



WE CARE News



WE CARE CHARITY GOLF 2023



Orchid Country Club
25 October 2023

Par-tee-cipate to support addiction recovery
For more details, please contact:

Leslie: 9154 6848 | Tzao Shen: 9121 0810 | Mala: 3165 8017



WE CARE Charity Golf 2023

Par-tee-cipate in support of addiction recovery!

*Golf enthusiasts and philanthropists alike, mark your calendars for a remarkable event that combines your passion for the greens with the power of giving back. The eagerly awaited **WE CARE Charity Golf 2023** event is just around the corner, promising a day of camaraderie, competition, and compassion on the golf course.*

Tee Off for a Cause

This year's event takes place at **Orchid Country Club** on **Wednesday, 25th October**. Golfers of every stripe are invited to participate in this day of friendly competition, all while contributing to a worthy cause. The event welcomes both individuals and teams, ensuring that whether you're a seasoned golfer or just starting out, you'll find a welcoming and supportive environment.

A Day of Giving Back

This is **WE CARE's** major fundraiser for 2023 and the funds raised from the event will be channelled directly into **WE CARE's** treatment initiatives, including evidence-based counselling and therapy programmes for addiction recovery. Every dollar donated will be matched by the Tote Board and the government and will make a direct and tangible difference in the lives of persons in recovery and their families.

Highlights to Look Forward To:

Scenic Golf Course:

The event will be held at the picturesque Orchid Country Club, acclaimed as a Club where people from all walks of life can come together to enjoy golfing. The Club is a premier Golf and Country Club in Singapore with a rich heritage and culture. Participants can enjoy a day of golfing in a serene and relaxing environment.

Networking Opportunities:

The event brings together a diverse group of individuals who share a passion for golf and philanthropy. Forge new connections, build relationships, and engage with like-minded individuals.

Gourmet Dining:

A delicious buffet awaits all participants after the tournament, offering a chance to unwind and socialize while you reminisce about the game!

How You Can Participate:

For all enquiries about this event, kindly call

- **Mala** **3165 8017**
- **Tzao Shen** **9121 0810**
- **Leslie** **9154 6848**

Or email events@wecare.org.sg





15th Finisher Awards - Celebrating Recovery Together

It is no surprise that persons overcoming addiction often face stigma and ridicule. However, in the often arduous journey of recovery, there exists a silent struggle that many individuals face – the lack of recognition for their efforts in recovery. While society may frequently celebrate achievements relating to academics, sports, or career, the battles fought by those on the path to recovery often go unnoticed.

These individuals exhibit remarkable strength, resilience, and dedication as they navigate the tumultuous waters of addiction recovery. Yet, their stories remain untold, hidden beneath layers of stigma and misconception.

At **WE CARE**, we recognize the importance of celebrating recovery and how it plays a vital step towards creating a culture of support, understanding, and healing. Every individual's journey towards sobriety, while unique on its own, is marked by countless moments of perseverance, growth, and rebuilding relationships with loved ones and themselves.

At our bi-annual **Finisher Awards**, we celebrate the sobriety achievements marking the clean time of our clients in the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th year milestone marks. The recent 15th edition

of our **Finisher Awards** took place this July, and we honoured 20 recipients – 16 first years, 1 fifth year and 3 seventh years.

This marks the largest number of recipients in our **Finisher Awards** history with many first-year recipients hailing from the Support for recovering Addicts and their Families through Empowerment (SAFE) program, an initiative spearheaded by NCSS in collaboration with Singapore Prison Service.

The ceremony was well-attended by more than 100 guests comprising family, friends, beneficiaries, and our community partners, including: **National Council of Social Service (NCSS), Singapore Prison Service, Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), National Addictions Management Services (NAMS), the State Courts** and fellow social service agencies.

Always a joyful yet emotional experience for both the recipients and their loved ones, the Finisher Awards serves not only as a platform to celebrate recovery but also plays an important role in breaking down the stigma associated with addiction. The powerful testimony of struggle and triumph can inspire others to continue in their



recovery journey and provides audiences an unfiltered rendition of recovery from addiction.

It is especially heartening when family members and significant others show up in force to support their loved ones in recovery, with relatives taking leave from work and even travelling from across the borders to witness this memorable occasion.

The success stories are also testament to the work we do at **WE CARE** and affirms our mission in advocating for all persons with addiction and their families. Ultimately, this event reinforces that recovery is not just about abstaining from one's drug of choice or compulsive behaviour, but also about reclaiming one's life, rebuilding relationships, and nurturing a resilient mental and emotional well-being.

We would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who made time to grace the event and to **our Directors of the Board, Mr Robert Chew, Ms Frances Cheang, Mr Koh Kah Yeok, Mr Dane Anderson and Ms Tina Doran** for presenting the awards.



WE CARE 18th Jubilee Celebration



In 2023, **WE CARE** celebrates its 18th birthday. A number of events and activities have been planned to celebrate this jubilee anniversary. From July to August, we held a series of events to celebrate through Art. We participated in the 3-day Sands for Singapore Charity Festival where we fielded a booth to reach out to the public to increase awareness about the work that **WE CARE** does. At the same time, we also offered art items like art works for fundraising. An art exhibition was also organized where art pieces and other items – donated by beneficiaries, supporters, well-wishers, volunteers and staff alike – were on display and available for fundraising donations.

Sands For Singapore 2023 – Where Hearts Come Together

In a heartwarming display of unity, generosity, and community spirit, **Marina Bay Sands** recently hosted their annual captivating 3-day charity festival – **Sands For Singapore 2023** that brought together people from all walks of life in the name of charity. Against the iconic backdrop of the Singapore skyline, this year's theme "Where Hearts Come Together", illuminated the city with a symphony of music, the arts, and goodwill, leaving an indelible mark on both attendees and beneficiaries alike.

The festival commenced on Friday 4th August with a rousing opening ceremony that set the tone for the entire event. Distinguished guests, philanthropists, and community partners gathered to inaugurate the event, highlighting the shared commitment to making a positive impact on society. As the sun dipped below the horizon, the Event Plaza at Marina Bay Sands came to life with an array of gourmet pop-up stalls, live performances, and a unique Giving Marketplace featuring a wide array of items on sale from 16 charitable organizations and social enterprises.



WE CARE was privileged to be invited yet again to be part of this event, and this year we put together a wider array of items for fundraising, including handmade costume jewellery and artworks generously created and contributed by our beneficiaries and supporters.

Many in our community also volunteered their time to help us at our booth over the course of the 3 days. Despite the heat, it was always a heartening moment whenever a visitor made a donation or contribution, no matter how big or small, in support of our cause.

The highlight of the event unfolded on Day 2 with the **Community Chest Heartstrings Walk 2023**, jointly organized by Community Chest and Marina Bay Sands. **WE CARE** fielded over 30 participants this year including members of our board, staff, beneficiaries, and their loved ones. Undeterred by the humid weather, the walk was a spectacle to behold with people from all walks of life and even their furry friends making their way around the bay!

It was an enjoyable and fruitful 3 days as the festival not only raised substantial funds for various charitable causes but also fostered a sense of unity and camaraderie among our fellow social service agencies. We had the opportunity to make new friends with like-minded organizations, and it underscored the potential of collaborative efforts to bring about meaningful change in society.

*A big thank you **to all our donors** and our sincere gratitude **to Marina Bay Sands** for their generous contributions.
We'll see you all at next year's **Sands For Singapore Charity Festival!***



It Takes A Kampung

WE CARE Community Services
Art Exhibition | Fundraiser | Celebration

Taking place within a single evening, 'It Takes A Kampung' is an art exhibition and fundraiser that celebrates the 18th anniversary of WE CARE Community Services.

Recovery requires the support of an entire kampung. Community support is crucial to addiction recovery and provides a strong foundation for individuals seeking to overcome addiction.

The artworks and crafts at this event have been generously donated by the people who make up the satellite communities and networks revolving around the efforts of WE CARE, the beneficiaries that we treat, staff, friends, supporters, families, spouses and our partners.

Within this nurturing ecosystem, individuals battling addiction find acceptance, understanding, encouragement, and the resources necessary for their recovery journey.

Sharing a common language through artistic expression fosters a sense of belonging and helps us realize that we are walking together as we face life's challenges and successes.

Above all, creative endeavour reminds us that we are all connected. And each and every brother and sister, a work of art.

And when they are lost, a simple gesture from us is sometimes all it takes to get them back onto the right kampung path again.

WE CARE 18th Jubilee Anniversary Celebration - *It Takes A Kampung*

On July 20, 2023, **WE CARE** held its first art exhibition at The Chapel Gallery, the former Sculpture Square. The exhibition celebrated **WE CARE**'s 18th jubilee anniversary and also functioned as a fundraiser.

The theme "It Takes A Kampung" was truly embodied through the collaboration of the many different community members who donated artworks and other items to the exhibition, and also through those who showed up to make this event a success.

Leading up to the day of the event, Samraggi and I worked on a website to showcase all the pieces donated to the exhibition. Because of the number of items that were donated to **WE CARE**, the website also included items that could not be included in the physical exhibition. This being the first project that I worked on as a summer intern with **WE CARE**, I enjoyed working with different people on tasks such as photo-taking, pricing, taking inventory, and creating a website.

Before the event, everything began to fall into place when we loaded up paintings, jewellery and candles and brought them to the venue to set up the display. Seeing how fast the space transformed from an empty space with empty walls to being filled with so many colours that it made everything feel all the more exciting and real. While the weather did not cooperate on the day of the event, it did let up a bit when 4 pm came around; and the event was well attended.

It was great to see people interested in learning about the stories behind the pieces, and the enthusiasm from all the people who helped to make this event successful.

Reflecting upon my involvement in this event from start to finish, it has solidified my understanding of what a supportive community is. Among the many people that were involved, I always saw a willingness to help whether it was picking up supplies, bringing back meals for others, or helping out and assisting in any way.

There is something to be said about the power of community events and the impact of sharing the meaning of **WE CARE**.



Yan Ling Joslin, intern –
Hailing from the University of Oregon,
Yanling has been interning with **WE CARE** since
the beginning of July to August. She majors in
Global Studies and the Chinese Language.



Ms Ng Ling Ling, MP for Ang Mo Kio together with Board Members, and staff of WE CARE.

The art exhibition at The Chapel on 20th July is the first event of its kind that WE CARE has held.

Equal parts celebration, fundraiser and exhibition, it revolves around the theme of community.

The celebration is for the 18th anniversary jubilee of WE CARE and the art exhibition is a part of that celebration.

The contributions – in the form of art pieces, jewellery, and candles – from individuals, who represent the various stakeholders in WE CARE, symbolize the village or kampung that comes together to help one of its own.

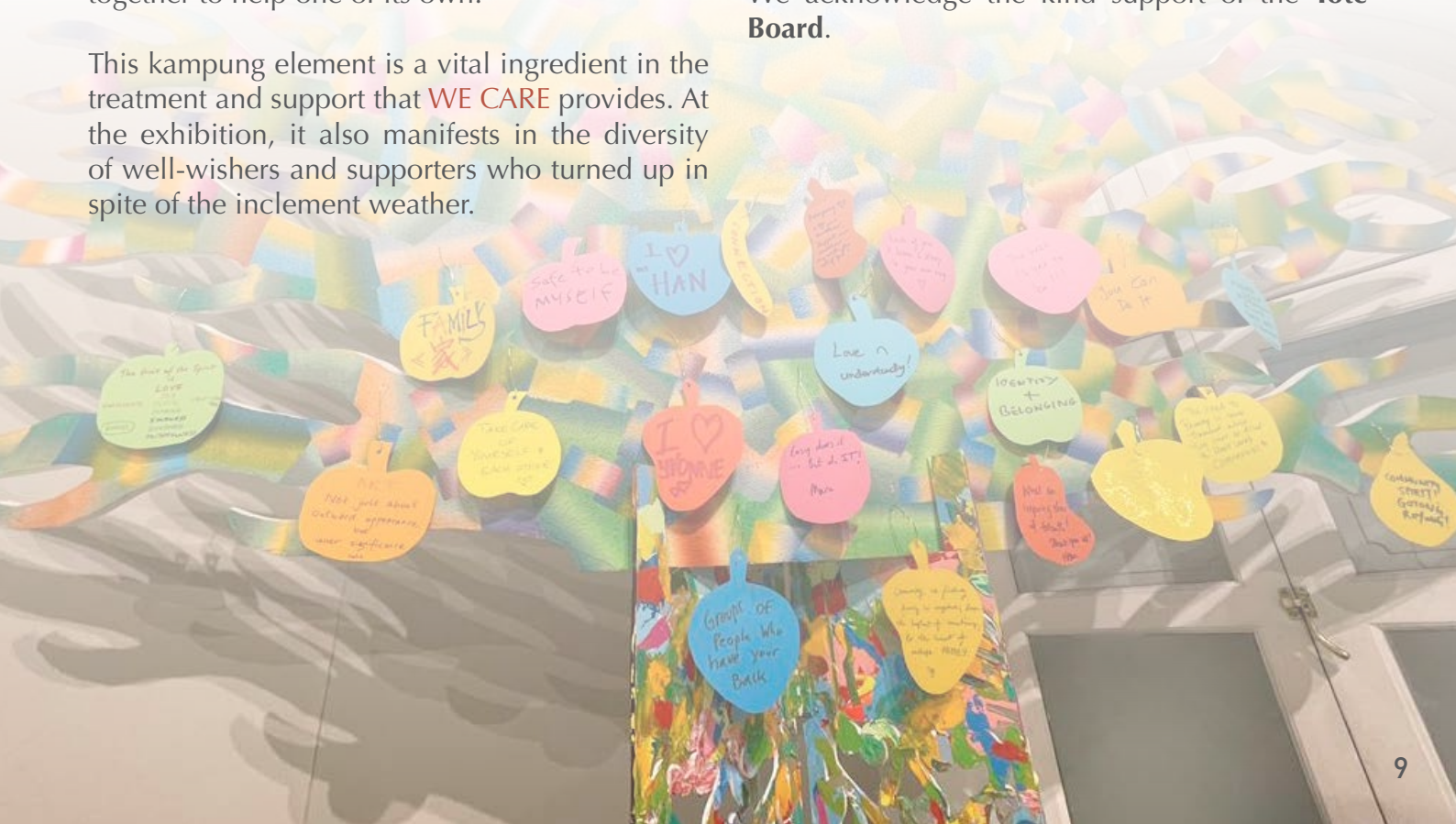
This kampung element is a vital ingredient in the treatment and support that WE CARE provides. At the exhibition, it also manifests in the diversity of well-wishers and supporters who turned up in spite of the inclement weather.

Guest of honour Ng Ling Ling, MP for Ang Mo Kio, made time to grace the occasion, interact with us and to share some encouraging words.

Although it did not raise much in the way of funds, it was an inspiration to the community that we treat that they are seen, are heard and are celebrated.

To showcase all the items donated to us for this cause, a website was set up at www.it-takes-a-kampung.com. Those who wish to donate to WE CARE can visit it to view the full range of items.

We acknowledge the kind support of the **Tote Board**.





WE CARE Charity Movie Transformers Rise of the Beast

It was all systems go on 8 June – Movie Day! The **WE CARE** Charity Movie is a signature fundraiser where our esteemed donors, valued partners, loved ones and our members can come together to show their support for one another and the recovering community at large.

The movie was the much-awaited premiere of Transformers – Rise of the Beasts, the sequel to 2018’s Bumblebee, an exciting film of triumph over seemingly impossible adversity. The anticipation in the air was palpable as guests and movie goers started streaming in for the pre-movie reception and registration.

Taking place during the June school holiday period, the event saw donors and supporters streaming in as families, groups of friends, colleagues and individuals. It was heartening to see so many happy faces!

Our valued partners, Marina Bay Sands and Singapore Pools generously donated tickets to various other charities such as Campus Impact, a social service agency that helps disadvantaged youths holistically.

Staff and volunteers who were dressed in our white **WE CARE** t-shirts greeted attendees and helped to usher guests to their seats in the 600-seater theatre. Their willingness to serve reflected their passion for our vision – to be the leading community hub of addiction recovery.

Board director Dr Lee Cheng took to the stage to express gratitude and recognition for the unwavering support of our community partners. As the lights dimmed and the movie began, the attendees settled into their seats to enjoy an evening of entertainment.



Here are some reactions from our audience:

“Fast-paced, action-packed, several heart-stopping moments, and mirage is a scream! – HG”

*“It’s great to attend a movie premier with both sponsors and beneficiaries, all in one theatre. That’s what makes **WE CARE** feel like a big family. – K”*

“Exciting action with a simple moral, to save the worlds, we have to work together. – C”

“I enjoyed myself. Really exciting, and great to see so many people enjoying themselves. – O”

*“Thank you **WE CARE** for the movie treat tonight. “We are not called to do extraordinary things, but to transform ordinary things with extraordinary love. – E”*

On behalf of all persons in recovery and their families, **WE CARE** would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone for your generous contributions. Thanks in particular go to our valued partners; **Marina Bay Sands, Singapore Pools, National Addictions Management Services (NAMS) and Promises Healthcare.** We also acknowledge and appreciate the support of **Tote Board.**

In the words of Optimus Prime,

“Thank you, all of you. You honour us with your bravery (and generosity).”



Novena Church Collaboration & Outreach

The Annual Procession (ANP) honouring Mother Mary is a key event of the **Church of St. Alphonsus**, or more affectionately known as Novena Church. As part of this year's initiative leading up to the ANP, the church collaborated with various organisations, both religious and secular, in an effort to reach out to the poor and abandoned communities in Singapore. **WE CARE** was invited to collaborate in a video (bit.ly/NovenaOutreach)

about addiction recovery, and to conduct an outreach session at the church on Saturday, 12 August. We are grateful for this opportunity and we welcome collaboration efforts from other organisations, religious or otherwise, to raise awareness about addiction and about the services that **WE CARE** provides for treatment and support.

Hear from our members and volunteers on their experience:

Being able to support **WE CARE** at their outreach programme at Novena Church on 12th August was a dream come true for me. Long have I dreamt of being of service to the two pillars which have greatly helped me in my recovery - my faith and the Masses which strengthen my desire to stay sober; and my community which helps me to feel loved, accepted and motivated to stay on this path to recovery.

I will never know how our presence there may have helped a brother or sister in the Catholic faith to know that there is a place like **WE CARE** where recovery does happen. At the same time, we create a greater awareness of this place where addicts, loved ones of addicts or

volunteers can come to understand about addiction and how best to help ourselves and/or others.

It is my hope that even if we have encouraged a single addict to reach forward for help or just one family member to be interested to know more so that they can help their family member in their struggle with addiction, we have done our little part.

If we have made one person more aware or to care, then it would become more than just a dream come true for me.

Ian Dennis
(Not his real name)

On Saturday 12th August 2023, I attended an outreach event at Novena Church. Going into this event I did not know what to expect because I had never done outreach at a church before, and have been to a church a limited number of times in my life.

Doing outreach within the community is important to the mission of **WE CARE** because it actively works to destigmatize addiction by bringing the issue to the forefront of people's minds, and educating them about addiction. Additionally, getting out into the community and talking about addiction is helping to normalize talking about it and getting help.

In my conversations with different people about what **WE CARE** does, a commonality was that while most

people knew others with addiction issues, getting them to seek help was difficult. Many did find it useful to know what resources are available and how to access them, so when you want to get help you know where to go.

In interacting with faith-based communities, I have noticed that kindness and helping others are cornerstones of their values. Novena Church is a place where, regardless of faith, people are there for healing. In his homily, the priest encouraged the congregation to treat people who are going through addiction with kindness, patience, understanding, care, forgiveness and to pray for them instead of condemning them.

Yan Ling Joslin
Intern





MENTAL HEALTH & SELF-CARE: First Put On Your Own Mask

Hi, my name is Rebecca and I have a long personal history of wearing myself thin. I once thought that rest was for the weak, that asking for help revealed my inadequacy, and that saying “no” would lead to being rejected. Plus, I was raised to feel responsible for the people around me. My job, my family, my friends, they all needed me in one way or another, and I simply didn’t have time to take care of myself. Self-care seemed selfish. I also felt perpetually exhausted, and deeply unhappy.

As I get older, I’ve begun to re-consider this approach. I try to take consistent and intentional actions to build and maintain my personal resources. Maybe it’s because I’m older and therefore tire more easily, but I now appreciate the value of prioritizing my own well-being before answering others’ needs. Even still, learning to first put on my own mask has been a huge adjustment.

Like saving money in the bank, self-care practices help us to navigate and recover from the sustained chaos of life. A strong internal foundation makes us less vulnerable to stress and overwhelm, and to the related physical and emotional health effects. Self-care also informs how we interact with people and circumstances. Being well-resourced helps us identify and achieve goals, to make more effective choices, and to align actions with personal values. Also, existing in the world as a well-rested, resilient person is just far more pleasant than the alternative.

Self-care supports physical, emotional and cognitive health. Just as everyone learns differently, each person’s self-care style will differ depending on what’s most accessible and effective. Because consistency and sustainability are key, it helps to find practices that you enjoy. I try to re-frame self-care as something that I get to do, not something I have to do. Like eating dessert instead of taking medicine.

Discovering which approaches work best is not an exact science, so patience and open-mindedness are key. The process begins with personal investigation and honest recognition of one’s present state. After identifying how you’re feeling and what you need, the next step is to believe yourself and then act accordingly. After a lifetime of subverting my own needs for the sake of others, these inner channels of communication can be difficult to tap into. It’s taken time and practice to recognize how I’m feeling, to decide how I’d like to feel and, if they’re different, to then make the appropriate adjustments.

Selfcare
.. IS NOT ..
SELFISH

Emotional time travel seems to work. I look back at situations in which I felt overwhelmed and (without judgement) try to imagine what I could have done differently. What resources would have better supported *Yesterday Rebecca*? Other times I look ahead and try to envision ways to set up my future self for success. How can I care for myself so that *Tomorrow Rebecca* will have what she needs? I like this technique because it gives me both a playbook and crystal ball that I can analyze either after or beforehand.

Negotiating all of this in real time is most challenging. Feelings are complicated, fluid and difficult to interpret in the moment. It's good to know your warning signs: the thoughts, feelings and behaviors which indicate that your resource gauge is approaching Empty. When I'm feeling reactive, vulnerable and stretched thin, I have a few ways to check in. *Can I step away and try to calm my mind? Should I go for a walk? Would it help to chat with a friend? Do I need to eat?* (I am a very angry hungry person; a simple snack often prevents a total catastrophe.) I still find it really hard to recognize that I'm struggling as I'm struggling, so I'm trying to pay better attention, and to believe myself.

Sometimes, though, self-care involves not-doing vs. doing. Avoiding draining, high-output situations is one of the simplest paths to staying well-resourced. As a shy and overall socially awkward person, I used to accept almost every offer and invitation, fearing that if I declined, I'd never be invited again. I now know that being judicious with my time and energy goes a long way in preserving my resources. Evasion isn't always an option, but you might be surprised at to how much you can actually say "no."

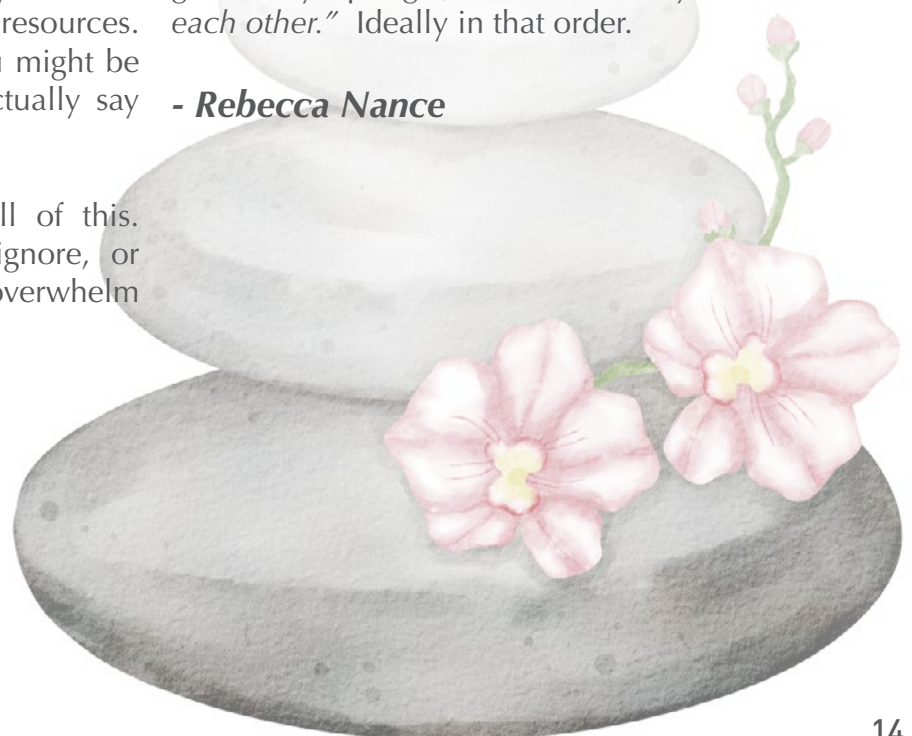
There is a time-sensitive aspect in all of this. Things may seem small enough to ignore, or too intense to handle, but stress and overwhelm

accumulate if left unaddressed. Powering through without applying self-care is like taking out a high-interest loan. Eventually the debt will come due, sometimes at a higher cost than was originally owed. The consequences can be very real, since long-term stress can fracture relationships, undermine vital support systems and cause serious health problems.

Self-compassion lives at the heart of self-care. Negativity bias causes us to focus on the sad, scary and dangerous aspects of our environments. These instincts, and a culture that reinforces them will drag you down like quicksand, and make feeling constantly tired and sad seem normal and expected. For far too long, I didn't think I was supposed to, or even deserved to feel good. We all have our bad days, but it's important to actively cultivate a positive state of mind. Everyone deserves to feel happy, healthy and safe.

Self-care is not selfish or wasted time. After all, you can't pour from an empty cup. Prioritizing your own well-being ensures you can offer sustainable support to those around. Understand your warning signs and address them before you burn out. Know when to ask for help. Consider seeking outside or professional counsel if you're having trouble sleeping, low mood or drastic mood swings, changes in appetite, or if you've lost interest in things you once enjoyed. Learn how to move at your own pace. First meet your own needs, and then worry about what others might expect. To put it simply, in the words of the late, great Jerry Springer, *"Take care of yourself, and each other."* Ideally in that order.

- Rebecca Nance





I am an addict, born and raised

I am cross-addicted to both gambling and drugs. From a very young age I was aware that addiction was in my blood but did not think I could do anything about it - I thought that since those were the cards I was dealt, I'd just have to learn how to work with them. It's like when someone is born into royalty: They might not want to be king but along the way they grew into that role.

As I grew up, I came across many people who commented that I had an "addictive personality", but I paid them no mind. As I look back on my recovery journey, it's clear that there were warning signs that I either ignored or was too caught up to see. You would think that multiple trips to DRC (Drug Rehabilitation Centre) would have succeeded in getting my attention, but they did not.

I made my first bet when I was in Primary 5, and had my first drug when I was 15. At the time I didn't think much of it - they were rites of passage and I was more than happy to be in on them.

Let me begin with gambling, which started innocuously with my auntie helping me make a \$5 bet on Newcastle United to win. The wager seemed to make watching football more interesting, and since the adults in my family were doing it, why not? There wasn't a week that went by where my family weren't stressing over the results of 4D, Toto or football games. Gambling was normalised in the culture I was brought up in, so I saw nothing wrong. Not only was it a way to add excitement to watching live football games, but it came with the promise of quick money.

Where else in the world can you double your money in 90 minutes but in a football match?

My gambling habit didn't truly take off until I got into NS - the first time when I had any semblance of an income. Granted, it wasn't much, but I felt more powerful now that I had some earning power. And so, I channelled this newfound power into my gambling habit. I started making larger bets more frequently, and even started making bets on credit. I started chasing losses, and borrowed from people to either gamble some more or pay off debts. I have since learnt that these are hallmarks of a compulsive gambler.

At those times, the scary thing was that I was unaware of how destructive my behaviour was, on both myself and those around me. In fact, it felt right. But I was merely making ends meet.

On to my drug problem. It started at 15 when the stars aligned, but in a very distorted way. Within a few days of my trying my first joint of marijuana, I was given my first sleeping pill by my parents. At that time my father had a month's supply of sleeping pills prescribed for him after a slipped disc surgery had resulted in an infection. He was having problems falling asleep, thus the prescription.

Like most teenagers my age, I had a tendency of sleeping and waking up late during the weekend which would then lead to me being unable to fall asleep on Sunday night. Driven by my frustration, I complained to my parents who then proceeded to give me one of my dad's sleeping pills. Again,

innocent in itself. The experience was similar to my mum giving me Panadol when I had a fever. Within half an hour, I was out like a light and had the best sleep of my life. To make things better (or worse), I woke up feeling more refreshed than I had ever been. This experience with my parents led to the development of a very dangerous belief - that when I was feeling something negative, I could simply medicate the negativity away.



From then on, whenever the opportunity for me to use drugs arose, I would take it. This extended to alcohol, and carried on for the next 15 years. When I reached legal age, my drug use took off in a similar way to my gambling when I entered NS. Self-medicating with whatever substance I could get my hands on became a way of life.

Coupling the trauma I had from being in a dysfunctional family with the fact that my closest circle of friends had also started gambling, using drugs and drinking alcohol, my addictions progressively became the centre of my universe. From the ages of 20 to 30, every action I took in life was to feed my addiction. Just constantly finding legal and illegal ways and means to get more drugs or money, and no one was spared.

Sure, in the past I have tried to quit many times, usually when I ran out of money and drugs, but never truly succeeded. I could never attain a meaningful length of sobriety because I would always end up giving in to my temptations. I had reached a point where I was convinced I was stuck in this vicious cycle and there was nothing I could do about it.

I am now 31, and have finally found true recovery. The idea of recovery came into my life after a chance meeting with an old secondary school friend a few months before I turned 30. He gave me the basic facts, and asked me to go to a 12-Step meeting, saying that more would be revealed.

That first meeting changed my life, because I met other addicts just like myself, but who had

somehow been clean for a few years. They spoke about experiences that were eerily similar to mine, with a sense of freedom that I desperately craved. They seemed to have found the answer. I eventually found a sponsor who then suggested that I go for detox in NAMS (National Addictions Management Services) and subsequently, **WE CARE** Community Services. More than 15 years of active addiction had driven me to a point of hopelessness and exhaustion, so I was willing to take on any suggestion that offered even the tiniest glimpse of hope. I'm glad I did, because if I had not, I would not be writing this today.

Detox helped me through the initial recovery process, but it is **WE CARE** and the 12-Step groups that have helped me stay in recovery. Through these 2 avenues I was able to change my environment from a completely toxic one to one that I feel safe in. They offer me every tool one could possibly need in recovery, and through their support, I'm slowly piecing my life back together.

Above all, recovery for me has been a journey in self-discovery. I've learnt so much - about myself, why I used to engage in destructive behaviours, why some of the belief systems I developed throughout life were completely whack. More importantly, I've learnt how to correct the errors. It was tough to admit that basically everything I previously thought was right was in fact wrong, but it was a pill I'm truly happy I swallowed.

- Jay (July 2023)





A Henna Good Time!

True to our mission of advocating for persons in recovery, **WE CARE** endeavours to foster greater understanding of addiction as a mental health condition and empathy towards the recovering community.

Working with schools and Institutes of Higher Learning serves as an avenue to raise awareness amongst young minds and engage Gen Z individuals who are eager to make a positive impact in their communities and beyond.

WE CARE has collaborated with various educational institutes, including National Junior College (NJC) over the past few years.

During the June school holiday period, members of NJC's Indian Dance (NJID) took time away from their busy curriculum to conduct two interactive activities for our members – a hands-on origami workshop and a henna hand art session.

Although it is generally available in Singapore, it was a new experience for many of our members who had never been exposed to henna before. Members of

NJID came well-prepared with henna cones and a myriad of designs on their mobile devices – ready to paint away. After a quick demonstration, participants got the chance to practice their newly acquired hand-painting skills on paper, before executing it for real on their hands.

Hear what the members from NJID had to say:

*“Our experience at **WE CARE** teaching the participants henna art was truly a very fulfilling and enjoyable one. The participants were so enthusiastic and receptive that it was an immense joy to work with them. Their interest in henna really encouraged us to try our best to teach them how to draw using henna! We could engage in conversations with them effortlessly because they were such easygoing and fun people. We definitely enjoyed our time there and we hope that the participants felt the same way too. A sincere thank you to **WE CARE** for giving us the opportunity to get to know people from different backgrounds better. We hope to continue to be of service, and to share our skills and joy with the recovering community. – NJID”*

With initiatives such as these, **WE CARE** hopes to bridge the gap between theory and experience. Interactive activities in a safe environment allow for the opportunity to develop social awareness and to plant the seeds of empathy – ultimately addressing the stigma surrounding addiction and mental health.

Kudos to National Junior College and NJID for taking a positive step towards fostering a greater sense of social responsibility.



Our minds and bodies are intricately connected. We've caged ourselves into a destructive, monotonous 9 to 5 style of living which may not be the best for our bodies or minds. As humans, our bodies require a break from the daily hustle and bustle of city life. Engagement with nature helps to restore physical energy into our mentally drained bodies. A hike or a trek can go a long way.

At **WE CARE**, the staff and the beneficiaries stand by this principle. They ensure the team takes a break and leisurely time in nature.

The most recent hike was the Tree-Top Trail Walk at MacRitchie Reservoir. The trail was completed by a group of 28 members, including the staff of **WE CARE**, the beneficiaries, and students from National Junior College. A startling fun fact is that the group was composed of people belonging to all age groups, the majority of them being in their 30s to 60s, and they were bustling with energy even after the trek. The level of difficulty ranged from moderate to complex. The route got jagged and steep at multiple points in the hike, but the attempt was successful.

Several addiction recovery programs offer hiking as a part of addiction treatment. Hiking can push through a rush of feel-good chemicals similar to the effects of some substances. However, the benefits of hiking are not limited to the release of endorphins (mood-boosting chemicals) but also the sense of solitude and the peacefulness that comes along with the journey.

Hiking offers space for introspection and self-reflection. It gives one a chance to understand, feel, validate, and regulate one's emotions. Validating and controlling our emotions is an integral part of the



journey. This allows us to connect with ourselves and foster healthier relationships with ourselves.

Completing a trail path is a trial on its own. It is an enriching adventure to hit the top, pause, take a break, and continue the walk down. Pushing ourselves to the limit and achieving a feat is a rewarding experience.

Conversations with most of the members were very insightful. This may be slightly astonishing, but interacting with the adults was much easier than with students in the same age group as me. Talking with Caleb is my fondest memory from the trip. Opening up to Caleb and interacting with him was the easiest because we had something in common. Still, apart from that, it always felt like he had something to add to the topic and was comfortable about starting a conversation. I felt integrated and valued. Not to mention, he was amusing to talk to!



Walking on the bridge had to be the most rejuvenating and soothing moment. The view from the bridge was breathtaking. On the bridge, time seemed to stand still, providing a momentary respite from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

It is also a delight to have youngsters accompany us. Their vibrant energy, zesty, liveliness, and unstoppable chatter created an environment with constant engagement.

Although the route seemed daunting initially, I gradually began to enjoy the thrill. Hence, the best way to enjoy exercising is by getting rid of that same old repetitive exercise module and trying something new every time. Introducing something new to your routine is the best way to be consistent. This is because you will look forward to something new and exciting and won't dread the experience. But trying out something new isn't a thrilling experience for everyone. The fear of failure and the shame it brings continues to linger in your mind. One way to overcome this fear is by finding an encouraging and supportive friend with whom you can perform these activities. One needs a 'partner in crime' at such times.

Bringing a friend along on hikes means getting more adventurous. The hiking trails can be slightly more complicated, all because you know you can rely on someone. The fear of getting lost becomes a more enjoyable moment than something you'd dread. I genuinely believe that the bond you form through these hiking sessions is beautiful, one where you can rely on each other if something goes haywire.

Trekking routes unveil many emotions and are a metaphor for the recovery process. The rugged paths mirror the challenges faced during recovery, demanding perseverance and determination.

WE CARE is that friend you can rely on through your recovery journey. At these lowest points in your life, **WE CARE** will be right by your side and show you the brighter side of life, the excellent view from the top of the hill.

- *Dhruvi, intern*





Visit to the Asian Civilisations Museum

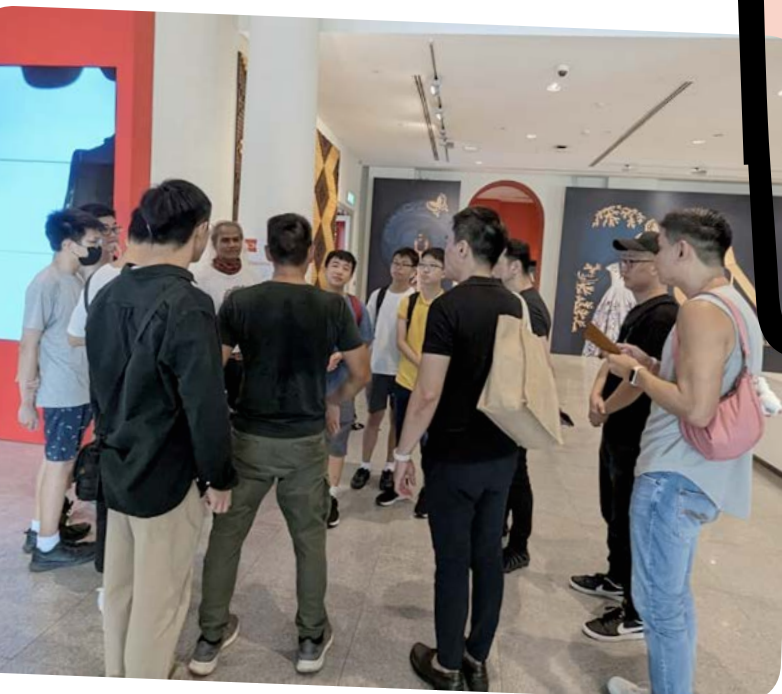
In collaboration with students from Hwa Chong Institute who are currently working on a service learning module in school, a group of **WE CARE** beneficiaries and staff visited the Asian Civilisations Museum on 3rd July 2023.

The current special exhibit at the museum is the “**Andrew Gn: Fashioning Singapore and the World**” display. It features the designs of the Singapore born designer, Andrew Gn, whose designs have been seen on numerous royals and celebrities. Most notably, the exhibit is interactive and allows visitors to use a bracelet to virtually collect different motifs Gn uses, such as the iconic butterfly and floral that are often seen in his clothing.

At the end of the exhibit, we were able to scan and create our own designs from ones collected throughout the experience. Attendees of this museum visit thought that it was fun to be able to experience the museum and the perspective that it offered, “**a smorgasbord of culture showcasing the different layers through time**”.

As an intern, this is my first day on the job and being able to see the range of events and support that **WE CARE** provides to its community is the best way to dive headfirst into this experience. The work that non-profits do is incredibly beneficial to not only the demographic they directly aim to serve, but also anyone who has the chance to be a part of the group to learn from it.

Yanling Joslin – Intern



The museum visit happened to be my first day as an intern at **WE CARE** and my fourth day in the city of Singapore. The ACM, or the Asian Civilisations Museum had already been on my radar for a while and the new exhibit on the work of Singapore-based fashion designer Andrew Gn was a wonderful experience. I really enjoyed the little interactive bits such as designing collars and scanning the wrist band to collect mementos.

I also got to peruse some of the other exhibitions at my leisure, my favorite being the one on ancient religions. Much like the diverse yet interconnected culture of modern Singapore, a lot of early religions (such as Hinduism and Buddhism) are more interconnected than we might initially realize and the museum was testament to the interconnectedness of different cultures in days long past.

Samraggi – Intern

HIGHLIGHTS

Discovering new joys in recovery.
Exciting events and activities from
the recent past.



15th Finisher Awards



18th Jubilee Art Exhibition



Asian Civilisations Museum



Asia Pacific Orchid Conference



Charity Movie - Transformers Rise of the Beasts



Community Chest Heartstrings Walk 2023



Conversational Hindi Class



Sands for Singapore Charity Festival 2023



MacRitchie Tree-top Experience



Henna Art Workshop with NJID



National Day BBQ Celebration



Tampines West National Day Carnival

Transforming Lives. Restoring Families.

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



WE CARE
COMMUNITY SERVICES

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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 behaviour 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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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

