 month sentence, the absence of a structured aftercare programme left her vulnerable to relapse upon her release as she rushed to jump straight back to work.

With 4 years of abstinence from substances, Yasmine was determined to remain clean. However, the onset of the Covid pandemic proved to be a challenging time for her as with many others. Struggling with the isolation and uncertainty, she found herself once again succumbing to the lure of using prescription medications as a means to cope.

The withdrawals Yasmine experienced from prescription medications proved to be an excruciating ordeal marked by intense physical and psychological distress. Alongside grappling with the torment of withdrawal symptoms, she also faced the additional burden of weight gain. Amidst these challenges, Yasmine found herself in a tumultuous period at home and at work, burdened by mounting responsibilities and navigating through personal problems and increasing stress from work.

Despite her struggles, she hesitated to reach out for support, viewing it as a testament to her perceived weakness, thus compounding her isolation and struggles.

In 2022, Yasmine unfortunately turned back to meth in an attempt to tackle her weight issues and wean off prescription medications. This eventually led to her second arrest within months and subsequently an 8 month sentence back in DRC.

This time however, she was determined to break free from the cycle of addiction and decided to join the **Project SAFE (Support for Addicts and their Families through Empowerment)** programme at **WE CARE** upon her release.

Although she was initially sceptical about the effectiveness of counselling, and felt that it was risky for a group of recovering addicts to be together, she remained open-minded and was willing to participate in the group programmes such as the lunch time support group meeting.

“When I attended my first lunch-time support group meeting, they closed the meeting with the serenity prayer and I thought to myself is this a cult or what?”

Continuing to attend the sessions initially out of obligation to fulfil the programmes’ requirements, Yasmine aimed to quickly complete the mandatory sessions and move on.

However, amidst one of these gatherings, a sharing struck a chord within her: **“addiction is a lifelong disease with no cure.”** This simple yet profound statement sparked a shift in her perspective. As she grew acquainted with fellow members and forged meaningful connections, Yasmine found solace and support in their shared experiences. Through their stories and camaraderie, she gradually came to recognize the value of these sessions, ultimately embracing the principles encapsulated in the serenity prayer.

Unlike her previous experience, Yasmine chose not to hastily return to work following her completion of the programme. Instead, she prioritized her recovery journey, diligently attending sessions at **WE CARE** twice a week. After six months of focused effort and self-reflection, she eventually resumed her professional responsibilities.

This time around, Yasmine gained a newfound understanding: there existed a distinction between merely abstaining from substance use and actively engaging in the process of recovery. Reflecting on her past struggles, she acknowledged the absence of essential tools to navigate the complexities of recovery during her initial attempt at sobriety.

Despite having a supportive network of family and friends, Yasmine grapples with the challenge of discussing her addiction with them, fearing their apprehension and worry that she might relapse into drug use. However, finding solace in the non-judgmental environment at **WE CARE**, Yasmine discovers a safe space where she can openly express her emotions without fear of stigma or reproach.

As Yasmine approaches the milestone of 18 months in recovery, she reflects on the progress she has made while not being complacent, especially during periods like holiday seasons

Despite the temptation, she remains resolute in her commitment to sobriety, drawing strength from new healthy coping mechanisms and strategies she has learned.

With the increasing responsibilities she faces in her professional life, Yasmine acknowledges the potential triggers that may threaten her recovery. However, rather than succumbing to anxiety about the future, she embraces the mantra of taking things one day at a time – a valuable lesson gleaned from her experiences in group therapy. By focusing on the present moment and prioritizing self-care, Yasmine navigates the complexities of her journey with resilience and determination.

Today, Yasmine stands elegantly as a beacon of hope and inspiration for others struggling with addiction. While her journey has been marked by setbacks and obstacles, she remains steadfast in her commitment to recovery. With the support of **WE CARE** and her newfound community, Yasmine looks forward to a future filled with promise and possibility.

by **Simon** and **Yasmine**

Simon is currently on the **WE CARE** Comms team. **Yasmine** joined **WE CARE** as part of Project SAFE and drops in regularly at our Drop-In Centre.



Ask for help.

Singaram- Out From The Fires of Addiction

During the 1970s, Singaram grew up in a neighbourhood notorious for drug use and secret societies that promoted the consumption and abuse of drugs. Singaram himself began using drugs at the age of 14, after his friends and neighbours introduced them to him. This resulted in a continuous cycle of consumption eventually leading to an addiction.

“People normally work in the morning and sleep at night.” Singaram described his experience, “But I sleep in the morning and work at night.”. Addiction made the process of getting a job very difficult. Even after finding work in the 1980s, his company cheated him by withholding his pay. In a drug-fuelled emotional rage, he set fire to the company building, resulting in a 9-month prison sentence for arson.

During his time in prison, Singaram met several prison counsellors who attempted to help him with his addiction but were ultimately ineffective. They could not relate with Singaram in the slightest and seemed to recycle the same advice - “Don’t use”, “You’ve been like this for too long already”, and “Think of your parents”.

Those experiences left Singaram disenchanted, and with a negative perception of counsellors as a whole.

Upon release, Singaram continued to struggle. Going to work remained a major difficulty,

and Singaram’s addiction caused him to be hospitalised multiple times. Those stays led to a mountain of hospital bills, exacerbating his already dire financial situation. Even paying for food and public transportation became a problem. Deep down, Singaram knew that his current way of life was unsustainable.

Furthermore, he lived in a flat with his mother and younger brother, while his sister lived in Australia. After the death of his mother, her flat was scheduled to be sold - this left Singaram with a pressing need to find some housing, failing which he would be forced into a life on the streets.

Addiction typically involves a burning of bridges, and Singaram is no exception. He has unfortunately lost support from everyone in his family apart from his sister, who continues to keep in contact with him even till this day, despite being in another country.

Singaram, however, doesn’t place any blame on his family. He understands their reasons for losing contact and bears no resentment whatsoever.

Singaram eventually turned to Christianity and met a pastor who helped him onto the path of recovery. However, this was still not enough as the pastor could not be with him at all times of the day.



“I was scared.” Singaram said, “If I stay alone, I will relapse.”

Singaram first sought help at **WE CARE** in 2015. At first, he was wary of counsellors due to his previous experiences with the prison counsellors. He was also sceptical of programmes such as Narcotics Anonymous since he was afraid of revealing his story.

What he found instead, was the complete opposite. His counsellor didn't try to dictate his actions, but instead offered a genuine listening ear. “Her kindness motivated me to stay committed to my recovery journey.” he says gratefully.

With the help of his sponsor, counsellors and everyone he met at **WE CARE**, Singaram slowly learned that social support was crucial in order to receive the personal and effective care he needed.

Recovery fellows suggested he take two years off work to focus solely on recovery, which he duly followed. Two years later, he resumed working and continues to this day. He lives by the quote, “Two years you take from people, after two years you give.” Now, a little more than five years on, he holds a prison pass and visits prisons to share his experiences, hoping to inspire others.

Singaram emphasises the fact that recovery is not easy, especially alone. Social support is critical in recovery, and Singaram's advice to people who are struggling is to remember that help is always available.

Most importantly, he says to keep asking for help when you really need it - one will be pleasantly surprised by the number of people who are willing to help even if there is no personal gain.

The road to recovery is long and difficult, but people, whether strangers, religious figures, or family members, will always be able to offer assistance. There are people who have been through similar hardship, willing to share their experiences and ensure that the same mistakes aren't repeated.

They can motivate us to stick with the journey, but, ultimately, the decision to endure the unsteady and arduous road of recovery rests with us. Singaram ends with a line that he's heard many times in the 5 years plus that he's been clean. It's short, yet powerful - “Keep coming back”.

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By **Mikela** and **Sam**

Sam and **Mikela** are currently interning at **WE CARE**. **Sam** is studying Political Science at UCLA while **Mikela** is studying Health in Social Science at the University of Edinburgh.



Friday's Detox Experience at NAMS

Because drugs are illegal in Singapore and the government holds a zero tolerance policy on the use of drugs, when I became an addict, I became very afraid of the law. This fear affected my recovery. I thought that I would face severe punishment if I asked or looked for help with regards to my addiction.

But that could not be further from the truth. In fact, if you are struggling with addiction and are in desperate need of help, there are many ways you can get it in Singapore.

My recovery journey started in December 2022 when I found **The Greenhouse** (a recovery centre that helps women, LGBT, racial minority and those that are HIV-positive). There I was able to find a community of addicts and for the first time in my years of using, I felt heard and understood. Now, drug use is not unique to the gay community in Singapore but it is certainly a rather prevalent problem. In my interactions at The Greenhouse, I found out about **National Addictions Management Service (NAMS)**.

A few months ago, after a fateful call (that I can only describe as my Higher Power working through me), I found myself forcefully admitting myself into NAMS. I was still pretty high, and I remember making my cab driver's life hell. The air in that space was so tense I found it hard to breathe and the paranoia was just consuming me. I wish I could have just disappeared.

I walked in through the glass doors of the clinic feeling scared of everything. I cannot remember what I did, but I know I was probably acting like a damned fool. Despite that, I actually found the admission process smooth and the staff were friendly. Walking from Block 9 to Block 4 where I was to be warded, all I could think about was how much I had f****d everything up in my life up to that point.

How I was such a disappointment to everyone who loved me and why, oh why did I relapse again? There was also that phone call. All in all, all these things kept racing through my head but my body physically was so tired. As is often heard in the meeting rooms, I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. My eyes were dead but they were also welling up with tears.

Usually, when you get admitted to NAMS, you have to first complete a week of detox. I did not know what to expect. I was so restless on my first night and I could not sleep even after they gave me medication to calm me down. I was walking up and down and filling up notebooks, scribbling on newspapers...I felt like a zombie on steroids. I just could not stop moving my hands. And try as I might to rest, the thoughts of regret and remorse would shoot through my mind, like thousands and thousands of tiny hot bullets.

But by the grace of God, I was finally able to sleep and over the week things got better. I even made a few friends in detox who shared their experiences

with me. And truly, this disease knows no discrimination. No matter your background or where you come, it is all one and the same and somehow there is comfort in that, that you are not alone in this big rocking boat.

In my second week, I was fortunate enough to be moved to the rehabilitation side of NAMS. I remember the first conversation I had with a counsellor there. He had asked me a simple question, "What happened?" And then, "Do you think you're an addict?" I said no. I shared with him my war stories and how I was abused as a child and how it all led to me finding drugs. I ended by saying something like, "If the outside world is good, then internally I would be good."

I thought he would agree, feel pity for me and say that yes I was not an addict and just a victim of bad circumstances. But he said something that shocked me — he said that I WAS an addict.

To this day I remember this conversation vividly, because it taught me a very important lesson in recovery: **that no matter how bad the world gets, we need to have the strength to not let it affect us inside.**

We cannot control what happens to us, we can only control how we respond.

The NAMS rehabilitation programme, although some would say is short, is packed with the essential things an addict would need for his recovery. It felt like I was being prepared for battle. At the same time, I was being healed.

Another key lesson that is significant to me are the different types of relapses. I always thought that relapse happened only at the moment you finally take that drug again. However, there are actually stages to them: **Emotional**, **Mental** and then the **Physical** relapse. In recovery, the urge to take drugs again does not just come out of the blue, this insidious thought is at first a small black seed in your mind which slowly grows over time. It is important that you weed those small black

seeds (to arrest the thoughts) before they make you do something that you do not want to and cannot afford to do anymore.

In occupational therapy, we made keychains that I still look at and hold to this day whenever I am feeling down or just need that reminder that the world is not evil and that everything would be okay. Part of the programme was also the recovery meetings. I was no stranger to meetings, but this was the first time that I would attend so many consecutively that by the end of the day I felt so tired. But unlike my comedowns, it was a good tire. My body was exhausted but my heart was uplifted. I felt emotions that I thought were dead. I saw myself in other addicts' shares. I did not even know these people and yet, here I was crying. I felt heard and understood. Compared to the lonely tears I used to cry, I shed happy tears. I do not know how to describe it other than the fact that it was just — pure love.

After two weeks, I was discharged from NAMS feeling like a completely different person. I did not leave empty-handed: I now have counsellors who I see regularly who help me work through my underlying issues (Everyone should be in therapy!) and a support system that I am slowly building in recovery spaces like **WE CARE**. As a recovering addict, it is important for me to prioritise recovery work — such as daily lunch meetings at **WE CARE** — and being part of a community of like-minded individuals. We all need help sometimes and it is important to have people we can turn to.

If you happen to read this and you are scared of getting help, don't worry. I can confidently say that there are resources for people like us in Singapore. You are not alone.

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by **Friday**

*Friday is currently pursuing his degree in the humanities. After seeking help at NAMS and having found **WE CARE**, he has discovered a renewed sense of hope and is excited for what the future holds.*



Be a Samaritan - Suicide First Responder Training by SOS

Sometimes death feels like the easiest escape.

It's a grim thought, but it's something that has crossed the mind of many, especially in active addiction. Many of our beneficiaries use their addiction to, in their own words, "escape or numb" the pain, and suicide ideation usually occurs when the pain gets too much for them to deal with.

Over the years we've lost a few who have gotten help here to suicide, and the fact remains that one is too many. Part of the reason why we do what we do here at **WE CARE** is to show anyone who walks through our doors that no matter how much pain they're in, there is a way out. "You're not alone" are three very simple and somewhat clichéd words, but in many cases help those who are harbouring suicidal ideation.

Yes, suicide is a taboo topic. But it shouldn't be. It happens more than one might think - there were 322 suicides recorded in Singapore in 2023. While it was the lowest number reported in more than 20 years, it averages to almost 1 suicide a day that could be avoided.

Do you know how to deal with someone who wants to commit suicide? Apart from the instinctive answer of "Don't do it", that is. Through no fault of their own, many do not know what to say or do. Which is why we were really grateful when the **Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)** approached us with the idea of conducting their **Be A Samaritan (BAS)** Programme.

Run over 3 hours, the programme aims to provide lay people with the knowledge of how to save lives by offering social support and mental health resources when needed. The first half of the programme was an e-learning module, with the second being an in-person workshop conducted by SOS.

The content included definitions of suicide and accompanying terms, like psych-ache, and how to identify suicidal behaviours and warning signs among both loved ones and strangers. The course also included global and local suicide statistics, which really opened the participants' eyes to the gravity of this issue.

In total, there were almost 30 participants that comprised **WE CARE** staff, helpline volunteers and **SAFE** buddies, all of whom found the programme highly useful and engaging.

It has equipped us all with a comprehensive understanding of suicide and the tools required to save lives, and we cannot express enough how grateful we are for the opportunity.

In return, we conducted an addiction awareness talk for their staff and volunteers so that they would be better equipped if they encountered someone struggling with addiction.

It is these kinds of collaborations that we relish, where two organisations come together to share knowledge with the common goal of helping their beneficiaries better, and we look forward to future collaborations both with SOS and with other organisations!



WE CARE: **A Leading Community Hub for Addiction Recovery in Singapore**

True to our vision of being the leading community hub for addiction recovery in Singapore, **WE CARE** has always welcomed visits from fellow social service agencies, institutes of higher learning and organisations in the mental health space.

Interestingly, in recent times, **WE CARE** has seen an increase in visitors from beyond our borders, including some from as far as the United Kingdom. Naturally, we are happy to host the visit of our overseas guests.

A typical visit to our centre begins with a presentation about our services, to provide the audience with a comprehensive understanding of who we are and what we do. We also address any topics related to addiction or mental health that the group is particularly interested in.

This is followed by an interactive Q&A segment where participants usually ask a wide range of questions. Where suitable, we may also invite a recovering person to share their journey with the group.

The session culminates in a tour of our premises, which often draws comments about the centre's communal, calming and non-judgemental atmosphere – a sentiment that I, as a staff member and former client, wholeheartedly agree with.

Here are some of the more recent notable visits:

Imperial College London (United Kingdom)

With over 40 students from different faculties, the visit from Imperial College London was one of the larger overseas groups we hosted. They were a very cosmopolitan group, and because many of them were graduate students, they asked a myriad of questions ranging from clinical treatment modalities to funding resources.

Sheng Kung Hui Macau Social Services (Macau)

Renowned for its casinos and gaming establishments, Macau is a well-known tourist destination for recreational gambling. The team from Macau Social Services visited us as part of their learning journey to better support their clients struggling with problem gambling.

It was a mutually insightful engagement as both parties shared how we support individuals with gambling issues in our respective countries. It was great to see the like-mindedness and commonalities we shared despite our cultural differences. The team thoughtfully shared their informative materials, including books and brochures from their organization.



Ewha Womans University (South Korea)

A vibrant and intelligent group of young ladies from one of the top women's universities in South Korea reached out to us earlier in the year. As part of their Bachelor's in social work and economics, the students were required to conduct an overseas research study exploring overseas drug rehabilitation institutions and treatment centres.

It was refreshing to hear the students' perspectives on our approach to addiction treatment and to learn from them about South Korea's stance on substance abuse. The students shared valuable insights into their country's challenges, including the stigma surrounding drug abuse and the need for increased treatment funding.

Other Visits

Student groups from **Kansai University of Japan** and a group of highly qualified academic researchers from **Karaganda Buketov University**

in **Kazakhstan** were also among those who visited our centre. Despite the obvious language barrier, we appreciate the efforts of institutions to increase their understanding of addiction and the services and role **WE CARE** plays in recovery. Later this year, we are also expecting a visit from the **Shanghai Drug Treatment Centre**.

WE CARE's Growing Impact On Addiction Recovery

Although **WE CARE** is a relatively small charity, the increasing interest from overseas groups visiting us is a testament to the quality of our work. More significantly, it signifies a global shift in attitudes towards mental health and addiction treatment.

If your organization or community is interested in visiting **WE CARE** to learn more about addiction recovery, please contact us at: admin@wecare.org.sg.





What Our Interns Experience

Besides clinical interns, who clock their practicum hours with **WE CARE** to fulfill the requirements of their field of study, we are fortunate that other interns also want to spend time helping out at the centre.

Over the last 2 to 3 months, 4 interns have stepped through our doors. Two, Sam and Lingchen, arrive courtesy of Absolute Interns, with whom we have enjoyed a 3-year collaboration, where they match promising candidates with corporates and charities. Sam hails from UCLA and Lingchen, Butler University. Writing in on their own accord, Mikela from the University of Edinburgh and Saumyaa from the University of British Columbia, have chosen to spend their summer break to work at **WE CARE**.

Growing up in a digital age, I was immersed in media that often romanticised substance use, making it seem glamorous or even desirable. As a student in Scotland, where binge drinking is practically a rite of passage, I became accustomed to seeing substance use as a normal part of social life.

However, my time at **WE CARE** opened my eyes to a deeper, more complex reality in which youth's growing dependence on virtual modes of engagement presents an increasing challenge with online addiction as well. Despite society's growing understanding of addiction as a curable brain disorder rather than a moral failing, I noticed that the stigma surrounding addiction remains deeply ingrained in Singaporean culture.

Fortunately, events like **WE CARE**'s Finisher Awards, which celebrates the grit and determination of individuals who have overcome decades-long addiction, proves that supporting people with kindness, practical resources like recovery programmes and drop-in centres, and celebrations of their milestones in recovery, actually help people recover.

The 17th Finisher Awards ceremony I witnessed was a powerful reminder that recovery is not just possible, but something to be celebrated. The event also played a crucial role in reducing stigma by highlighting the milestones in recovery, spreading the vital message that anyone can overcome addiction with the right help and mindset.

Another highlight of my time at **WE CARE** was engaging with the beneficiaries themselves. Listening to their stories about their past as well as their hopes for the future was incredibly inspiring. Each person's journey reinforced the idea that change is always possible, and

it takes small but meaningful actions one day at a time. These conversations also deepened my understanding of addiction as a coping mechanism for various mental health challenges, including familial or relationship issues, conditions like anxiety and depression, or the pressures and demands of work.

Working on the helpline further broadened my perspective. I gained firsthand insight into the prevalence of addiction in Singapore and the essential role that a drop-in centre offering activities, social support, and affordable counselling, plays in helping those in need.

Despite extensive existing research on the biopsychosocial aspects of addiction, I was surprised by how pervasive the belief in addiction as a moral failure still is. I remember sitting in on one of **WE CARE**'s outreach awareness talks aimed at educating social workers about the signs of addiction and how to handle related situations. When asked to choose from a list of what they believed addiction to be, a significant number of people selected "a moral failure". It was shocking, but also enlightening to see how minds could be changed through education and the discussion that ensued over the 2-hour session.

By the end of it, participants seemed to have shifted their views and were asking more informed questions about addiction. This session also highlighted for me the broad scope of addiction. It's not just about substances; it's about any learned behaviour that becomes difficult to stop, whether it's gambling, gaming, watching porn, compulsive dating, or being online. In our increasingly digitised world, many more people can relate to the concept of addiction, even if they don't engage in substance use.

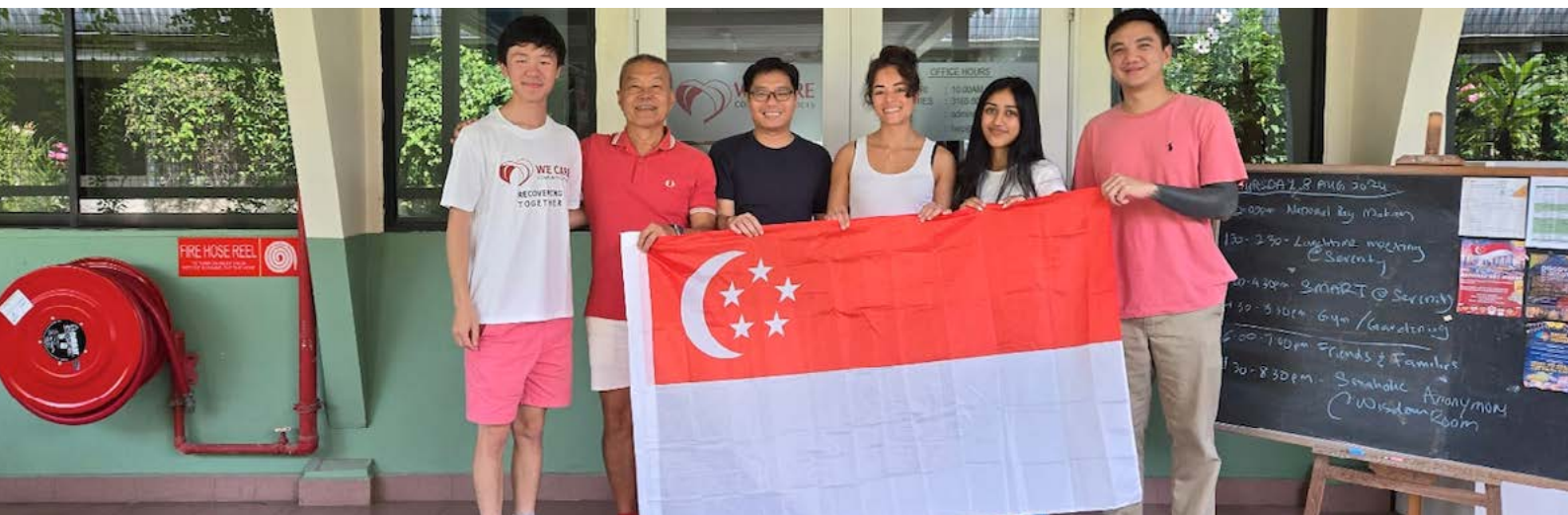
The most significant lesson I took away from my time at **WE CARE** is the critical importance of advocacy in reducing stigma around addiction and mental health. Writing stories of beneficiaries' recovery and creating educational posts for **WE CARE**'s Instagram allowed me to play a small part in educating others about the multifaceted nature of addiction and sharing tips to improve mental health.

I also had the pleasure of joining various activities at the drop-in centre, such as mindful movement, art club, and pickleball. Laughing over lunches at Thursday's cook-ins, participating in the Mandai nature walk, and attending the 17th Finisher Awards

weren't just enjoyable – they were integral to the sense of community and support that **WE CARE** fosters.

My time at **WE CARE** has taught me that addiction is a complex, multifaceted issue that requires empathy, education, and resources to tackle. The fight to reduce stigma continues, but with every story shared and every milestone celebrated, we move one step closer to a world where addiction is understood, not judged.

- **Mikela**, University of Edinburgh, who wanted to work at a place that uses a person-centric approach to care and holistically rehabilitates and empowers persons to change their lives for the long term.



Interning at **WE CARE** has definitely been an eye-opening experience for me. As a shy person who would rather listen politely to others talk, I learned a lot from the stories of the beneficiaries here. This experience not only allowed me to meet amazingly talented people but also deepened my understanding of addiction and recovery.

Interviewing people like **Enid**, **Syarif**, and **Singaram** were so enlightening as I was able to understand how they fell into the trap of addiction, how they coped, how their mindset transformed, and ultimately how important **WE CARE** is to these people.

WE CARE really is a family that was brought together by kind and like-minded people all with the goal of helping their community and others in need. The 17th Finisher Awards was a signature moment for me – seeing people who had struggled for years talk about how they were able to reclaim their lives and set new goals was extremely fulfilling.

I realize that recovery is a journey with its own set of challenges and triumphs and each small victory, whether it is achieving a milestone in the number of years clean, accepting heading to prison, or becoming a recovery guide, is a testament to the strength and determination of the individuals I had the privilege to work and talk with.

It's not only the people who I interviewed either. Many of the beneficiaries come from backgrounds marked by trauma, loss, incarceration and addiction that had often been entrenched for years. Talking to them and listening to their stories, I was honestly struck by the resilience they displayed and the courage it took for them to confront their respective challenges. They taught me the importance of self-care and seeking support from others when needed.

WE CARE was also a really fun place to work at. The banter between all of the staff was genuinely really funny and I really felt that everyone was working together as a family in support of themselves, the beneficiaries and the clients. The other interns here were also amazing people and really fun to be around. I really enjoyed working and experiencing **WE CARE** together with them. My internship really was a transformative experience as the stories of the beneficiaries and the dedication of the staff left a great impact on me, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been part of such an important and meaningful organization.

- **Sam**, UCLA, who wished to learn more about how addiction affects persons and their lives, while also gaining experience in communicating with others.

My time at **WE CARE** has been overwhelmingly positive. Before interning at **WE CARE**, my understanding of addiction, particularly the experiences of individuals in recovery, was limited. Although I had learned about addiction in an academic setting, I had never delved into how it affects people on a personal and social level. My education covered the scientific aspects of addiction but not the anthropological dimensions.

As an anthropology major, my goal at **WE CARE** was to explore the multifaceted impacts of addiction on the relationships surrounding those in recovery. Anthropology has equipped me with the tools to understand the various ways people express mental or physical distress, which I was able to apply to addiction at **WE CARE**.

During my college years, I lacked hands-on experience in exploring addiction recovery. However, given the rising prevalence of addiction globally, I became interested in how addiction is perceived and addressed in Singapore. At **WE CARE**, I observed daily interactions between staff and recovering individuals, providing me with opportunities to engage deeply and gain a nuanced understanding of addiction.

WE CARE's culture of respect, compassion, empathy, and care was particularly striking, especially in an Asian context where addiction is often stigmatized. Witnessing the genuine care and support offered to clients was heartwarming and eye-opening.

From the very first day, the **WE CARE** team welcomed me warmly and introduced me to another intern. Initially,

I was nervous about meeting new people, particularly from different cultural backgrounds. However, over time, I became comfortable and at ease. The close-knit workspace facilitated easy communication with staff and clients alike. After a month, I was joined by two new interns, and we quickly formed friendships, further enriching my experience.

Highlights of my internship included attending the 17th Finisher Awards and participating in various planned activities. Although my time at **WE CARE** was brief, I gained crucial insights into addiction through interactions with knowledgeable individuals. The work environment was relaxed, allowing interns to dress casually and collaborate comfortably in the office. Our tasks varied daily, from designing social media posts for **WE CARE**'s Instagram to assisting staff with their workloads.

Overall, my internship at **WE CARE** was a memorable and invaluable experience for me as an anthropology student. It provided me with essential insights into addiction, a topic often misunderstood. I will miss the **WE CARE** team, the recovering individuals, and my fellow interns. I am grateful that my first internship was with **WE CARE**.

- **Lingchen**, Butler University, who has a passion for service, selflessness, and a willingness to serve others, especially those in non-profit organisations, and vulnerable communities.

As a university student, studying psychology, I approached the opportunity to intern at **WE CARE** as an academic endeavour. Little did I know that through this experience, I would gain a wealth of invaluable experiences and become part of a community. Working on the **WE CARE** helpline was an integral part of my internship experience. This role placed me in direct contact with individuals seeking support, which required patience, empathy, and an understanding of the complexities surrounding addiction.

However, sometimes I encountered situations where I felt uncertain about how best to provide support or handle particularly difficult conversations. During these moments, my superiors' patience and guidance were of great help. They offered constructive feedback and practical advice on how to approach similar situations in the future. Their support helped me understand how to balance empathy with effective problem-solving. This process of learning through direct experience and mentorship enabled me to grow more confident and skilled in my role.

I also had the opportunity to attend **Singapore Care Network Connect Event** which offered a platform to meet and learn from seasoned professionals in the

field of addiction recovery. The events were not only educational but also served as a testament to the collaborative spirit within the recovery community.

Throughout my internship, I formed strong relationships with the other interns. Together, we learned from each other, and grew as a team. These connections added a personal layer to my professional journey, making the experience all the more rewarding.

The most memorable part of my internship, however, was attending the Finisher Awards, a ceremony that celebrated the achievements of individuals in recovery. Listening to the stories of those who had overcome addiction was both moving and inspiring. It brought to life the theoretical knowledge I had gained in my studies, offering a personal perspective to the concepts of addiction and recovery. The event underscored the power of community support and the significance of acknowledging and celebrating every step towards recovery.

- **Saumyaa**, University of British Columbia, who wanted to join **WE CARE** to further her knowledge in the field of addiction recovery and gain valuable experience.



They came for addiction recovery, but are staying for the connection

The people that come through our doors are connected by one common goal - **recovery**. However, once they join the community, it's not long before they find other common interests. These common interests may be considered by some individuals as past interests, from a life they lived a long time ago, but ultimately become a recurring topic of conversation that ends up strengthening ties at the centre.

When some of them rediscover these past and forgotten interests, you can almost see the light in their eyes. Suddenly, they're smiling again.

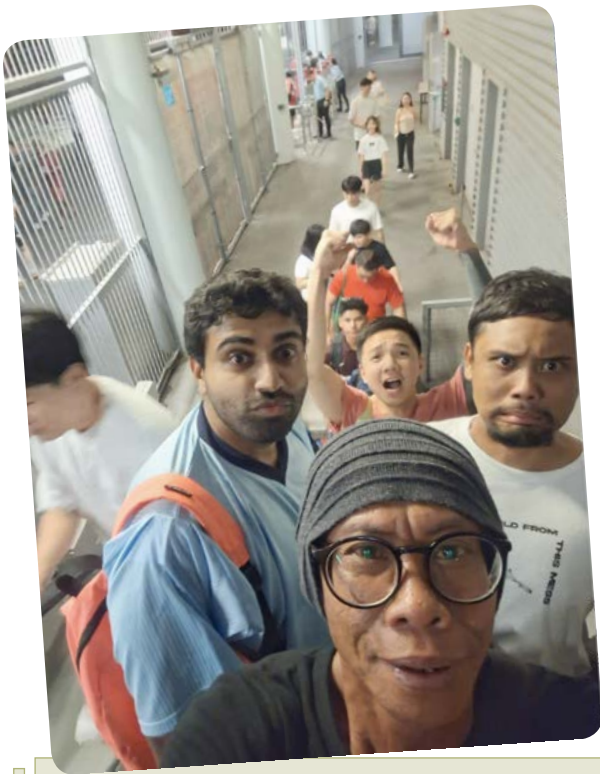
There's the compulsive gambler that used to love gardening, but gave it up because he was too worried about his gambling debts. There's also the beneficiary who was on track to become a national footballer, only to have his body give up on him - a human body is rarely able to withstand a football training regime and a drug addiction. And finally, there's the sexaholic who spent the first 20 years of his life playing the guitar, only to have his addiction make the music stop.

That's what addiction does to people in recovery: It turns one into a person who wouldn't think twice about abandoning their lifelong passions. At rock bottom, some of them are unrecognisable even to themselves. One recipient at our 17th Finisher Awards even shared that she hadn't looked at herself in the mirror in years, prior to beginning recovery.

At **WE CARE**, we encourage beneficiaries to try new things or rediscover old passions. When one's life revolves around one single activity, be it drugs, alcohol or sex, for a long period of time, it's hard to imagine a life without it.

Especially in early recovery, some are even unwilling to participate in new activities, because the fear of uncertainty and change far outweighs the pain of their current situation. Life, and their personalities, have become both unrecognisable and upside down.

It's part of the reason why we organise monthly outings to places like nature reserves or to go see



the Christmas lights along Orchard Road - to show them that there is a life worth living, outside of addiction.

This particular activity wasn't an official **WE CARE** one. It's being included in the **WE CARE** newsletter because it's the perfect example of how those in recovery build a life outside of addiction through connection and common interests.

A few of our beneficiaries just decided to go together because many of them hadn't been to a live game in years nor had they been to see the new national stadium. In fact, one of them hadn't been to a live game since the Tiger Cup in the 90s!

Below is a short excerpt of the match report written by one of our beneficiaries, Gregory:

The conundrum of a Singaporean football fan is a peculiar one; a nation with a notoriously underdeveloped sport infrastructure despite the wide appeal among its populace. A country which set forth lofty ambitions to sit among the table of the world's elite footballing giants for decades, yet sit as perilously far from that goal as she has ever been.

That being said, one would not have noticed this as nearly 50,000 spectators packed themselves in the National Stadium on the evening of 6 June to feverishly support the Lions as they faced the daunting task of upsetting South Korea. The visitors were looking to seal top spot in the qualifying group, with their starting line-up featuring stars shining among European club heavyweights, with H. Son understandably grabbing the limelight, the captain of English Club Tottenham Hotspur (and 1st Asian player ever to do so, for that matter; a colossal feat in and off itself).

The home side, to their credit, showed considerable fight, despite the clear disparity in ability. There were rare sightings at goal for the Lions, however, the Korean rearguard were ruthless in their pressure, forcing attackers into playing hopeless crosses into the box, rather than create clear openings.

*Regardless, the match was a fascinating and exhilarating watch for the attending **WE CARE** contingent. Sure, there was a tangible sense of disappointment to see our national side so comprehensively outclassed, but there was a genuine happiness and appreciation amongst the group to hold witness to such a memorable experience.*

*Ultimately, it was a poignant reminder that life can be daunting and we may face similarly insurmountable odds, but as the popular adage at **WE CARE** goes: 'Easy does it'.*

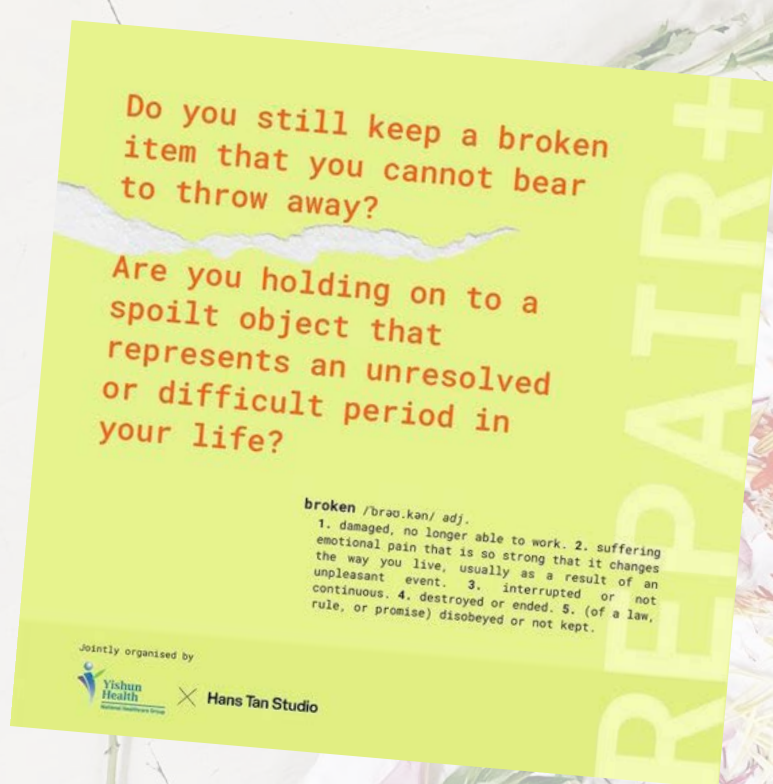
Final Score: Singapore 0 - Korea Republic 7

As you can see from the pictures, they had a great time. Recovery doesn't have to be boring. In fact, it rarely is. Many come to **WE CARE** for addiction recovery, and many also stay - for the connection.

-
by **Jat** and **Gregory**

Gregory is a beneficiary at **WE CARE** and both him and **Jat** count football as their number one passion.





This was the brochure from Yishun Health Hospital on the Repair+ initiative

Breathing New Life into Old Objects: The Repair+ Movement

It was originally conceived to create greater awareness of the art of repair. That the act of restoration can be a creative effort that adds more value and character to an object that is cherished but has fallen into disrepair. Beginning life as an exhibition at the **Singapore Design Centre** in Jan 2021, the **R for Repair** initiative aimed to get the public to rethink their relationship to objects, amidst the growing concern on global waste, and a reaction against consumerism, and the culture of disposal when something is no longer useful.

The next iteration of the exhibiton took place at **The Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum in London** and opened in Sep 2022. It involved designers from Singapore and London, and 3 objects from the original 2021 exhibition.

Interest in this initiative was piqued by the creativity of the artists, and the moving stories behind the meaning of the beloved objects that were exhibited.

This year's edition, set to take place at 42 Waterloo Street, from 26 Sept to 6 Oct as part of **Singapore Design Week**, has been rebranded as **Repair+**, and will also include a panel talk with some of the artists and object owners. Since the end of last year, **Yishun Health Hospital** has been instrumental in speaking to vulnerable communities served by social service agencies, to ask individuals to share precious objects which have seen better days.

WE CARE is proud to have submitted the wedding shoes of our Recovery Guide **Jess Ang**. This is what we wrote:

The Wedding Shoes

There is a heartwarming story behind these wedding shoes.

For Jess, getting married was a big deal.

As a person recovering from addiction, weddings held a special place in her heart. She never thought she would have one, considering the time she was spending in and out of prison. Her past struggles meant she missed out on many family occasions, including weddings and her own father's funeral.

In 2001, after getting clean, Jess was finally able to hold her own wedding. She rented a dress, wore a cute tiara, and bought what she felt were the most beautiful white shoes.

She doesn't have many things left from her wedding, even though she loves holding onto sentimental articles. Jess has an assortment of things from her big day, like thank-you cards, gifts, and paintings. But these shoes were the only things she could keep from what she wore that day, and she attaches a great significance to them. So although they have not weathered the

ravages of time well, they serve as a reminder of happy family moments and a memento of the love surrounding her on that special day.

Through thick and thin, her recovery journey, her relapses, and moving home, she has hung on to these shoes. They are constant symbols of her journey and symbolise the happiness she feels in recovery.

Just looking at these shoes always brings a smile to Jess's face, reminding her of the positive journey and changes she has been through.

Life has thrown several challenges her way, and after a few initial relapses, Jess began her true recovery journey with **WE CARE**. Fast forward 16 years, she is clean and still going strong.

And still married.

A full story on the exhibition will be shared in our December newsletter. In the meantime, we show her wedding shoes earlier this year, and a teaser of their revitalised state:

Jess has hung on to her wedding shoes for over twenty years.



This is what the designer artists from Aaah Studios who worked with Jess have come up with:



Jess slipping into her restored shoes.



Neurodivergence Talk with APSN

On 29 August 2024, our kind neighbours conducted a talk on Neurodivergence for all staff at **WE CARE**.

Paul Chin, the lead psychologist at APSN, provided an in-depth overview of **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)** and **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**.

The talk also emphasized the importance of early diagnosis and tailored interventions, addressing shared complications such as communication and behavioural issues. Additionally, effective support strategies were outlined, along with a focus on the unique communication and behavioural needs of individuals with IDD and ASD.

Neurodivergent clients have been referred to us in the past, which is why we requested this talk so that everyone would have the opportunity to learn more.

This is just one instance of the many collaborations we have had with our neighbours at Kembangan-Chai Chee Community Hub, and we look forward to more!

Sands for Singapore Charity Festival 2024

Marina Bay Sands once again hosted their annual 3-day **Sands For Singapore Charity Festival 2024** on 23 to 25 August 2024 from 5 PM to 11PM. The festival brought together people from all walks of life in the name of charity against the iconic backdrop of the Singapore skyline.

Held at the Event Plaza at Marina Bay Sands, it also included a **Giving Marketplace** that featured a wide array of items on sale from numerous charitable organizations and social enterprises.

WE CARE once again had a booth at the Giving Marketplace.

At the booth, fundraising items like customised **WE CARE** coasters, umbrellas and jute bags, as well as basil plants grown in our very own garden were available.

Both our staff and volunteers came together to spread the joy of giving over the three days - **a big thank you to everyone that came down!**



HIGHLIGHTS

Living our best life in recovery.
Enriching activities and vibrant
events from the recent past.



Be A Samaritan -
Suicide First-Responder Course by SOS



Introduction to Video Editing with Sam



Mandai Nature Walk



CN Network by CARE Network



WE CARE 17th Finisher Awards



Visit to the Indian Heritage Centre





Simple Stitches with Mikela



Community Chest Heartstrings Walk 2024



Sands for Singapore Charity Festival 2024



Embracing the Fukusa Experience



National Day Celebrations 2024

Transforming Lives. Restoring Families.

Counselling | Therapy Programme | Drop-in Centre | Recovery Support Groups | Events & Activities



We are located at:

Kembangan-Chai Chee

Community Hub

11 Jln Ubi #01-41, Block 5

Singapore 409074

Tel : 3165 8017

Fax : 6491 5338

E-mail: help@wecare.org.sg

WE CARE aims to be the leading community hub of addiction recovery in Singapore.

We treat all forms of addictions, including alcohol, drugs, pornography, sex, gaming, internet and compulsive behaviours like shoplifting.

Our core services are:

- Counselling for recovering addicts and their families
- Educational and therapy programmes
- A drop-in centre
- A hub for recovery support groups
- Community outreach

For more information on what we do, please go to: www.wecare.org.sg

Counselling sessions are private and confidential.



Help is just a phone call away

If you have a problem with addiction, or if you know someone who has issues, call us at **3165 8017** or email help@wecare.org.sg

The first step in getting better is to ask for help

About This Publication

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The views of the writers may not reflect the views of the centre

WE CARE needs your help.

WE CARE Community Services Ltd is a registered charity.

We provide treatment for all forms of addictions and our services are open to persons of all races, cultures and religion.

To fund our programmes and services, we depend mainly on donations from individuals and corporations.

Your support enables us to provide quality care to individuals and families affected by addictions and compulsive behaviours.

As we are an approved Institution of Public Character (IPC), donations to **WE CARE** are tax deductible.

To make a donation:

Write a cheque payable to **“WE CARE Community Services Limited”**. Alternatively, go online to make a donation at:

- Giving.sg/we-care-comunity-services-limited; or
- Wecare.give.asia

