

WE CARE News

Your Brain
is Lying.
Again.

The
Helper's High

The **Wrong Space**
for Yoga

The **TCM** Way
to **Wellness**

Kidney
Matters

Nutrition
in a bite

...and more!

WE CARE at ChariTrees 2026

Every contribution helps to fund counselling, group programmes, and family support for individuals on the road to recovery.

*The ChariTrees fundraising campaign will remain open until 31 December 2026.
Eligible donations received by 31 December 2026 will be matched 50% by Tote Board & the government under the Enhanced Fundraising Grant.*

♦ Ways to Give

Big Signature Tree	6m Tall, Premium Recognition	S \$150,000
Garden Landscape	Tree in Cluster of 5 with exclusive branding	S \$60,000
Art Tree	Unique, Artist-Designed, Branding on Base	S \$20,000
Traditional Tree	Elegant Festive Appeal	S \$10,000
Mini Tree	Compact & Meaningful	S \$6,000

*Donations of any amount are welcome and will help to support the important work that we do.
Should you wish to adopt a tree, please reach out to Joyce or Leslie for further details.*

Scan to find out more



Scan to donate



Donations above \$50 are eligible for 2.5x tax deduction.

If you require a tax-deductible receipt, kindly share your full name & NRIC/FIN details with us.

US

For enquiries, please contact:
Joyce Lee 9339 7741/joyce@wecare.org.sg
Leslie Goh 9154 6848/leslie@wecare.org.sg

ChariTrees

2026

Blossom of Hope

20 NOV – 26 DEC 2026



MARINA BAY WATERFRONT

Over six weeks in November until December, every tree lit along Marina Bay will carry a name and a cause. The name tells us who the donor is, and the cause, the name of the charity that they support.



What is ChariTrees?

ChariTrees is a signature annual fundraising initiative that transforms the Marina Bay Waterfront into a captivating display of Christmas trees — each representing hope, generosity, and collective impact.

Since 2011, it has grown into a meaningful platform that brings together charities, corporate partners, and the wider community in a shared commitment to uplift lives. This year, WE CARE Community joins as a beneficiary of this fundraising initiative.



21st Finisher Awards: A Celebration of Recovery, Resilience, and Reunion

On 23 July 2026, the **WE CARE** community gathered at the SingPost Auditorium for our 21st Finisher Awards. This edition proved to be particularly memorable. With more than 140 attendees, we welcomed our largest crowd yet – a number that has grown steadily over the years, a heartening testament to how our recovery community continues to expand and thrive.

We were honoured to have Mr Dinesh Vasu Dash, Minister of State for MCCY & MOM and Mayor of South East District, join us as our Guest-of-Honour. Alongside Board Director Dane Anderson, he presented awards to over 20 recipients. While there were a few recipients who were unable to join us in person, they remained very much in our hearts and thoughts throughout the evening.

A particularly special moment came with the induction of Ernie into our 10-year club. Ernie has come full circle – she started as a client and is now a Recovery Guide at **WE CARE** who guides others on the same recovery path she once walked herself.

Her family members took the time to share a few touching words, and as always, it was deeply moving to hear from the loved ones who've supported our clients' journeys.

Music has always had a way of capturing what words alone cannot, and the **WE CARE** Warblers reminded us of this once again. Performing two acapella numbers – Stand By Me and You'll Never Walk Alone – the group struck a chord that resonated deeply with everyone in the room. Both songs speak to the heart of recovery: the assurance that no one walks this path alone, and that with community and support, we can weather any storm together.

The event also brought together partners from various organisations whose collaboration continues to make our work possible. We are deeply grateful for their ongoing support, without which many of our programmes simply wouldn't exist.

Perhaps the most heartwarming sight of the evening was watching former clients – now years into their own recovery journeys – return to celebrate with us.

Old friendships were rekindled, hugs were shared freely, and smiles lit up the room. It was a powerful reminder that recovery isn't just about the destination; it's about the community you build along the way.



Here's to another year of milestones, and to the many more recovery journeys still to come.

By **Jat**

Jat is on the **WE CARE** Comms team

The Amazing Race 2026



12 teams, 12 locations and a crowd raring to complete the Amazing Race and return for lunch in air-conditioned relief.

Saturday 13th June dawned bright and sunny, in contrast to the day before, when steady rain had pummelled Singapore.

Many teams had arrived early to don their costumes (and in some cases, face paint) in a heated rivalry to secure the best dressed prizes. Bananas, prisoners, sharks and characters from the literary pilgrimage Journey to the West, sauntered by, posing for photographs with bemused well-wishers, volunteers, staff and Board members.

Like the American reality series after which our fundraiser is named, teams - with 4 to 5 members – had to complete challenges, both mental and physical, moving from one location to the next with clues that are earned after each task is accomplished. The **WE CARE** version doles out points and the team with the most marks wins. Adding spice to the contest, bonus points were dished out for 9 landmarks if teams could spot them, and demerits for errors made.

To throw in a digital spin, the whole race is conducted via WhatsApp, with game masters messaging clues and comments, and teams taking wefies and videos to prove they had completed the required challenge.

The fundraiser was supported by the Tote Board, and also Health Promotion Board (HPB) which, in an interesting move, was included as one of the challenges in the Race. Offering 3 exercises, participants chose one to complete and received a token when they finished, to add to their goodie bag which they had earlier collected when registering.

Other sponsors included Singapore Pools, whose generosity covered prizes that included FairPrice and Uniqlo vouchers, Uncle Saba's who donated their poppadoms, and Sol Pizza, who offered dining vouchers.



Asked what they thought, most participants, felt that the duration was just right. Joseph said that “2 hours are comfortable for everyone, young and old.” First-time participant Zubir chimed in with “The activities were good, just a bit taxing LOL.” Several echoed what Ahmad felt: that “the area was relatively less crowded during the weekend, making it easier to move around.” Board director Tina, who has participated in several Races (and fielded one of the winning teams), found that the “addiction- and recovery- related tasks were meaningful.”

Board member Francis Cheang congratulated the teams, gave out prizes and reminded them that “every step you took today made a real difference. The funds raised here will go directly towards **WE CARE**’s work — ensuring that individuals and families affected by addiction continue to have access to the treatment, support, and hope they deserve.”

Our thanks to all our donors, organisers Team Axis, caterer Tung Lok, volunteer photographers, and everyone who helped to make the event unforgettable.

By **Leslie Goh** and **Joyce Lee**

Here are the winning teams:

BEST TEAMS

1st – The Synapxians

Andreas Chua
Mike Chan
Natasha Low
Thomas Tan
Yong Wen Shiuan

2nd – Wecarebears

Roy Yeng
Andy Quek
Willy Beh
Rahul

3rd – Not Everything is Black and White

Tina Doran
Charlotte Murray
Shree Sarkar
Suzie O’ Carroll
Vanessa Koh

BEST DRESSED TEAMS

1st – Amazing Grace

Zubir
Benjamin
Daren
Ivan
Seth

2nd – Sharkananas

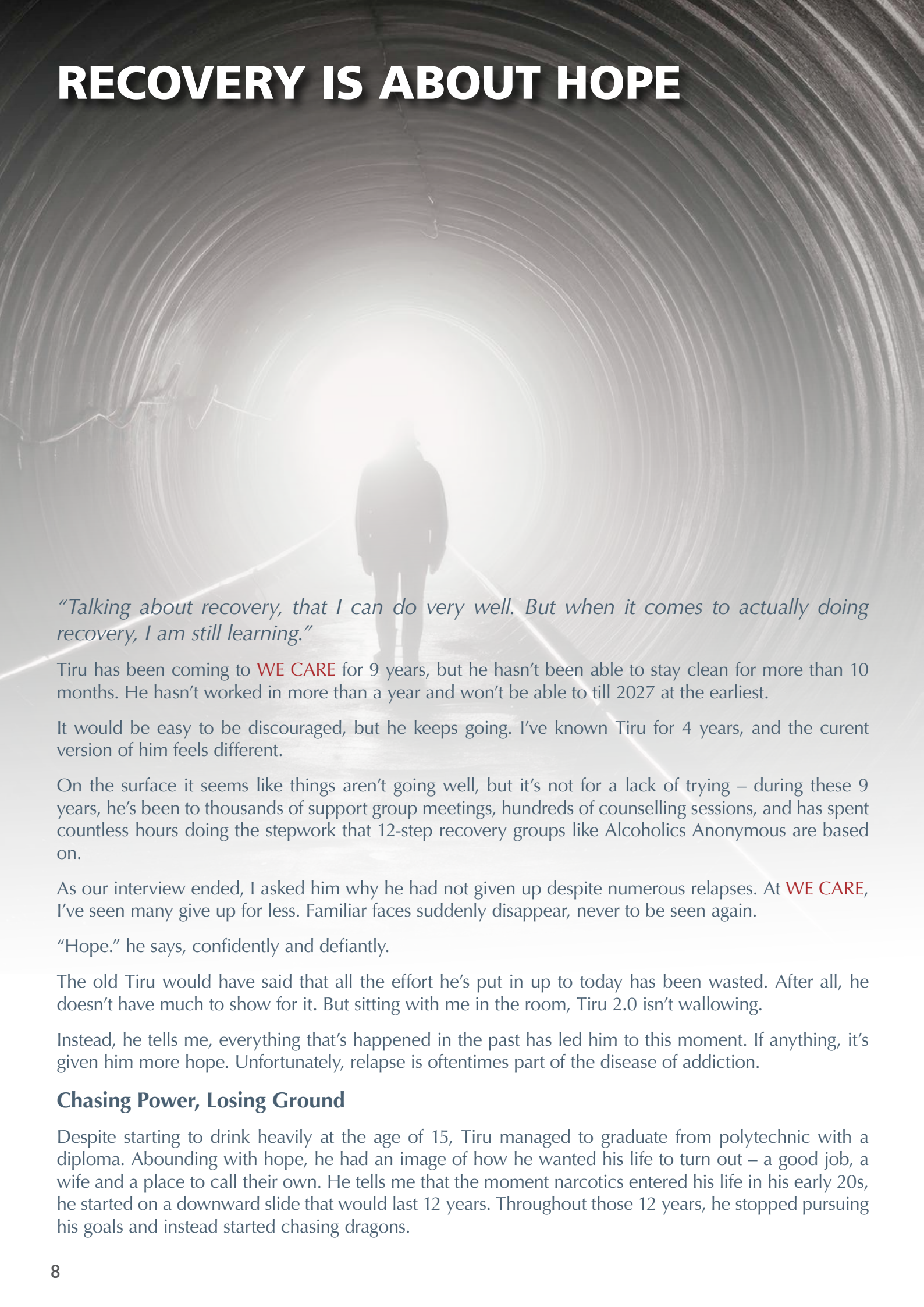
Ahmad
Joseph Wong
JY
Nazri
Salmon

3rd – Blazing Conviction

Benson
Ke Jun
Michael
Emrys



RECOVERY IS ABOUT HOPE



“Talking about recovery, that I can do very well. But when it comes to actually doing recovery, I am still learning.”

Tiru has been coming to **WE CARE** for 9 years, but he hasn’t been able to stay clean for more than 10 months. He hasn’t worked in more than a year and won’t be able to till 2027 at the earliest.

It would be easy to be discouraged, but he keeps going. I’ve known Tiru for 4 years, and the current version of him feels different.

On the surface it seems like things aren’t going well, but it’s not for a lack of trying – during these 9 years, he’s been to thousands of support group meetings, hundreds of counselling sessions, and has spent countless hours doing the stepwork that 12-step recovery groups like Alcoholics Anonymous are based on.

As our interview ended, I asked him why he had not given up despite numerous relapses. At **WE CARE**, I’ve seen many give up for less. Familiar faces suddenly disappear, never to be seen again.

“Hope,” he says, confidently and defiantly.

The old Tiru would have said that all the effort he’s put in up to today has been wasted. After all, he doesn’t have much to show for it. But sitting with me in the room, Tiru 2.0 isn’t wallowing.

Instead, he tells me, everything that’s happened in the past has led him to this moment. If anything, it’s given him more hope. Unfortunately, relapse is oftentimes part of the disease of addiction.

Chasing Power, Losing Ground

Despite starting to drink heavily at the age of 15, Tiru managed to graduate from polytechnic with a diploma. Abounding with hope, he had an image of how he wanted his life to turn out – a good job, a wife and a place to call their own. He tells me that the moment narcotics entered his life in his early 20s, he started on a downward slide that would last 12 years. Throughout those 12 years, he stopped pursuing his goals and instead started chasing dragons.

He channeled the frustration and rage of a dysfunctional household into unlawful activities. You name it, he's probably done it. And throughout, he strove for the kind of status and power that typically comes with a few stints in jail. As twisted as it sounds, serving a long prison sentence added to the allure of wielding that status and power.

Yes, the 12 years provided him with many highs – some of which he explained as fireworks in his head – but throughout those years there was an undercurrent of hopelessness. He had no dreams; no aspiration towards anything. He found himself cushioning a dead end with substance and money, convincing himself that there was no better place to be.

Inevitably, the constant game of cat and mouse wore Tiru out. He had (somewhat) attained the status and power he had set out for at 15, only to find that it wasn't all it was made out to be. The frustration and rage that he had tried to bury were still there. Many addicts think suppressing pain and trauma will work, but that relief is usually temporary.

Sooner or later, the demons creep back up and remind you that unless you let them out, they are happy consuming you inside.

The First Step Back

I've known Tiru ever since I got into recovery, and it's apparent to me that the major inflection points

in his recovery journey were inspired by those around him.

The first inflection point – and ultimately the start of his recovery journey – was in 2017 when he dragged himself to the detox ward of the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS).

He only found the motivation to make the journey to Buangkok after seeing a close friend do the same. It worked for him, so Tiru felt that it might too for him.

And it was in the cold, quiet wards of NAMS, amidst the intense heroin and alcohol withdrawals that hope reintroduced itself in the form of NA, AA and **WE CARE**'s outreach efforts. Tiru knew that upon discharge he could not go back to living in isolation and decided to give **WE CARE** a try.

Recovery requires a person to open up – to their counsellors, at support group meetings, and ultimately to themselves. The idea is that addiction is just a symptom, and that it is fueled by things lying beneath the surface. Only by processing the issues that lie beneath the surface can real recovery happen.

This was a real stumbling block for Tiru, because he had spent more than 20 years living a life where vulnerability and showing feelings were forbidden. In that life, vulnerability was seen as a sign of weakness.



Tiru joining an activity in the drop-in centre in 2021



With the help of his first counsellor, he found his footing in recovery. Slowly, as he experienced unconditional love for the first time, the walls that he worked so hard to put up came down. He also met more people who were further along in recovery. Hope gradually returned, and Tiru finally got a taste of the life he truly wanted. As they say, the seed of recovery had been planted.

That did not stop the relapses from happening, but Tiru kept coming back.

Finding Courage To Go On

He told me of another major inflection point, when he mustered the courage to face and work on his childhood trauma with his second **WE CARE** counsellor. This grit emerged when he saw the positive changes in another fellow beneficiary. Another inflection point inspired by someone around him.

Working with his new counsellor and doing step work with a sponsor forced Tiru to confront the very reason why he started using drugs in the first place. Going deep into his psyche was extremely tough and painful, but was also when he made the most progress. Together with tirelessly attending support group meetings located around Singapore, he chipped away at his walls.

There is a misconception that once you get into recovery, everything starts to be rosy. This, however, cannot be further from the truth. The triggers and urges remain, and life continues to throw curve balls.

The biggest one came in the form of a foot infection, which he got during his longest stint of

sobriety. The infection forced him to stop working – something he was deriving a great deal of esteem from – and was so bad that he had to start using crutches.

Self-pity eventually got the best of him, and he relapsed again. For about a year, he would periodically limp into the centre, and disappear again for a few weeks. Only early this year did the crutches finally come off – the infection is gone, but a deformity resulting from improper healing means that he has one more operation to get through.

Better Than Yesterday

Tiru's story is the perfect example that recovery for each person looks different and is never linear.

It's also a reminder that when it comes to recovery, quantifying success is tough. The number of years someone has been able to stay clean is the primary marker of success, but there is so much more.

It is about internal changes – behaviour and perspective. For Tiru, recovery is not a straight line to be measured in milestones alone, but a long return to self. His journey is a lesson for us all, that no matter how many times you fail, the most important thing is that you get back up.

The undercurrent of hopelessness has washed away, and it's been replaced by a quiet sense of hope. And that's what drives him to keep coming back.

—

*By **Jat** and **Tiru***

***Jat** is on the **WE CARE** Comms team*

我仍然相信自己值得被爱

I Believe I Deserve to be Loved

很多人以为，吸毒的人只是贪玩、堕落，或者意志力不够坚定。但是如果你愿意花一点时间听完我的故事，你会发现事情远比表面复杂。

我的故事里有孤独、有失落、有渴望，也有一次又一次跌倒后重新站起来的勇气。

今天的我，仍然走在康复的路上。虽然这条路并不轻松，但我终于学会诚实面对自己，也开始相信自己值得拥有更好的未来。

我用了十多年的冰毒

我第一次接触冰毒，是在工作环境里。当时身边不少人都在使用冰毒。刚开始，我并没有意识到后果会有多严重，只觉得大家都在用，好像是一件再平常不过的事。没有人告诉我，这个选择会慢慢改变我的人生。

最初，冰毒让我感觉自己更有精神、更有自信，也让我暂时忘记生活中的压力和烦恼。

工作压力、情绪低落、孤独感，似乎都能在药效出现的时候暂时消失。但后来我才明白，问题从来没有消失。

毒品只是把痛苦暂时藏起来，而那些没有被解决的问题，最终都会回来。

十多年里，我的人生不断在希望与绝望之间拉扯。我以为自己是在追求快乐，实际上却是在不断逃避内心深处的空洞。

我一直很想被看见的童年

谈到童年，我花了很长时间才有勇气面对。也很少与任何人提起过我的童年经历。

我并不想把所有问题都归咎于家庭，因为人生最终还是要为自己的选择负责。

但我也必须承认，成长经历确实深深影响了我。小时候，我一直渴望被肯定。

我努力读书、努力工作、努力做好别人期待的事情，只为了得到一句简单的认可。

一句“你做得很好”。又或者一句“我为你感到骄傲”。

然而，那份期待似乎一直没有真正被满足。慢慢地，我开始把自己的价值建立在别人对我的评价上。

我变得过度迎合别人，害怕冲突，害怕拒绝，也害怕让人失望。很多时候，我做一件事并不是因为自己喜欢，而是希望得到别人的认可。

久而久之，我越来越看不见真正的自己。把自己变成讨好型人格。

长大后的孤独，比想象中更深。很多人以为长大以后，人生自然会变好，但对我来说并不是这样。

进入社会后，我每天忙着工作，身边也有朋友，但内心却越来越空虚。表面上很热闹，实际上很孤单。

我不知道自己真正想要什么，也不知道自己为什么而活。

而冰毒，正是在那个时候成为了我的出口。它让我短暂忘记痛苦，也让我感觉自己终于被接纳。

那种感觉很好，但代价也越来越大。

COVID-19期间的人生低谷

疫情期间，很多人的生活都受到影响，我也不例外。

长期使用冰毒，让我的身心状态迅速恶化。最终，我进入了我人生第一次戒毒所，接受强制戒毒。

对很多人来说，戒毒所象征失败。但是对我来说，那是人生第一次被迫停下来面对自己。

没有毒品，没有逃避，只有真实的自己。还有那些长期被压抑的情绪。

我戒毒五个月后

最近我经常梦见到我正在吸毒，梦到我在寻找毒品，梦到以前一起吸毒的人，甚至我可以感觉到注射毒品，最夸张的是我甚至感觉到可以闻到毒品的味道。

那些梦里的快感很真实，醒来以后会需要一点时间来分清是真是假。当我分清这只是个梦的时候，我很庆幸的同时带有一点难受。

我庆幸的是这只是个梦，我难受的是发梦的次数越来越频密。我怕会被这不是真实的梦导致我会开始合理化。

我开始在网上找相关的资料，在我找到的资料里面说到这是非常正常的现象，而且通常不是复发的征兆，反而是常见的戒毒恢复期。

从科学角度来看，这种现象叫做药物梦 (DRUG DREAMS) 或使用梦 (USING DREAMS)，当我看到这是正常现象以后轻松了不少。

最后，我最怕的是醒来以后开始联系以前一起用毒品的朋友，我怕醒来以后有强烈想要寻找毒品。

如果我怕的事情即将发生，我只能做的是尽快联系我的辅导员，支持小组或者家人来给予我帮助。

我第一次认真思考

离开戒毒所后，我维持了数年的戒瘾生活。我曾经以为自己已经完全康复。

但五年后，我再次复吸。那次经历让我非常失望。我一直问自己，我到底在逃避什么？

我不断责怪自己，觉得所有努力都白费了。后来我才明白，康复从来不是一条直线。

跌倒并不代表失败，真正重要的是跌倒以后是否愿意再次站起来。

回头看，那段时期我承受着巨大的压力。

长期累积的情绪、家庭关系中的冲突，以及内心深处没有处理好的伤痛，让我再次失去了平衡。

我终于明白，单纯停止吸毒并不等于真正康复。

WE CARE改变了我的人生

第二次离开戒毒所后，我遇见了人生的重要转折点——WE CARE。

在那里，我第一次感受到真正的接纳。没有批判，没有标签，只有理解与陪伴。

在辅导员的帮助下，我开始重新认识自己，我逐渐明白，成瘾从来不只是毒品的问题，真正需要面对的，是毒瘾背后那些更深层的东西。

孤独感、自我价值低落、被拒绝的恐惧、长期压抑的情绪，以及过去留下的伤痕。这些问题如果没有处理，即使停止吸毒，也可能再次复发。

而真正的康复，是学习与这些伤痛和平共处。

学习接受自己

过去很长一段时间，我都活在别人的期待里。我害怕真实的自己不被接受，害怕不够好，害怕不值得被爱。

但随着康复的深入，我开始学习接纳自己。我也遇见了一位始终支持我的伴侣，在最低潮的时候，他没有离开。在我怀疑自己的时候，他依然相信我。

除此之外，我的家人也给予我许多支持，这些关系让我明白，其实一直有人关心我。只是过去的我，看不见。

康复是一辈子的功课

这些年，我学到几件非常重要的事情：

第一，学会面对情绪。

很多复吸不是因为想吸毒，而是不知道如何面对压力、愤怒、孤独和焦虑。

第二，建立支持系统。

没有人能够完全依靠意志力独自康复。家人、伴侣、朋友、辅导员和支持团体都很重要。

第三，远离高风险环境。

康复初期尤其需要避免接触过去的吸毒圈子。

第四，保持规律生活。

睡眠、运动和健康饮食看似简单，却是康复的重要基础。

第五，重视复发警讯。

当情绪持续低落、失眠、想隔离自己或开始合理化吸毒行为时，都应该尽快寻求帮助。

我仍然在路上

如果现在可以对年轻时的自己说一句话，我会说：

“你不需要透过讨好别人来证明自己的价值，也不需要依靠毒品逃避痛苦。你本来就值得被爱。”

今天的我，并不认为自己已经完全成功，因为康复从来不是终点。

它是一种每天都要做出的选择。但和过去不同的是，现在的我愿意面对自己，愿意接受帮助，也愿意相信未来。

我的故事不是一个完美的结局。它只是一个真实的见证。一个关于跌倒、挣扎、成长，以及重新站起来的故事。

如果你此刻也正在黑暗中挣扎，我想告诉你：

改变不一定从成功开始。

很多时候，它只是从愿意求助开始。

而希望，永远不会太迟。

By把遮仔, The Boy Who Carries An Umbrella

This pen name belongs to a beneficiary who is more comfortable writing in Chinese. It refers to a time in their childhood when they carried an umbrella everywhere they went.

Due to space constraints, the English translation will appear in our next issue.



One of the Longest-Serving Volunteers

"I thought I wasn't suited for it."

This was Ezra Phang's initial reaction when he was first asked to volunteer at **WE CARE**. He genuinely believed he was bad with people. A former lawyer, he describes his past self as an "contrarian" — someone who preferred working alone, didn't like group affiliations and actively avoided being tied down to any single organisation. For a long time, he preferred being on the outside.

Yet today, Ezra, or Yen as most of us know him, is one of **WE CARE**'s longest-serving volunteers, amongst all regular volunteers, marking four years of involvement in the centre's art initiatives.

In person, Ezra speaks with the sharp self-awareness of someone who has reinvented himself. Transitioning from law to art, painting became his second vocation. But during the pandemic, a quiet crisis of purpose hit him. He found himself questioning the ultimate meaning of his craft. "I felt like I was just painting pretty shit," he reflects candidly. He was also inspired by who he saw serving the community, people like medical professionals, Covid volunteers, those stocking shelves or working in construction.

Volunteering, as it turned out, became the anchor that gave his art — and his life — a different kind of purpose.

But the true turning point happened by accident.

Walking past the art room one day, Ezra was struck by the sound of abundant laughter and a vibrant, infectious energy radiating from the space. Intrigued, he looked inside and noticed something beautiful: there were people seated at the table, and he literally could not tell who were the staff and who were the beneficiaries. Everyone was just human, creating together.

That atmosphere drew him in. He became the third art volunteer in a lineage that began with Barry, the first volunteer art teacher, and Annelaure, an art therapist who has since moved back to Switzerland. Looking at the setup, Ezra notes with appreciation how well-resourced the centre is, providing the physical and emotional space needed for real expression to take place.

He recalls one art session where there was a mix of students. Leveraging their experience, those who had gone through some sessions stepped up to co-lead the activities for new participants.



Watching his craft being passed down in real time brought him a profound sense of joy. In that moment, he realized this beautiful cycle of mentorship is exactly what volunteering is all about.

In his own words, Ezra notes that, “There is no such thing as a mistake.” He says that one should keep all first drafts because it is not about being perfect but about progress. It is not about finding the correct medium or to tackle any one subject matter per se, but to see how things would react to each other.

There is no one right way of doing things, and that is how it is. It is a journey of self-discovery.

His biggest takeaway, is watching the story of an individual person unfold, and bearing witness to their transformation through art. He prides himself in creating a safe space where individuals can slowly find their voice. He came to realize that you don’t have to be a traditional “people person” to make a difference; you just have to be willing to sit in the room, share the energy, and help others find their own canvas.

By Arthur Albuero

*Arthur is pursuing a degree in Linguistics at NTU, and is interning with **WE CARE** during the break before his final year. In his spare time, he likes to speculate about alternative futures and other lives. He has also discovered a passion for working in social service agencies.*



*Ezra’s painting in the **WE CARE** reception*

Helper's High



Most people who volunteer for **WE CARE** and other agencies working with people in need, do so because they hope, in some small way to make a difference to the lives of others – perhaps by offering an empathetic and non-judgmental welcome to anyone needing support. That certainly was my hope when I joined **WE CARE** last year. I had recently retired and did not want to sit at home and spend my time thinking back on what I had given up. I wanted some new, meaningful things to do.

After 6 months as part of the Helpline Volunteer team, I think I underestimated how much I would benefit from the experience. There is something called ‘Helper’s High’ that I have discovered firsthand. It is the sense of wellbeing that people get from doing something without obligation that helps someone else. We experience it in different ways – sometimes as a feeling of warmth in the chest, almost like the emotional equivalent of stepping into sunlight after being indoors all day. Sometimes there’s a little rush right in the moment of helping — your heart rate ticks up, as you feel more alert, almost energized — and then settle back to something calmer, a steady warmth.

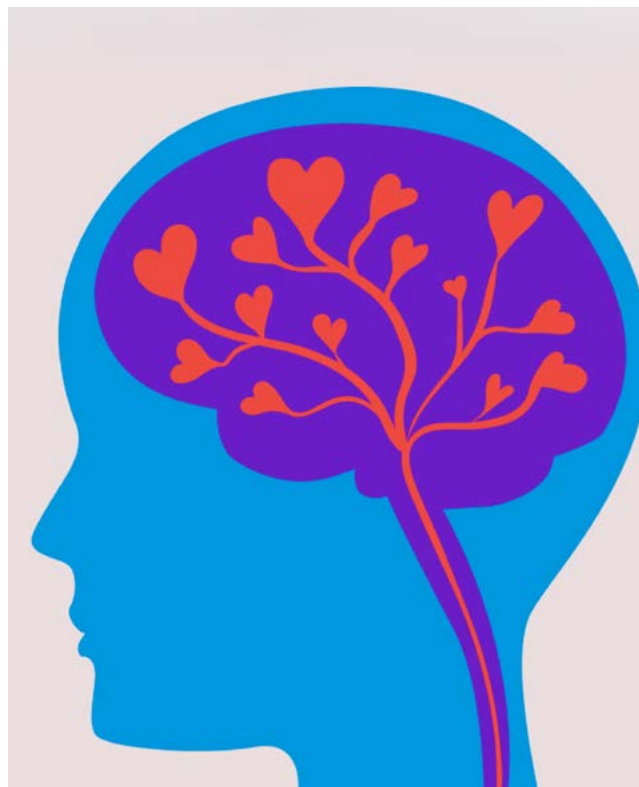
When I read more about Helper’s High more generally, I learnt that it doesn’t really matter how big the act of help is. Giving someone directions, picking up something they dropped, listening to a friend vent for twenty minutes — these small, almost forgettable acts of kindness seem to trigger the same kind of glow as bigger, more dramatic gestures. It’s less about the size of the deed and more about the genuine intention behind it. People who help because they feel obligated to, or because they’re trying to look good, tend to report feeling much less of this effect than people who help simply because they wanted to.

There's also a social, connective quality to it — strangers feel a little less like strangers, the world feels slightly less indifferent, and there's a quiet reassurance in realizing you're capable of making someone else's day even a little better. And unlike a lot of other feel-good experiences, it doesn't seem to fade with repetition the way, say, the thrill of buying something new wears off. Apparently, people who volunteer or help others regularly often say the warmth doesn't really get old — it just becomes a steady, dependable part of how they feel about their week or their life in general, rather than something that needs to be chased or escalated to keep working.

I guess it's a similar satisfaction that our SAFE (Support for Addicts and Families through Empowerment) buddies feel when they help others who are still on their recovery journey.

I look forward to more of it!

*Ian has been volunteering with the **WE CARE** Helpline since retiring from work in 2025. Alongside his volunteer work, he is pursuing further studies in psychotherapy and counselling.*



What Ian describes as helper's high is literally a chemical rush of euphoria followed by tranquility which is experienced after a person volunteers or performs acts of kindness. Coined by researcher Allan Luks in his 1991 book, *The Healing Power of Doing Good*, the term describes a phenomenon where selfless service enhances physical well-being and reduces stress.

When you support others, your brain engages its mesolimbic system — the same reward center activated by food, money, or recreational drugs. This process triggers a cocktail of “feel-good” chemicals, what we know as endorphins, that serve as the body's natural painkillers, producing a mild, natural wave of euphoria.

At the same time dopamine spikes to reinforce the behaviour, and leaves you with feelings of satisfaction and a “warm glow”. To round off the effect, oxytocin, the affiliation hormone, is released into and widens blood vessels to lower blood pressure, to limit inflammation, and to calm fear or anxiety.

There is now a vast body of research, including studies highlighted by the Harvard Medicine Magazine and the Greater Good Science Center, that demonstrates that altruism yields tangible benefits, such as reduced stress, stronger immunity and higher longevity.



Counselling – Solo or Group

When you step into recovery, the landscape can feel overwhelming. There are acronyms to learn, new faces to acknowledge, all with the heft of responsibility of finally coming into spaces that would help you release your old habits and get better. You hear about 12-Step programs, SMART Recovery, individual counselling, and group meetings. Personally, when I was first starting out I didn't really know where I fit. I just lowered my head and went where my peers went.

What I've learned through my own lived experience though is that recovery doesn't happen in just one way. Different spaces serve different parts of our healing.

For me, individual counselling was where the deeper work happened. In truth, having spent some time studying mental health conditions and immersing myself in literature about neurodivergent experiences, I thought that I was better than my counsellor and every session felt like a revision of what I had known. The funny thing about it is that often those who think that they know more are those who have the most to learn. I cannot say I was not scared and that I hid

from my own issues by stacking the knowledge I had. This led to a lot of denial about the state of things in my life and rejection of advice from my counsellors. I only ever took advice if it inspired me and that also led to me missing a lot of things, turning a blind eye to the actual areas of my life that I needed to work on. But that's the funny thing right, at least for me, I think we can really only listen to things that we already know about or have already started accepting.

It is also an intimate space where I could open up. Because it is personalised, there is room to stretch out your thoughts. You can pull apart the details of your personal history, explore specific triggers, and look at the underlying issues that you might not be ready to say out loud to a room full of people. Especially if sharing those issues might bring more perceived harm than good. It is a space where you can go in-depth, peeling back the layers at your own pace.

But as valuable as that one-on-one time is, individual counselling can sometimes feel solitary. That is where group settings can turn things around.

Whether it is a structured group session, a 12-Step spiritual program, or a SMART Recovery meeting focused on coping with urges and managing emotions, the dynamics shift. In a group, you are no longer alone with your thoughts. You sit in a circle and hear other people talk about their struggles in their own words. And there is a profound relief in that. It lifts the isolation.

Group meetings also offer something a single counsellor cannot: a tapestry of different perspectives. If you have been hitting a wall with a certain strategy in your recovery, someone else in the room might share a completely different method that worked for them. It opens up your point of view. This shared space is especially vital when dealing with heavy emotions or difficult circumstances. When you carry a heavy weight by yourself, it crushes you. In a group, that weight is distributed. You realize that others are willing to help hold it with you.

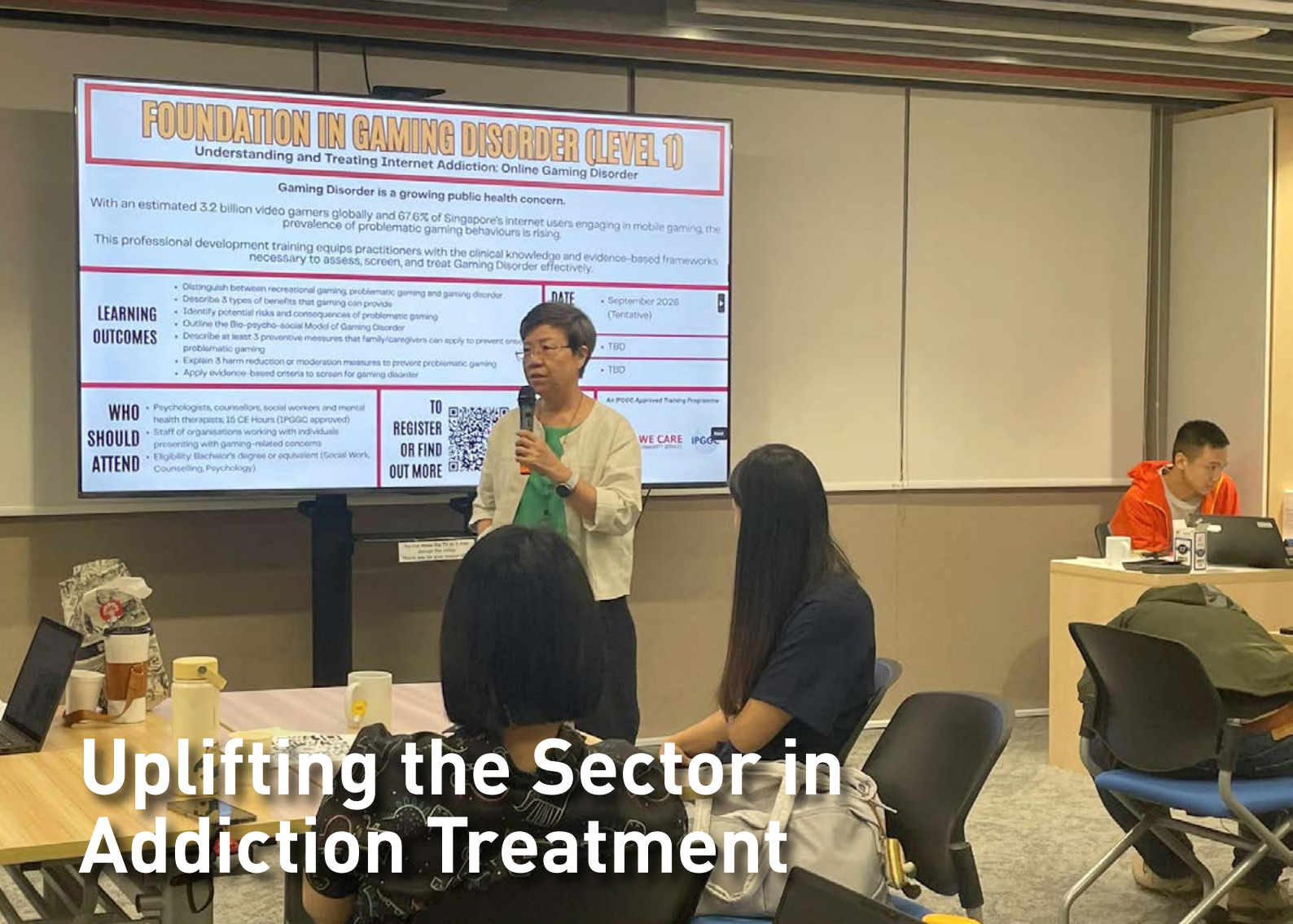
Recovery is never a competition. We all move at our own pace. Yet, seeing others navigate the same challenges can be quietly inspiring. When you see someone reach 30 days, or six months, or a year of sobriety, it changes what you think is possible. It isn't about comparing yourself to them; it is the realisation that If they can do it, then maybe I can too.

Ultimately, individual and group recovery are not opposing choices. They work together. One gives you the privacy to understand yourself, while the other gives you the community to sustain that understanding. They are both anchors, helping us take the next step, and the next, and the next.

By **Friday**

Friday has taken the first step in getting psychotherapy treatment for their addiction.





Uplifting the Sector in Addiction Treatment

Reflecting the **CARE** in our name (Centre for Addiction Recovery and Education), a cornerstone of our core mission is to elevate professionalism and strengthen expertise in addiction treatment within Singapore.

Addiction is a complex mental health condition that manifests in many forms. Yet despite their prevalence, addictions and compulsive behaviours remain heavily stigmatised and widely misunderstood.

This year, the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) placed a spotlight on behavioural addictions - compulsive behaviours such as excessive gaming and device use, problematic pornography use, and gambling, among others.

To support this initiative, NCSS and **WE CARE** jointly organised an exclusive full-day workshop led by Dr Stephanie Diez, Professor of Social Work at PennWest University and a leading authority on gaming disorders, gambling and problematic internet use.

The workshop brought together social workers, clinicians, counsellors and educators from across the social service sector. Beyond sharing the latest research and insights into the evolving gaming and gambling landscape, the interactive discussion sessions sparked meaningful conversations around real-world case scenarios faced by practitioners.

An especially interesting observation emerged during these discussions. As some participants were avid gamers themselves, they shared about the games they actively played. It quickly became apparent that gambling-related mechanics, such as loot boxes and gacha systems, are prevalent across many different game genres, highlighting how these features have become increasingly embedded within modern gaming.

This collaboration marked a significant milestone for **WE CARE** and reflects the growing recognition of our expertise within the addiction treatment sector. With plans already underway to further develop our partnership with Dr Stephanie Diez, we look forward to continuing to equip community partners with the knowledge and skills needed to address this emerging area of need.

Building on this momentum, **WE CARE** subsequently conducted a three-day workshop on the Foundations of Addiction Counselling Practice for more than 20 social service professionals in May. Jointly organised by NCSS, the programme aims to strengthen addiction treatment capabilities across the sector and equip organisations to better support individuals experiencing addiction.

Following its successful inaugural run, the workshop returned for a second intake in June, with two additional runs planned for the third and fourth quarters of the year. Held at the Social Service Institute (SSI), one of the programme's highlights was the role-play component, where persons with lived experience portrayed clients seeking counselling help. This provided participants with a realistic therapeutic setting in which to practise their counselling skills.

One participant shared that the experience was especially meaningful because meeting someone in recovery “puts a face to the addiction”, making it far more impactful than learning solely through written case studies.

These initiatives represent just some of the many ways NCSS and **WE CARE** are working together to strengthen addiction treatment competencies across Singapore's social service sector.

To follow through on these training sessions, **WE CARE** will be providing supervision and consultancy to clinicians who are beginning to work with clients presenting with addiction-related issues.

To stay updated on upcoming workshops, training opportunities and other addiction-related initiatives, follow us on our social media channels at @wecarespore. You may also find out more by writing to admin@wecare.org.sg.

—

By **Simon**

Simon is part of the **WE CARE** Comms team.





The Wrong Space for Yoga

In a bare meeting room at an addiction recovery centre, the absence of a modern yoga studio atmosphere made something else visible: the practice itself.

I taught a yoga class last Friday at an addiction recovery centre, in a conference room inside a community hub.

The room was minimalist by default, not design. Thin polyester mats, meek, malnourished pillows, an armory of folded tables and chairs pushed against one wall, and a single wrinkled lamp standing in the corner. There were no mirrors, no candles, none of the things the spaces I usually teach in would consider the bare minimum.

By every measure of a modern yoga studio, this room was all wrong.

I have worked with people in recovery before, but always one at a time, never as a group, and I went in that afternoon not really knowing what I was walking into. If I'm being honest, I still don't know much. I couldn't tell you what got them there, what they were recovering from, or what they had done before they arrived. By the end of the 90 minutes, however, I had stopped trying to work it out, because it had stopped seeming like the point.

They were people on mats, and we were going to do some yoga.

I kept it simple. We began seated, taking long breaths to steady the body, a few quiet minutes to let the mind settle.

Then gentle work for the neck, then the spine, moving in every direction it knows — folding, extending, twisting. I explained we were doing Yin today, and what that meant, the long holds, the stillness that's harder than it looks, and we moved into butterfly and a seated fold, resting back to the mat between each shape. Cat-cow. Child's pose. Lizard, then pigeon. Then a long savasana, close to 10 minutes, and several of them fell asleep.

It was during savasana that I felt something stir inside me. The participants were still, some of them already asleep, and I felt the weight of something settle over the room — not their stories, which I didn't know about, but something underneath the stories that didn't need telling to be felt.

It took me back to the last morning of my Men's Retreat last year.

I had gone to the studio earlier than usual, to meditate, and I couldn't. I kept thinking about what it must have taken for each of my participants to be there — to show up, step forward, and turn toward the light while still inside the dark. And thinking about their darkness, I encountered my own. I had meant to sit with their pain and instead I was sitting with mine, and the line between the two had gone, and I broke.

This class was not the retreat. But the room carried a similar weight, and I could see it in their bodies, in ways I won't describe here, as they're not meant to be displayed.

There was nothing in that room arranged to produce this feeling of release. Yet it arrived anyway, unaccompanied, and because nothing had been set around it to help it along, it made me wonder, not for the first time, how much of what we as yoga teachers build into our studios is for the practice, and how much of it is for us.

Afterwards one of the participants came over to tell me the class was exactly what he had needed. These simple words filled something in me I hadn't known was empty.

Making room

There is research now that suggests there is more to this than a general sense of wellbeing. A clinical trial in Bengaluru added a gentle two-week yoga programme to standard medication for men going through opioid withdrawal. Those who practised reached minimal withdrawal symptoms in a median of five days, compared with nine days for those on medication alone. The yoga was not addiction treatment in itself; its more plausible role was physiological: giving a nervous system caught in withdrawal a way to settle.

Another trial, with adolescents whose gaming had become compulsive, found a similar pattern: less distress, steadier attention, and reduced symptoms observed in people with Internet Gaming Disorder.



Both studies point to an increasingly important way of understanding addiction: not only as a disorder of behaviour but as a disorder of regulation, and that yoga can serve as practical nervous-system training offered at the moment the body most needs it.

None of these interventions took place in a studio. A hospital ward, a school hall — rooms with nothing in them — were enough, and may even have been the point.

In the studios I teach in, we give a great deal of attention to the environment — the mats, the lighting, the playlist, the décor adjusted until everything is right — and I don't think that is wrong, because the right environment can make a real difference to how an experience lands.

But I have started to wonder whether some of what we build is for the practice at all, or whether it has become the thing we perform — and whether, from the inside, a teacher can even tell the two apart. The wrong room made that difference clear to me in a way the right ones never have.

When the work actually starts, the room falls away, and what is left is the thing itself: people in a space that felt safe enough to be with themselves, finding their way back into bodies that perhaps had felt, for a long time, like somewhere to escape rather than return to.

These are people who would probably never walk into a yoga studio.

That afternoon, they didn't need one. And neither did I.

—

By **Yen**

Yen Feng is a yoga teacher, former journalist and editor of The Yoga Edit, an independent publication exploring yoga as a living culture — the people, practices and ideas shaping the community today. More at <https://yenfeng.substack.com>.

A dramatic photograph of a two-story house engulfed in intense orange and yellow flames. The fire is particularly thick on the roof and upper windows. In the lower right foreground, a firefighter wearing a helmet and dark gear is visible, looking towards the burning building. The background is a clear blue sky.

Your Brain is Lying. Again.

How Catastrophising Gets Us

For more than a decade, using drugs and gambling provided me with so much entertainment and fun then when I finally got into recovery, I grieved.

Even when the wheels of life started to fall off, there would still be fleeting moments of bliss and ecstasy – when you and all your friends are on the dancefloor and the DJ drops the song you’ve been listening to all week, when you’re all sitting in your friend’s room laughing heartily at something silly or when you’re all sitting in a bar and the team everyone pooled money to bet on scores the winning goal with the last kick of the game.

Through the highs, my mind inextricably linked drugs and gambling with fun. I can still hear myself saying “I’ll never be able to have fun without using or gambling.”

The reality is, however, the complete opposite. Life is now more fun. This is not some far-away positive hypothetical that an old timer in recovery said to me, trying to encourage me – it is my own experience.

And that’s one of the ways catastrophising has lost its grip on me – by being debunked by my own personal experiences.

I am slightly embarrassed to admit that I am fast becoming that old timer spewing far-away hypotheticals.

Catastrophising is rife in the minds of those struggling with addiction. Here’s how catastrophising works: you take one moment, feeling, or fear and stretch it into an absolute, irreversible worst-case outcome.

It is a thinking trap, and for people in recovery, this pattern is especially harmful as it can make challenges feel insurmountable and eventually push them back towards their addiction.

For someone not in recovery, an example of catastrophising can be that you think you’re going to mess up an important presentation despite being fully prepared for it, or that you’re somehow going to reenact your own version of a Final Destination scene.

While speaking to people for this article, another example that came up multiple times was them thinking that they would be fired when a supervisor asks to speak to them first thing in the morning – despite having performed well at work.



If you find yourself catastrophising, it simply means your brain has fallen into the habit of stretching one moment of fear into the absolute worst ending imaginable. It isn't a sign that you're broken or weak – for many of us in recovery, it's what years of chaos and consequences have conditioned our minds to do.

We spent so long bracing for the next disaster that our brains just never quite got the memo that things had changed. The good news is that you can push back against it. Here are three ways.

First, pause and ask yourself honestly – “Is there actual evidence this is going to happen, or am I just scared?” More often than not, the answer is the latter.

Second, drag yourself back to the present moment, because catastrophising almost always plays out in a future that doesn't exist yet.

Third, say it out loud to someone you trust. There is something almost comical about hearing your own catastrophic thought spoken into the air – it has a way of shrinking dramatically the moment it leaves your mouth.

And if you do catch yourself catastrophising, please don't beat yourself up about it. It is one of the most human things there is, and being in recovery doesn't make you immune to it.

What matters is simply being aware – because the moment you can name it, you've already taken away some of its power. That awareness, small as it seems, is everything. And with time and enough real experiences to look back on, that catastrophic voice gets quieter.

Not gone, maybe – but quieter. And quieter is enough.

By **Jat**

Jat is on the Comms team at **WE CARE**



Kidney Matters

Throughout the sharing by Carrie Choy from the **National Kidney Foundation (NKF)** here at **WE CARE**, I had one overriding thought, and it was that, “You don’t think about what is going on inside until something goes wrong.”

For many individuals navigating the journey of recovery, physical health can easily take a backseat to more immediate mental and emotional issues. In the chaos of active addiction or the intense focus of early recovery, monitoring blood pressure or tracking sugar intake rarely feels like a priority. Yet, educational programmes like the one given by the NKF serve as a vital wake-up call, reminding us of a universal truth: health is wealth.

Protecting our bodies isn’t just a clinical recommendation; it is an act of self-respect and an essential part of sustaining long-term recovery.

But kidney health isn’t just a niche topic for a specific group. It is a critical conversation that affects absolutely everyone.

Learning About Your Kidneys

Despite each of them being roughly the size of a clenched fist, your kidneys are absolute

powerhouses. Positioned near the middle of your back, these two bean-shaped organs are a core part of the body’s urinary system.

They work tirelessly around the clock to keep you alive by performing several essential functions:

- **Balancing Electrolytes:** They regulate steady levels of minerals like sodium and potassium.
- **Regulating Blood Pressure:** They produce hormones that control how tightly your blood vessels constrict.
- **Managing Calcium:** They activate Vitamin D to maintain strong, healthy bones.

The Hard Truth

Kidney failure is completely **irreversible**. Once these organs lose their function, the damage cannot be undone, leaving dialysis or a transplant as the only options for survival.

In Singapore, an average of **6 new cases** of kidney failure are diagnosed every single day. Currently, there are more than half a million Singaporeans suffering from Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) and more than 9,000 patients relying on the National

Kidney Foundation (NKF) for subsidized dialysis, costing millions of dollars annually to sustain. With treatment centres running at near-maximum capacity, the entire purpose of community outreach is to prevent kidney disease before it even starts.

The Hidden Connection: Lifestyle, Trauma, and Diabetes

The leading driver of kidney damage is Type 2 diabetes, which is responsible for **2 out of every 3 new cases** of kidney failure. Type 2 diabetes is a chronic condition where the body is unable to properly use insulin, leading to high blood sugar.

Over time, high blood sugar levels cause the body's tiny blood vessels to become narrow, damaged, and clogged. When the intricate blood vessels inside the kidneys are compromised, they can no longer filter waste effectively. One of the earliest warning signs of kidney damage is the appearance of tiny bubbles in the urine, which indicates protein leakage from poor filtering.

Alongside high blood sugar, **hypertension** (high blood pressure) acts as a second silent culprit, putting immense physical strain on these delicate filtration systems.

While Type 2 diabetes is largely preventable through dietary and lifestyle habits, those habits do not exist in a vacuum. Behavioural patterns and coping mechanisms can be passed down through generations. When stress, emotional pain, or survival mode shapes how a family eats, moves, and manages health, the physical vulnerabilities — like diabetes and hypertension — tend to follow. Breaking the cycle of addiction often goes hand-in-hand with breaking generational patterns of physical neglect.

Taking Action: Movement and Metrics

Preventing kidney disease comes down to managing daily choices. Regular physical exercise is one of the most effective shields we have; it naturally lowers blood sugar and decreases sensitivity to insulin, meaning your body doesn't have to work overtime to process the energy you consume. Aiming for **150 to 300 minutes of moderate exercise per week** provides the baseline protection your metabolic system needs.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight in kilogram}}{(\text{Height in meter})^2}$$

Understanding your health metrics is equally empowering. Keeping track of your Body Mass Index (BMI) is a simple way to gauge where you stand, calculated using a straightforward formula:

For most Asians, the healthy range for BMI readings should be 18.5 to 22.9. Do take note that BMI is just a general indicator, and should be read in conjunction with other health markers.

For those who want a better picture of where their health stands, they should take advantage of public health initiatives. Free health screenings are widely available for individuals aged **21 to 80**, offering a quick, zero-cost way to check your blood sugar, blood pressure, and kidney function before any basic issues becomes problematic.

Useful Tips for Kidney Care

- **Watch the Hidden Sugar and Salt:** Always check nutrition labels. Keep your daily salt intake under **5g (about one teaspoon)** and limit added sugars to protect your blood vessels from premature wear and tear.
- **Hydrate Mindfully:** Drinking sufficient water helps your kidneys clear sodium and toxins from the body, but don't overdo it to the point of discomfort—balance is key.
- **Don't Skip the Screenings:** Because kidney disease is a "silent" illness that rarely shows symptoms in its early stages, getting your routine blood and urine tests done is the only definitive way to catch issues early.

By **Arthur Albuero**

*Arthur is pursuing a degree in Linguistics at NTU, and is interning with **WE CARE** during the break before his final year. In his spare time, he likes to speculate about alternative futures and other lives. He has also discovered a passion for working in social service agencies.*



Nutrition in a Bite: Key Takeaways

*Trained nutritionist Renie Rosmadi spoke on food and its relationship to physical and mental wellbeing in **WE CARE** in May 2026. She has prepared this summary of her talk.*

Our recent **Nutrition in a Bite** workshop highlighted the fundamentals of healthy eating and how nutrition supports both physical and mental well-being.

Participants learned the importance of balancing macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins and healthy fats) with micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) to fuel the body and maintain overall health.

The session also explored the gut-brain connection, demonstrating how a healthy gut microbiome can influence mood, cognition and immunity through probiotic- and prebiotic-rich foods. The gut-brain connection involves complex bidirectional communication and this constant dialogue explains why stress can trigger stomach pains (mental issues translating to physical ones), and why persistent digestive issues can lead to anxiety, depression, and mood disorders (physical to mental).

The workshop emphasised a food-first approach, encouraging participants to obtain nutrients from whole, minimally processed foods. The closer to the ground of any food that we consume, the healthier it is. Research has found that many processed foods contain additives to enhance their taste or to prolong their shelf life, and in many cases, these added chemicals offer few health benefits.

When it comes to supplements, it is best to derive the nutrients they contain from the food and to supplement when it is difficult to get them from our diet.

Common nutrition myths were also debunked, such as the misconception that all probiotic drinks, yoghurts and fermented foods are equally healthy. There is also the widely held belief that some salts are superior to others. But the fact remains that however healthy any salt is made out to be, we would have to consume it in large amounts before the supplementary minerals and vitamins they carry can make any appreciable impact.



To wrap up, participants were introduced to simple, practical habits they can adopt daily, including choosing whole grains, incorporating healthy fats and magnesium-rich foods, and making balanced food choices to support long-term health and well-being.

—

By **Renie Rosmadi**



The TCM Way to Wellness

Introduction

In recent years, Traditional Chinese Medicine or TCM has attracted much attention for its holistic approach to wellness and health. With more awareness of wellness and alternative medicine, TCM treatments, including herbal medicine, acupuncture, cupping, taichi and foot massage, have become popular.

With more than 2,500 years of health and healing knowledge, TCM is also an entire cultural and philosophical framework that emphasizes the maintenance of the body's internal balance and the flow of qi (life force or energy). Rather than treating symptoms in isolation, TCM views the human body as a system with interconnected organs.

As the body of knowledge is vast, the TCM Wellness Workshop conducted on 23rd June by Chai Binhua focused on three areas: lifestyle habits (Yang sheng 养生), ear meridians (Er xue 耳穴) and food therapy (Shi liao 食疗).

Lifestyle habits 养生

One cornerstone of a good lifestyle is sleep.

The TCM concept of Zi Wu Liu Zhu (子午流注 or body clock) parallels the Western notion of circadian rhythm but is broader, encompassing nature, the seasons, and cosmic balance. Ideally, our sleep should begin at 9 pm, but in acknowledgement of modern life constraints, Binhua advises aiming for 11 pm to align with the body's optimal blood replenishment period (11 pm to 3 am).

Waking at 5 am is considered natural, while insomnia or stirring into consciousness at 3 am may indicate imbalances in the lung (Fei 肺) or kidney (Shen 肾) systems. Binhua stresses that emotions, regulated by the liver (Gan 肝) and gallbladder (Dan 胆), play a significant role in sleep quality. Modern habits like doom scrolling before sleep are seen as emotionally disruptive and counterproductive to health.

Another lifestyle habit to inculcate is exercise (运动). Exercise for TCM refers to 2 particular aspects: improved circulation (运) and movement or mobility of joints (动). This can be and should be regularly engaged in at all ages. Exercise regimes such as Tai Ji (太极) are highly recommended to be integrated into our daily lifestyle.

Meridians

The second focus is on meridians, a Western concept that most people can relate to, although it is not precisely a TCM term. To illustrate, Binhua uses the human ear (耳穴), which has acupressure points connected to many organs and body parts. Highlighting that anyone can massage the meridian points in their ears to experience tangible effects, this is a demonstration of TCM's practical application beyond abstract theory.

Food in TCM 食疗

The third area is Shi Liao (食疗), or food therapy, which covers so much ground that Binhua limits his discussion to basic principles. He emphasizes the importance of water consumption, particularly its temperature. In TCM, concepts of "cold" and "warm" are defined relative to our body temperature. For example, TCM distinguishes between "yin water" (boiled and cooled) and "yang water" (hot water).



Binhua shows participants how to stimulate acupressure points on their ears.

Drinking ice-cold water is discouraged, while warm water (around 40 to 50°C) is considered optimal, and supports digestion and circulation. This aligns with common knowledge that when we have a sore throat or a cough, we should avoid cold drinks, as they would provoke coughing.

TCM also associates the colour of food to the nutrition that affects major organs: green vegetables like spinach support the liver, red-coloured food like tomatoes reinforce the heart, yellow-hued lemons favour the spleen, while white foods like fish and rice suit the lungs, and black fungus and sesame are good for the kidneys.

Major food flavours are also related to the body; in particular bitter-flavoured food benefits the heart, food that is sour bolsters the liver, sweetness profits the spleen, pungent or spicy foods are advantageous to the lungs, and salty food helps the kidneys.

Conclusion

Throughout the talk, Binhua stresses that the core foundations of TCM philosophy are the yin-yang balance and the five elements (Wu Xing 五行).

In ancient Chinese philosophy, the Yin-yang balance states that all things exist as inseparable, complementary, and also act as opposing forces, such as dark and light, or passive and active. Within the body and mind, achieving balance is essential for personal health, harmony, and overall well-being.

Wu Xing describes the dynamic relationships of mutual support and restraint among organ systems. For example, the lung (metal) and heart (fire) interact to regulate exertion during running, illustrating how TCM links physiological processes in ways distinct from modern biology. He cautions against equating TCM terms for organs directly with Western systems of anatomy, for example spleen (Pi 脾) in TCM refers broadly to the digestive and circulatory functions, not just the anatomical spleen.

Binhua encourages openness and humility in accepting and understanding TCM. Its knowledge base is wide and deep, and may sometimes feel confusing.

If any reader is interested in a further session on TCM with Binhua, kindly let us know.

Binhua is a registered TCM practitioner, who also happens to be a counsellor with **WE CARE**.

—

By **Leslie Goh**

FOUNDATION IN GAMING DISORDER (LEVEL 1)

Understanding and Treating Internet Addiction: Online Gaming Disorder

An IPGGC Approved Training Programme



WE CARE
COMMUNITY SERVICES



Supported by



Gaming Disorder is a growing public health concern.

This professional development training by **WE CARE Community Services** equips practitioners with the clinical knowledge and evidence-based frameworks necessary to assess, screen, and treat Gaming Disorder effectively.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Distinguish between recreational gaming, problematic gaming and gaming disorder
- Describe 3 types of benefits that gaming can provide
- Identify potential risks and consequences of problematic gaming
- Outline the Bio-psycho-social Model of Gaming Disorder
- Describe at least 3 preventive measures that family/caregivers can apply to prevent onset of problematic gaming
- Explain 3 harm reduction or moderation measures to prevent problematic gaming
- Apply evidence-based criteria to screen for gaming disorder

TRAINERS



John Chua

- MCouns, Clinical Supervisor, Certified Counsellor in Substance Abuse and Gambling Addiction, Certified Clinical Supervisor, IC&RC
- Counsellor since 2006



Alex Lim

- MCouns, BSocSci (Psychology), CSAC, CGAC, SMART Facilitator, APSAC, SAC
- Counsellor since 2013

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Psychologists, counsellors, social workers and mental health therapists; 15 CE Hours (IPGGC approved)
- Staff of organisations working with individuals presenting with gaming-related concerns
- Eligibility: Bachelor's degree or equivalent (Social Work, Counselling, Psychology)

There is a structured pathway for professional certification and you will receive a certificate of completion

VENUE

• **APSN Learning Hub**
Kembangan Chai Chee Community Hub
11 Jln Ubi, #01-51
Block 6, S409074

DATE AND TIME

- 9AM to 5PM
- 24 & 25 September 2026

FEE

- \$950

30% funding is available for Singaporean citizens in NCSS member SSAs or MSF-funded agencies.

TO REGISTER OR FIND OUT MORE

Seats are limited, register now!

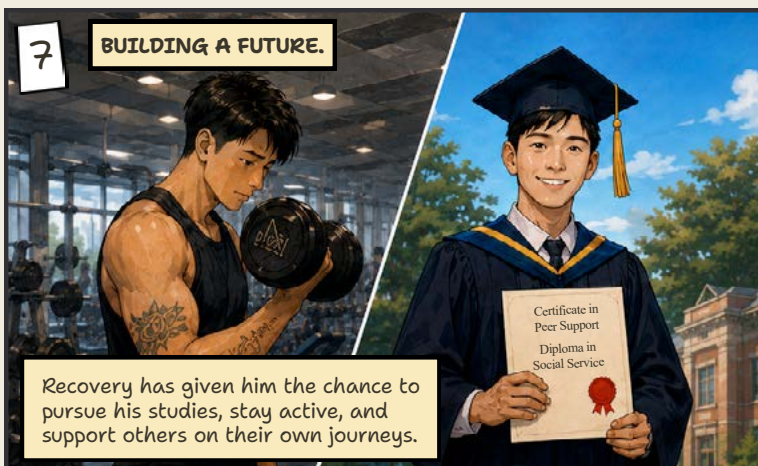
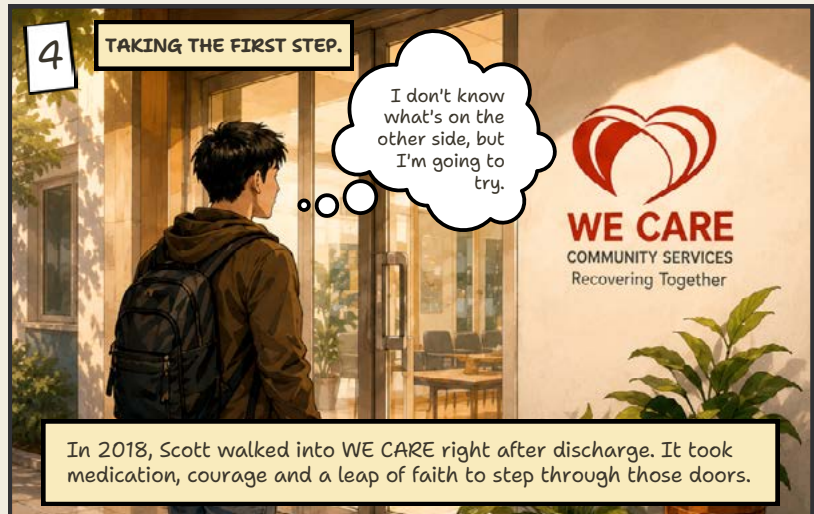
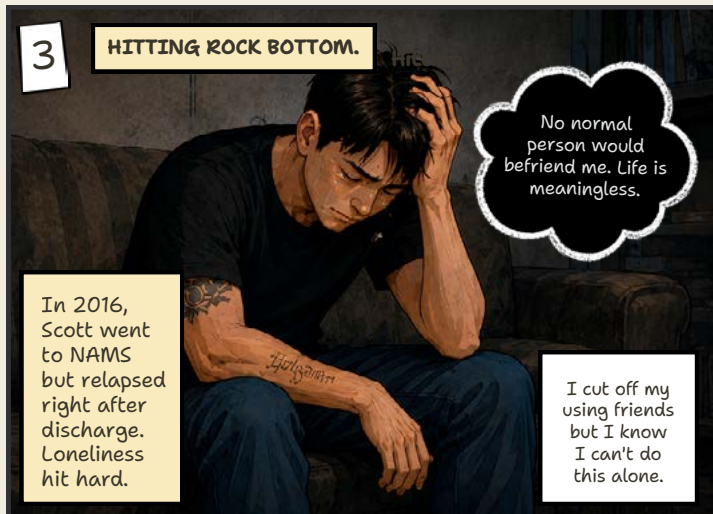
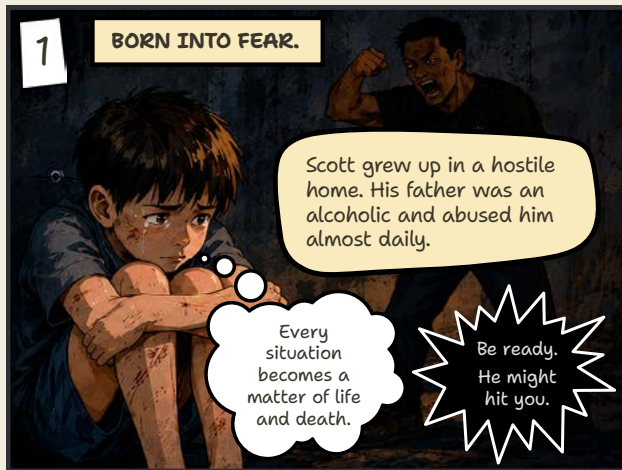


Scan or contact Jat:

85058607

jat@wecare.org.sg

IF NOT FOR WE CARE, I MAY BE DEAD SOMEWHERE



RECENT EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



WE CARE Amazing Race 2026



Assembly Talk for GMSS



NKF Talk on Kidney Health



New Hope Community Service -
Addiction Awareness Talk



Sands Macau and Students from
University of Macau



Nutrition In A Bite Talk



Mental Wellness & Addiction Talk for Suzuki Coffee



Visit to National Gallery Singapore



Project Obscura - Photography Workshop



Learning Journey from HCSA



YMCA Youth for Causes



Addiction & Mental Health Talk for Mastercard AP



Transforming Lives. Restoring Families.

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



WE CARE
COMMUNITY SERVICES

We are located at:

**Kembangan-Chai Chee
Community Hub**

11 Jln Ubi #01-41, Block 5
Singapore 409074

Tel: 3165 8017

E-mail: help@wecare.org.sg

WhatsApp: 8391 3023

Telegram: 9664 0967



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

Editorial Team:

Leslie, Simon, Jat

Contributors:

Yen, Arthur, Ian, Friday, Renie, Scott

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

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.



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-community-services-limited;
- or
- Wecare.give.asia

