

A photograph of two hands lighting sparklers at night. The sparklers are lit, creating a bright, golden light against a dark background. The scene is framed by a white border.

Issue 11 · Oct-Dec 2017

HOPE

World Mental Health Day that is observed on 10 October every year is a day that provides an opportunity for all in the mental health sector to showcase their work, and shed light on what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

While a commemorative day, raising awareness of mental health issues and mobilising efforts in support of mental health is something that needs to be part of our everyday lives.

Given that this year's theme is 'Mental Health at the Workplace', we've dedicated this issue of HOPE to this timely matter. Workplace stress is becoming more commonplace with more than half of workers in Singapore saying their stress levels have increased over a span of six months¹. Prolonged exposure to stress factors and lack of self-care can be damaging to our mental health, making us more susceptible to mental health conditions.

For adults with existing mental health conditions, they face an even tougher challenge — reintegrating into the workforce. While employment can sometimes give rise to mental health issues, it can also be the road to recovery for those living with the condition by helping them find renewed purpose and providing the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to society.

We are proud to play a pivotal role in our clients quest for gainful employment with MINDSET Learning Hub. The centre provides vocational training and skills competencies to persons who are coping with mental health issues and thereafter, facilitates job placements and provide support to both employees and employers. We also offer wellness package comprising talks, arts experiential and counselling to companies for workplace mental health.

Besides working adults, youths are also increasingly becoming more vulnerable as more adolescents are being diagnosed with depression and anxiety at an early age.

We recently extended our creative services and youth outreach programmes to pilot Creative SAY! a wellness centre for youths, focusing on creative modalities — sports, the outdoors, art, music, dance, writing and peer programmes — to promote mental health awareness and well-being.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all our donors, sponsors, partners, and volunteers for their continuous support in making mental health care more accessible in Singapore. We look forward to forging new collaborations and partnerships in furthering SAMH's cause.

Ms Tan Li Li

Executive Director, Singapore Association For Mental Health (SAMH)

¹ Gopal, Saradevi. Lucy, Daniel. Working In Asia: Key HR And Leadership Priorities, Roffey Park. 2016. Web. Sep 2017.

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Have a comment, suggestion or feedback to share with the editorial team? Email us at hope@samhealth.org.sg

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HOPE

NEWSLETTER

The Singapore Association For Mental Health (SAMH), established as a voluntary welfare organisation in December 1968, provides community-based mental health programmes and services to promote mental and social well-being and empower people with mental illness in rebuilding their lives.

For more information visit www.samhealth.org.sg or write to us at samhhq@singnet.com.sg
Toll-free helpline 1800 283 7019



Towards an Inclusive Workplace

Written by Tan Wen Xiang

Employment is an integral part of life as it meets many aspects of social and financial needs of one's life. Just like activities of daily living and seeking enjoyment, work plays an important part to persons with mental health issues (PMHI) as it provides a role that is positive and purposeful. Yet there are many PMHI who are facing difficulties in getting a job. This can be attributed to current employment climate but PMHI feel that they are denied opportunities by employers when they disclose their condition.

How do employers view hiring persons with mental health issues?

In 2015, Singapore Association For Mental Health (SAMH) conducted a qualitative study with employers who have hired PMHI to find out the employers' perspective and experience when it comes to hiring and working with PMHI. The study also helped SAMH to review existing programmes to create the best support for both employers and PMHI.

In the study, employers cited the shortage of manpower, especially in manpower intensive industries like cleaning and food and beverage, as a main reason of hiring PMHI. Some employers also view hiring PMHI as a way of contributing back to the community.

This study also highlighted the qualities that employers seek in

their employees, mainly the ability to perform tasks, a positive work attitude, consistent attendance, and willingness to listen to instructions. Further into the study, employers shared the common issues that they face in hiring PMHI — attendance, managing stress, and the amount of time taken for them to complete their tasks. Nevertheless, many employers do find value in working with people with mental health issues; namely good work ethics, loyalty to company, and willingness to follow instructions. Some employers even find that PMHI are more punctual compared to other employees they have.

Supporting persons with mental health issues in a workplace

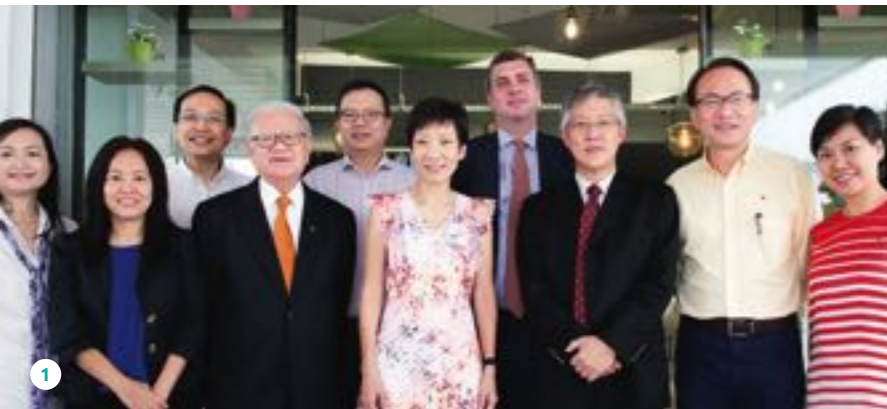
Overall, employers are still keen to support and hire PMHI but as they are not trained therapists or counsellors, they would like to work closely with social service organisations, such as SAMH, specialising in mental health in areas of support, training and monitoring of job progress so that PMHI can perform better at their workplace.

In 2016, SAMH, in collaboration with MINDSET Care Limited, started a new vocational training and employment placement centre, MINDSET Learning Hub (MLH), for PMHI to restart their learning and education journey so as to achieve employment. Training is conducted in a supported and non-intimidating environment tailored to their learning pace. MLH hopes to spearhead a cultural change that supports the integration of PMHI into our society by developing a pool of trainees with certified training and the relevant skill sets required to get the work done so that PMHI are empowered to provide for themselves and their families.



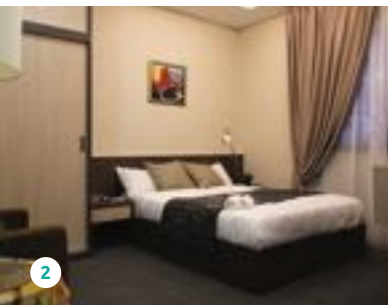
More Than Just A Vocational Training Centre

MINDSET Learning Hub is not just a vocational training centre that offers persons with mental health conditions tailored courses and real-life training in simulated training environments; but also an employment support centre for persons-in-recovery (PIRs) to find jobs after completion.



The Singapore Association For Mental Health (SAMH) in collaboration with the private charity under the Jardine Matheson Group has launched Singapore's first vocational training centre for persons with mental health conditions, which will enable them to reintegrate and return to employment. Located at Block 257 Jurong East Street 24, the centre was officially launched on 1 October 2016.

Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth launched the centre and expressed that the centre plays an important role. With the proper training facilities, skills certification and by providing job opportunities, persons with mental health conditions can fully recover and reintegrate into society.



This was a collaboration between SAMH and MINDSET Care Limited, a philanthropic arm under the Jardine Matheson Group, which is the first centre offering Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) courses to persons coping with mental health conditions. Encompassing 5,800 square feet of space, the MINDSET Learning Hub consists of four training classrooms and four simulated training environments — a café, a hotel room, a patient-care room and a commercial food preparation area.

The training for clients will last between five to eight months if they opt to complete all the modules leading to a WSQ certification. Right now, courses offered include the safe preparation of food and food hygiene skills. Trainees will also be able to learn about interviewing and resume writing, workplace communication and relevant skills. The centre aims to equip up to 300 trainees a year with the necessary skillsets in the areas of hospitality, healthcare support, cleaning, retail and F&B to secure meaningful employment. Other supportive features include a work attachment component for some programmes, followed by job matching to enhance the employability of PIRs.

"I wish to express my gladness that a place like MINDSET Learning Hub exists that caters specially to mental (health) patients who can receive education and learn skills, which help in their employability ... I find that MLH has a conducive environment with friendly staff and trainers who are sensitive and helpful to the needs of mental (health) patients." says Tan, a PIR, who completed the WSQ Certificate in Culinary Skills at MINDSET Learning Hub and is currently working part-time as a kitchen crew in an F&B establishment.

“With proper training facilities, skills certification that is purposefully tailored for this group of clients, then with the integration back to jobs, with job opportunities provided, I think this is a real support system that I think we’ve been waiting for a long time,”

MS GRACE FU
Minister for Culture, Community and Youth



MLH Café Now Open

Housed within MINDSET Learning Hub (MLH), the MLH Café is now opened for business! Delight yourselves to a variety of waffles, galaxy drinks and much more. We've got treats for both the young and the young-at-heart.

You could tag along with friends and family to spend some quality time together over scrumptious food. Alternatively, if you're thinking to throw a party or an event, look no further. Give us a call.

MLH Café aims to support people recovering from mental health issues reintegrate into the workforce by empowering them with relevant job skills through on-the-job training. 100% of our profits goes back into supporting our programme. Your patronage will help build self-confidence in our trainees and empower them to be self-reliant. We look forward to welcoming you at MLH Café!

Address Block 257 Jurong East Street 24, #01-405, Singapore 600257

Opening Hours Monday to Friday: 10am–4pm • Saturday: 9.30am–12pm • Sunday: Closed

Follow us on Instagram [@mlhcafe](#) for the latest scoop and be sure to tag us [#mlhcafe](#) in your cool food pics!



Give the Gift of Empowerment

Most agree that the workplace environment has a heavy influence on an individual's mental well-being. It often is a cornerstone from which a person makes a meaningful contribution to oneself and to community life. For people with mental health conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, mood disorders, anxiety disorder, and schizophrenia, finding employment or returning to work and retaining a job after treatment is often a challenge. Most often they are faced with stigma and rejections.

MINDSET Learning Hub provides those on the way to recovery an opportunity for employment. They undertake workplace skills training and are offered job placements. Each donation of \$35 will go towards a starter kit for a trainee. The starter kit consists of a backpack, pen, notebook, tumbler, and an ez-link card.

To make a donation, please visit:
www.giving.sg/singapore-association-for-mental-health/mlh

Campaign ends 31 December 2017.



giving.sg
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CREATIVE SAY!

Written by **Serene Goh**

After four months of operations in Marsiling, **Creative SAY!** held our official launch on Saturday, 15 July. President Halimah Yacob was our Guest-of-Honour, and she was also announced as Patron of SAMH on the same day. It was a special day for us as we showcased the work we do, and our broad youth clientele, to invited guests, generous sponsors and the media.

Creative SAY! is the newest of the three creative centres. SAY! stands for Sports, Arts and Youths, and our belief that youths should have a SAY! in their lives.

Located at Block 317 Woodlands Street 31, Creative SAY! was set up using the \$140,000 that The Ireland Funds Singapore donated to SAMH. It is a place of warmth, safety and fun for many youths from Mondays to Saturdays, 2pm–5pm. Most who come by range from ages 10–17, but there are also young adults from ages 18–35 who engage in our programmes as well.

Since we opened our doors, we have brought youths out for at least one core sport activity every month, ranging from High Element and rock climbing, to kayaking and dragonboat, to floorball and cycling. We also have open studio sessions for creative writing, arts experiential and art skills, drama, and fitness activities like Zumba.

Creative SAY! works with a wide spectrum of youths – youths who

just want to learn new things and hang out, youths deemed at risk by schools or agencies, and youths with early diagnosis of mental health conditions. We seek to create an inclusive environment where youths learn to share and accept one another as peers.

As with most non-profit organisations, Creative SAY! also depends a lot on volunteers and we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to them. We have a group of psychology and drama students from Singapore Polytechnic who used process drama techniques to introduce the concept of self to our youths and built up their self-esteem. We also have another group of foreign students from Hwa Chong Institution who are interested in psychiatry and arts and have been facilitating art sessions for our clients.

Other groups of volunteers include Campus PSY, Republic Polytechnic, Marsiling Youth Executive Committee, Anglo-Chinese School (Independent), NUS College of Alice and Peter Tan, and Temasek Polytechnic.



1. President Halimah Yacob, Patron of SAMH, with students from Singapore Polytechnic 2. Official launch of Creative SAY! with Mrs Noor Quek (Director of The Ireland Funds Singapore), Dr Francis Yeoh, President Halimah Yacob and Ms Tan Li Li.

OUR HEARTIEST
CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR PATRON,
MADAM HALIMAH YACOB,
ON BECOMING SINGAPORE'S
FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT!

From the President, Management Committee and Staff of
SINGAPORE ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Making a Difference in Our Community

On behalf of the many hundreds of beneficiaries who walk through our doors each year, we would like to express our thanks to our inspiring and generous corporate partners and supporters. Thanks to them, we are able to build a community and provide much needed services and programmes for our beneficiaries. In this issue, we would like to give a big shout out to Aon Risk Solutions Asia, who have helped fundraise \$170,000 for SAMH this year.



Through a fundraising event held at Lloyd's of London (Singapore) on 30 March 2017, the 'Enter the Komodo Drag-Aon 2017 Challenge' team raised more than S\$100,000, where the proceeds will go towards the operating costs of Creative SAY!. That very evening, eight enthusiastic gentlemen also gamely pledged to shave their hair off on 5 May to raise more funds.

'Enter the Komodo Drag-Aon 2017 Challenge' took place from 7 May to 10 May. A team of 33 from across the insurance industry embarked on an action pack endurance challenge on Komodo Islands, Flores, Indonesia – combining a series of trail-runs, a 28km sea kayaking and adventure hiking. The team got together again in August to volunteer for our Sporting Saturdays. Together with our youths, they built a raft out of empty plastic barrels and pipes, and then took it out to sea for a test. The volunteers and youths enjoyed themselves and had a great time bonding.

Following that, Ms Judith Finley, an underwriter at QBE Marine and Energy Services, who had attended the fundraising event and was touched by the work SAMH does, initiated a yoga session at Lloyd's of London (Singapore) to request for donations towards SAMH.

Apart from organising several fundraising events, they continued to volunteer and inspire others to raise funds by sharing about SAMH and its programmes and services even after they had completed the challenge. In recognition of their commitment towards building a better life for our youths, SAMH would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Aon Risk Solutions Asia.



1. Team high-fives and cheers after the endurance challenge. 2. Mr Geoff Lambrou, Chairman of Aon Risk Solutions Asia, flagged off the 'Enter the Komodo Drag-Aon' Challenge on 30 March. 3. Heads shaved to raise further funds for charity. 4. The 'Komodo Drag-Aon' team continued their support by volunteering at one of our Sporting Saturdays event. 5. Inspired by Aon's fundraising spirit, Ms Judith Finley organised a yoga session to help raise more donations for SAMH.

Race To Change

Seven medical students scaling four of the highest volcanoes in Indonesia to raise awareness for Mental Health.

Contributed by **Mental Muscle**



Mental Muscle 2.0 (front row) handed over the reins to Mental Muscle 3.0.

Mental Muscle 3.0 is a student-led initiative run solely by medical students and 1 August 2017 to 30 July'18 will be our third successive year. This year, with a total of 16 members spanning three cohorts of medical students, our project aims to generate public awareness for mental conditions and clarify misconceptions surrounding individuals battling mental conditions on an even greater scale than previous efforts. Our local endeavours include hosting talks, road-shows and workshops at teaching and work-related institutions, as well as engaging individuals in public spaces and radio talk-shows. This is in addition to managing social media, fundraising pages online and hosting engagement runs.

Our project will include an overseas physical challenge, to positively influence the way Singaporeans view mental health and raise funds to help this marginalised community. This challenge serves to be both mentally and physically demanding, hence, giving the project's name: Mental Muscle. In any case, our project is not only about the challenge, but also the efforts before and after the race. The previous two successful expeditions included a 250km Namib Desert Race followed by a 200km trek in Nepal, which raised funds close to S\$50,000 and S\$40,000 respectively for our beneficiary, Singapore Association For Mental Health (SAMH). The funds raised

from the first expedition facilitated the construction of a vocational training centre, MINDSET Learning Hub, for persons with mental health issues, to equip them with skills to enter the workforce. The previous expedition's funds were channelled to YouthReach, a rehabilitative centre for youths from the ages of 13–21 years old.

This year, we plan to further build upon the concept of endurance and perseverance via the physical challenge and to alleviate stigmas in the public via outreach efforts. Seven members of the team will scale four of the highest volcanoes in Indonesia back-to-back, with a total elevation of over 14,000 metres, from end of May 2018 to early June 2018.

Funds raised by our team will be channelled towards Creative SAY!, an exciting new initiative to reach out to youths in the community to raise awareness of mental health issues and build a stronger support system for them. This feat will further enable us to pay tribute to the individuals exhibiting determination in overcoming their mental health issues and direct attention towards our cause.

We will be most grateful for any support received either in the form of donations or equipment for the challenge!

Support the Mental Muscle 3.0 on www.give.asia/mentalmuscle

Look out for updates of the race via www.mentalmuscle.org or cheer them on via Facebook [@mentalmuscle](https://www.facebook.com/mentalmuscle) or Instagram [@mentalmuscle](https://www.instagram.com/mentalmuscle)

If you have any ideas on collaborations or wish to support the team in any other ways, do reach out to them via email at mentalmuscle@outlook.com

What's on

Upcoming events happening between
October to December

Voice Out! Concert in the Park

Let your hair down this October and celebrate World Mental Health Day! Unwind with live music by local and international artistes with your friends and family! Relax at the park and enjoy art activities and street performances. Join us for a mindfulness session and learn to relax your mind. Arrive early to reserve your picnic spot and collect a set of limited edition tote bag and picnic mat (while stocks last)! Let's voice our support for persons facing mental health issues! Performances by singers Stefanie Sun, Chloe Seah, Marc x Hashy, Amanda Lee, Hazid Imran and Mano Esperanza. Visit www.facebook.com/WMHD2017 for weather and event updates!

📅 Saturday • October 7 • 4:30pm–7pm 🏷️ Free
📍 Singapore Botanic Gardens, Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage



the mindful company
×
YOUTHREACH

'What's Important Series'

The Singapore Association For Mental Health (SAMH) has collaborated with The Mindful Company, a social mission-driven jewellery brand that promotes mental well-being, to create a series of bracelets called the 'What's Important Series'.

Inspired by the courageous personal stories of youth beneficiaries from SAMH's YouthReach programme, The Mindful Company and SAMH co-designed five bracelets representing five themes that arose from the youth's stories. They are family, knowledge, growth, dreams and the appreciation of the small things in life (gratitude). The youth's stories will be featured in the packaging of all the bracelets.

The series aims to raise awareness and start a conversation about youth mental health as well as SAMH's work. \$10 from the sale of each bracelet sold will go to SAMH to raise funds in support of their programmes for the youth.

To purchase these beautifully designed bracelets, visit www.mindful-company.com.



The MINDSET Challenge & Carnival 2017

Take part in the annual *Vertical Challenge* and race up the 33-floor Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 1 in support of Mental Health! Also, come and experience a day of jungle-themed adventure with an array of delicious food, craft activities for the family, games booths and lucky draw prizes to be won! Tickets are priced at \$8 and all proceeds will go to the MINDSET Learning Hub, a job training and placement centre that provides Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) and non-WSQ trainings for Mental Health clients. Approach any Jardine Ambassador within the Jardine Matheson Group to purchase tickets or visit www.facebook.com/mindsetsingapore for more details!

📅 Sunday • October 29 • 8am–3pm 🏷️ \$8
📍 Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 1 & The Lawn @ Marina Bay

Creative SAY! Sporting Saturdays

Only \$10 per activity! Fee includes gym usage at Creative SAY! and access to other sports classes conducted by the centre within the same month. The \$10 goes towards efforts to improve mental wellness in the community. Registration is required as space is limited. If interested, please call Serene at 6362 4845, or email creativesay@samhealth.org.sg. Creative SAY!'s gym is located at Block 317 Woodlands Street 31, #01-196 (opposite Marsling MRT) and is open from Mondays to Saturdays, 2pm–5pm.

Kayak N' Klean

📅 Saturday • October 14 • 10am–1pm 🏷️ \$10
📍 Water-Venture, Sembawang

Floorball

📅 Saturday • November 4 • 10am–1pm 🏷️ \$10
📍 National University of Singapore, CAPT Hall

Surprise Sport!

📅 Saturday • December 9 • 10am–1pm 🏷️ \$10
📍 Venue, to be confirmed



SINGAPORE ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH



Hearts for Minds

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COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

MARCH 22, 2018 • THURSDAY
MANDARIN ORCHARD HOTEL

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PRESIDENT HALIMAH YACOB

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For enquiries, sponsorships, or reservation of tables,
please send an email to Ms Marilene Leow at events@samhealth.org.sg or call 6283 1576.