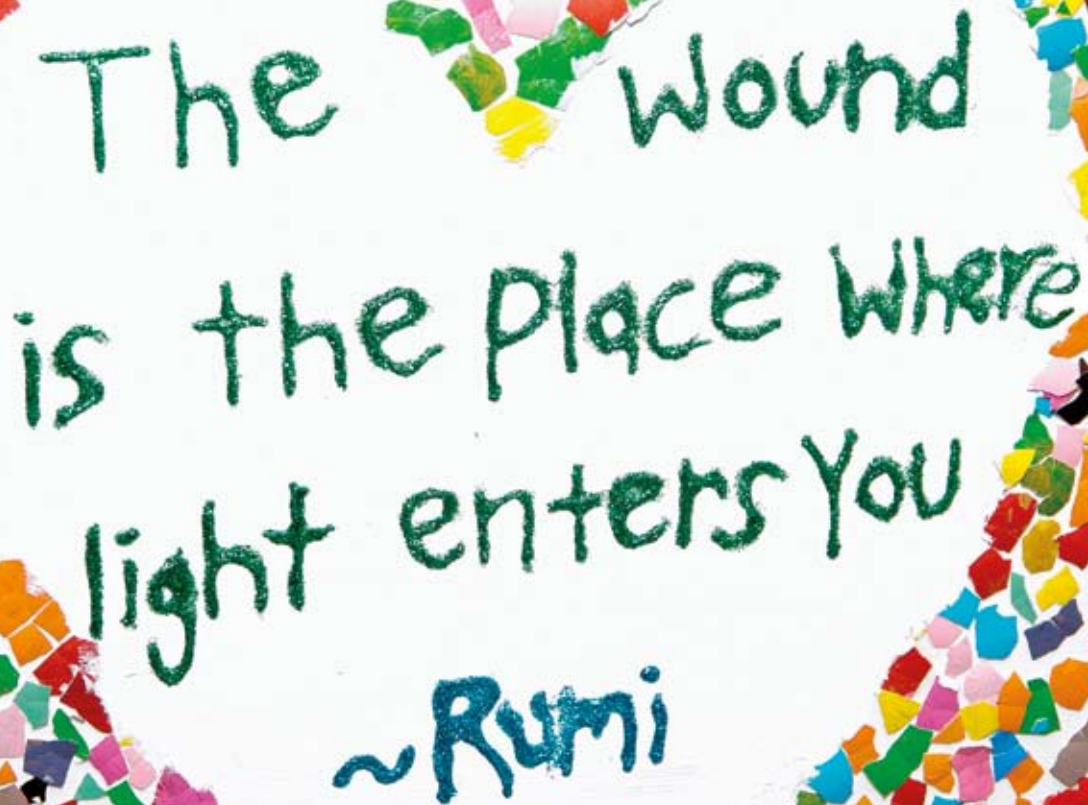


HEAL

Newsletter of Club HEAL • Issue 2, November 2013 • ISSN: 2339-5443



The Wound
is the place where
light enters you
~Rumi

**Artwork done by participants of Club HEAL.*

President's Message

By Dr Radiah Salim

When our patron Mdm Halimah Jacob first proposed the idea of having a Mental Resilience Day, I was not sure if it could be applicable to Club HEAL. But I looked up the term "resilient" in the *Chambers Mini Dictionary* and the meaning jumped at me:

"Resilient - readily recovers from misfortune, hurt, etc; readily recovering its original shape after being bent, twisted, etc."

How apt!

Of course it refers to exactly what we have been trying to do all this while – get our beneficiaries to rise and bounce back to being happy and healthy.

In Club HEAL, we want to empower, thereby enable. We believe that in every person there lie hidden talents, hidden strengths, which will unexpectedly manifest themselves in inspiring ways when a person is challenged.

In Club HEAL, we celebrate these strengths and talents. We strive to not do things for our PMIs (although that would be a much easier task). Instead, we try to get our beneficiaries to find his or her own way.

In short, we do not want to supply fish, we teach folks how to fish... and, better still, to market the fish so caught ...

At Club HEAL, we are currently exploring various strategies to so empower and enable.

“ Resilient - readily recovers from misfortune, hurt, etc; readily recovering its original shape after being bent, twisted, etc.”

One strategy is to recruit as many as possible to become HEALing Friends, then empower our HEALing Friends by providing them with adequate training – hence our 'HEALing Friends' training modules.

A second strategy is to have different types of support groups in addition to the caregivers' support groups. To this end, we have commenced separate support groups for those with depression, those with anxiety and those with psychoses, in the hope that these categorisations will lend focus during discussions.

Yet another strategy is to seriously help our participants become healthier physically by promoting healthy lifestyles; so we include activities in our rehabilitative service that advocate healthy eating, suitable exercise and smoking cessation.

Last but not least, there needs to be a plan to discover the hidden talents and strengths latent in each participant so that they can be nurtured and later translated into vocations. Club HEAL's social enterprise wing hopes to work with occupational therapists and job recruitment officers to achieve this objective.

I therefore end with this humble appeal – Singapore has a chronic shortage of working age adults, so employers, please look no further – do come visit our Club HEAL family and insyaa'Allah we can help you find that person you have been looking for.



Our Activities

Club HEAL *Iftar* (20 July, Wisma Mendaki)

It was an afternoon of love and empathy with the Malay-Muslim Members of Parliament spreading the healing love by donating \$15,000 to Club HEAL. The cheque presentation was led by Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs, Dr Yaacob Ibrahim. Also present were Mdm Halimah Yacob, Dr Intan Azura Mokhtar, Mr Zaqy Mohamed, Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim and Mr Zainudin Nordin, representing all 11 PAP Malay-Muslim MPs. After the cheque presentation, Club HEAL members mingled with the honoured guests and took photos.

Mdm Halimah stayed to celebrate the *Iftar* with some 80 participants and five friends of other



Hari Raya Get-together (31 Aug, BBE pavilion)

About 80 people turned up to celebrate this joyous occasion. Club HEAL participants performed an original *dikir barat* and a Hari Raya song. A joint effort between the MDA and BBE centres, participants had practised two weeks for the performance. They were greeted with warm applause and even asked to do an encore. Later, some participants voluntarily took to the stage to sing more songs. Their sincerity in making the event a success was heart-warming. Contests for *ketupat*-making and *kain-samping*-wearing were also heartily received. Mdm Halimah Yacob addressed the guests with an impromptu



speech. She said she was pleased Club HEAL was working closely with BBE grassroots, particularly MAEC, to provide a much-needed service to the community. The pavilion party was a resounding success.

Participants of the *Iftar* took the opportunity to get to know their patron better as she mingled with them at the quilling card-making and ketupat-weaving corners. Breaking of fast was with dates, porridge, cake and *samosa*. This was followed by congregational Maghrib and then dinner, comprising a delicious spread of *lemak ayam chilli padi*, sweet sour fish and fried vegetables with mushroom sponsored by the Malay MPs. It was an unforgettable experience, one that left warm

feelings in our hearts and a fullness in our stomachs as we parted from the Club HEAL family and headed back to our own.



National Day–Hari Raya Celebration (15 Aug, CRSS Centre)



There was triple joy when Club HEAL, along with Community Rehabilitation Support Services and Bukit Gombak Group Homes participants, spent a few happy hours getting to know each other. Ice was broken with a game of Whacko testing both memory and reflexes. Each group sang for the others and a blind singer regaled us with a medley of popular tunes.

The event was graced by Mdm Halimah Yacob. Her birthday falling the following week, we sang her a birthday song and presented her with cake. What is a celebration without food? The spread for the day – including *lontong*, *ketupat* and *satay* – was prepared by Club HEAL and CRSS, who kindly bought new utensils just to cater to their Muslim guests.

Mental Resilience Day (20 Oct, BBE CC)

Club HEAL with Bukit Batok MAEC and the Diabetic Society of Singapore celebrated this inaugural event, a brainwave of Mdm Halimah Yacob. MRD



was created to celebrate positivity, hope and the journey of every individual towards mental resilience. We had a bustle of activities, including a physical and mental health screening; a relaxation workshop; the Club HEAL films' screening; and a talk by Dr Radiah, Club HEAL president. The highlight of the event was a sharing session on mental resilience – hosted by exco member

Dr Bibi Jan Ayyub – where four role models shared how they overcame challenges (either as a person with mental health issues or as caregiver of one). Silver Ribbon Singapore, Singapore Association for Mental Health as well as Bukit Gombak Group Homes showcased their services at the booths provided. HPB provided the door gifts. The event was graciously attended by our patrons, MP Zaqy Mohamed and Mdm Halimah Yacob. Everyone left feeling inspired – let's hope MRD becomes an annual affair!



Upcoming Events

Empowering Caregivers of Persons with Mental Health Issues – A Public Seminar By Club HEAL

Date : 24th Nov 2013

Time : 9am till 12.45pm

Venue : AMP Auditorium Pasir Ris East CC,

1 Pasir Ris Drive 4, Singapore 519457

HEALing Friends Training (One-day Workshop)

Date : 7th Dec 2013

Time : 9am till 5pm

Venue : Bukit Batok East Community Club,

23 Bukit Batok East Avenue 4, Singapore 659841



HEALing Journey



A Pillar of Strength

My name is Kartina and I would like to share my experience as caregiver to a family member diagnosed with schizophrenia. Zalina is my twin sister, my close childhood friend and companion. She was diagnosed in 2007 and had a relapse in 2011. Stress and overwhelming confusion filled our household at the time. As long as Zalina takes her two types of medication daily, she is alright. My sister's journey to recovery has improved now that she has a job and earns a stable income. Employment gives her a sense of self-worth and confidence.

I would describe myself as Zalina's second caregiver; I provide her with a listening ear, love and moral support, and regard her as a valuable member of the family. Sa'ayah, my mother, is the primary caregiver. She may be 73-years-old and have arthritis, but she is the family's pillar of strength.

I believe it is unfair to stigmatise people with mental illness. They are not useless members of society, but they do need faith, love, care, understanding and support from family members and the community.

I encourage all caregivers to never ignore or give up on their family member who has mental illness. HD Thoreau once wrote, "Love must be as much a light, as it is a flame." Let us caregivers be both light and flame to our loved ones who suffer from mental illness, they will then heal faster.



Ask the Expert

Question:

My daughter has recently been diagnosed with a mental illness. Will she ever be symptom-free and cured?

Response:

Mental illness is a chronic condition and recovery is dependent on many factors, eg compliance to treatment, individual resilience and social support. Studies show that individuals who comply with treatment continuously, have strong willpower – and have loved ones who shower them with care and compassion – have better outcomes in recovery. It is also important to seek treatment early.

“It is possible to recover from mental illness and remain symptom-free for years. Others live fulfilling and productive lives even as they retain some symptoms of their mental illness.”

It is possible to recover from mental illness and remain symptom-free for years. Others live fulfilling and productive lives even as they retain some symptoms of their mental illness. Remember, you can have mental wellness while having a mental illness. This is the immediate goal everyone should aspire towards.



Creative Corner

Acceptance

By Omar Bagharib

Acceptance of the simplicity
The shape of days
The sun a dim
The day a flower
The establish of hope
The empowerment
The day disguise
In a day or two

The spontaneity
The day begin
Of the quiet man
The name begin
To shudder the crowd
The name begin
Of a desert denizen
A prayer or two



HEALing Friend



While undergoing studies in Psychology in France, I interned for Club HEAL twice: once in August 2012, then again in March 2013.

What attracted me was Club HEAL's mission to empower persons with mental illness. Club HEAL emphasises social rehabilitation and welcomes anyone who wishes to share, talk or listen. I met exceptional people there, both patients and helpers; we formed a big family where everyone belonged.

Having met patients with various issues – depression, schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorder – at Club HEAL, I now understand the stigma of mental illness and its impact on one's daily life. I also recognise the symptoms of mental illness. I enjoyed engaging people with mental health issues in daily rehabilitative activity, and visiting those who stay at home due to their psychological difficulties. Home visits are essential as the latter may otherwise lose contact with society.

I aim to become a clinical psychologist specialising in intercultural psychology. Through my participation in Club HEAL activities, I learnt how cultural factors impact an individual's psyche and now grasp the role of an intercultural understanding of psychological facts in the therapeutic care process. To sum up, my Club HEAL experience has been rewarding and I look forward to future involvement.

Rachid Oulahal



InfoHEAL (Malay)



Kesihatan Mental dan Anda

Dewasa ini, kesihatan mental telah menjadi satu fokus atau tumpuan bukan sahaja dikalangan para doktor atau pegawai kesihatan malah hangat dibincangkan secara umum oleh ahli-ahli politik, para pendidik dan tokoh-tokoh korporat. Kepesatan arus globalisasi, pembangunan, perubahan serta pemodenan yang begitu ketara telah menjejaskan sedikit sebanyak kehidupan setiap individu samada dalam negara-negara membangun atau negara maju. Kemelut kehidupan masakini yang mencengkam sebahagian dari kita mampu menjejaskan kesihatan mental. Mengapakah dan bagaimanakah perkara sedemikian boleh berlaku?

Ini adalah kerana kesihatan mental telah menjadi salah satu faktor penentu utama yang menjamin kekuatan dan keberkesanan seseorang individu, termasuk keluarga, organisasi, bangsa dan negara selain dari kekuatan fizikal dan spiritual. Oleh yang demikian tidak hairanlah jika lebih banyak sumber dan dana disalurkan oleh pihak penguasa tempatan untuk meningkatkan taraf kesedaran dan pengetahuan masyarakat umum tentang peri pentingnya menjaga kesihatan mental kerana darjah pembangunan dan keupayaan seseorang itu pula bergantung kepada dayatahan, jatidiri dan akhlak individu dan bangsa itu sendiri.

Bayangkan keadaan dimana anggota sesuatu keluarga itu misalnya kerap menghadapi stres atau tekanan yang boleh membawa kepada keadaan kemurungan dan gangguan emosi dan psikologi. Ini semestinya menjejaskan fungsi kehidupan seharian mereka. Bagi mereka yang bekerja atau bersekolah, masalah tersebut boleh menjejaskan tumpuan, usaha serta tugas seharian mereka dan seterusnya menjejaskan keberhasilan yang optima.

... continued on page 4

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1. Apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan kesihatan mental?

Mengikut definisi yang diberikan oleh Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia atau WHO, kesihatan mental melibatkan individu yang berupaya mengekalkan perhubungan yang harmoni dengan dirinya sendiri, dengan orang lain, mengambil bahagian dalam aktiviti kemasyarakatan dan boleh menyumbang di dalam masyarakat. Dengan kata lain, mereka yang memiliki kesihatan mental ini biasanya terhindar dari keluhan dan gangguan mental dan mempunyai tahap daya tahan atau "resilience" yang tinggi.

Dari pandangan Islam pula, manusia itu terdiri daripada lima komponen iaitu Hati, Nafsu, Roh, Akal dan Jasad. Sekiranya rosak salah satu daripada komponen tersebut, maka kemungkinan besar menjejaskan pertimbangan sistem akal manusia itu sendiri. Antara penyakit rohani yang sering dialami manusia ialah rasa kebimbangan dan takut iaitu takut miskin, takut mati, takut bencana dan takut malapetaka, rasa cemas, gusar dan gundah gulana, disamping penyakit lain seperti kemurungan (depression), merana, rasa bersalah (guilt), sukar buat keputusan dan terlalu panik (nervous), dan berbagai jenis fobia atau tingkah-laku tidak normal yang membawa kepada ketagihan.

Mengikut kaedah agama suci kita, cara yang paling berkesan adalah memperbanyakkan usaha mendekati Allah SWT untuk melepaskan diri kita dari di belenggui dengan berbagai gejala negatif yang menghambat dan mengganggu jiwa dan emosi kita. Banyak ayat Al Quran seperti "la takhaf wala tahzan innALLAHama'ana." Yang bererti "Janganlah kamu takut dan janganlah kamu bersedih hati, sesungguhnya Allah ada bersama kita" merupakan satu ayat

yang mempunyai impak yang teramat sangat dalam mempengaruhi jiwa kita menghadapi berbagai kemelut hidup. Inilah yang dimaksudkan apabila para ulama menerangkan bahawa doa merupakan satu ibadah dan sekaligus menjadi senjata untuk umat Islam.

“Kesimpulannya, mewujudkan kesihatan mental dikalangan setiap anggota masyarakat seharusnya merupakan tanggungjawab semua pihak. Ia tidak terletak ke atas bahu ahli kounselor, para psikologi atau guru bimbingan sahaja malah setiap mereka yang terlibat dengan proses perkembangan dan pembangunan sumber manusia.”

2. Kaitan Kesihatan Mental dengan Kecerdasan Emosi

Kesimpulannya, mewujudkan kesihatan mental dikalangan setiap anggota masyarakat seharusnya merupakan tanggungjawab semua pihak. Ia tidak terletak ke atas bahu ahli kounselor, para psikologi atau guru bimbingan sahaja malah setiap mereka yang terlibat dengan proses perkembangan dan pembangunan sumber manusia. Hari ini, Kepintaran atau Kecerdasan Emosi atau "Emotional Intelligence" yang di popularkan oleh Daniel Goleman (1998) semakin diterima ramai memandangkan kaitannya dengan kekentalan dan kemampuan fungsi diri seseorang menjalani kehidupan. Jadi, yang menentukan ketenangan dan kebahagiaan hidup adalah kesihatan mental.

[Editor's note: English translation of this article is available on the Club HEAL website.]



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Thrift Shop

Club HEAL operates a Thrift Shop at our BBE premises to serve as a platform to empower our participants with occupational and entrepreneurial skills.

We sell an array of items ranging from women accessories to books. We also sell Islamic calligraphy and quotes from Rumi which have been beautifully hand-painted.

Do visit us at void deck of Blk 244, Bukit Batok East Ave 5 – operating hours are during weekdays from 9am till 1pm (closed on public holidays).



Be A HEALing Friend

"You see, the Mu'min in their mutual piety, love and affection, are like a (single) body. When a part (of it) has a complaint, the whole body is united with it in wakefulness and fever." – (Bukhari and Muslim).

As a member or a volunteer, you can contribute in a variety of ways, from assisting in Club HEAL events to conducting rehabilitative activities! We need people from all walks of life who can contribute their time and skills to fulfill our cause.

To become a member, please fill up the membership form available at our website (see Resources section) and email it to us at admin@clubheal.org.sg or mail it to Club HEAL, Blk 244, Bukit Batok East Ave 5, #01-02, Singapore 650244.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Donations & Sponsorships

As Club HEAL is an Institution of a Public Character (IPC), all donors will be eligible for 2.5 times tax reduction. Donations can be made by cheque to 'Club HEAL' or by GIRO – form available at our website.

Please contact us at 8400 6306 for further details or email us at admin@clubheal.org.sg.

We thank you for your kind contributions.

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