

THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE



Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31b-32.

This is the Bible verse that we, at the Christian Counselling Services, firmly believe in. We truly believe that it is only when we know the truth about Jesus and about the Gospel, we will be set free - free from the bondage of sins and drugs. For the past three and a half decades, our volunteers have clung on to this belief and tirelessly shared this good news to all. And we thank God that we are able to see the impact of this truth on many ex-drug offenders, or overcomers, as we like to call them. Many have discovered the new freedom offered by Jesus and have become dynamic witnesses for our Lord.

However the world has changed over the years. Previously, many of those incarcerated had never heard of the Gospel, or had very little idea what the Gospel is all about. When they heard of what God had done for them for the first time, they were eager to learn more about this God and this offer of redemption. The main problem then is ignorance. But in the world today, we are bombarded with all kinds of information everyday - information without authentication or censorship. It is hard to tell the truth from lies. With eye-pleasing and mind-stimulating packaging, many half-truths and even outright lies have been presented to an unsuspecting audience as the Gospel truth. Hedonism and greed have been portrayed as blessings from God, while obedience to God is deemed secondary. The main problem today is false teaching.

As counsellors today, we need to stand firm in our belief. In Matthew 5:17- 18, Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least

stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." Indeed, the Bible is the Word of God, the ultimate truth. We must teach the Bible in totality without removing anything from it nor adding anything to it. All of us have been entrusted with the truth. We must be careful in presenting in its entirety to those who do not have the truth.

Finally, let us heed Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 4:16: "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." Let us prayerfully guard what has been entrusted to our care and be diligent in sharing it to those who desperately need it.

Patrick Chow
President

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Thirty-five years have gone by since the founding of the Christian Counselling Services by a group of Christian leaders comprising of different denominations in 1977. It was in response to a call by the government to help fight the scourge of drug abuse invading the country. It resulted much from the infectious “hippy” culture of the 1960’s.

Thirty-five years hence, are we still in battle? Yes! The scene may have changed, new drugs have been added but the fight is still on. Many of us at CCS have been in the “fray” since the beginning, so do not be surprised if you chance to meet a volunteer, still active, aged 88 years or more.

It is true that many newly released and especially the longer term repeated ex-drug offenders and ex-offenders express that they feel more secure behind the walls of the prison than when they are outside the prison. The adjustments to the many changes and the advances made in society, as well as rejection by families or even the “convenient disappearance” of relatives, are some of the challenges they have to face. Despite the pre-release programme, the fear and oppression plague them.

Who can they turn to for help where there is a void? Many end up with their old friends who may be the only ones who accept them and whom they approach despite being reminded not to go back to “old friends”. This invariably will start them on their renewed vicious cycle of their old lifestyle.

If we look at this group of citizens and ask ourselves “can we tap on this group of human resource to aid us reduce at least some of the imported work force?” Can we help them so that they will not continue to be a liability to our country but become useful contributing members of society? Can the prison authorities provide training in skills for jobs during their incarceration for example car cleaning, baking and polishing, so that they can be absorbed into the industry immediately upon release? Can we help them to become a blessing to their families, friends, themselves and to the nation?

It is this challenge, and our vision that has encouraged us to work with this group of precious people in our aftercare programme.

Each one has a story to tell and each has a desire be rehabilitated and “be transformed by the renewal of the mind” (Romans 12:2) and if he/ she is willing to fulfill his/her personal journey of recovery, we are available to assist them.

At CCS, we have drawn up a framework through which we can guide and mentor our clients who want to change. We welcome them at any stage of their journey of recovery. We have journeyed with first timers and we have also journeyed with eleventh timers. If life-long coaching is needed to reduce relapse and sustain recovery it can be met with our framework for holistic aftercare.

We give all glory to our Lord Jesus Christ for every transformed and renewed life He has pulled out from the clutches of the enemy over the years.

The Editor



THE WORD OF GOD is central to the Ministry of the CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING SERVICES (CCS), as such, we are praying for GOD to provide for us and enable us to print a customised Bible, with specific prayer guides, enriching study helps, such as the concordance, dictionary, maps etc. It should help each one to “go deeper” in their study and to enhance their growth to discipleship.

THE BIBLE will be used particularly by inmates in the prison as well as to follow them, when they leave the prison, and continue in the study of the Word throughout their lives. This is our prayer and our hope. Pray with us and support us. God bless you.

UNDERSTANDING AND HELPING OFFENDERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

What a wonderful time of learning we had at the Singapore After Care Association (SACA) at the feet of a good trainer and facilitator, Ms Saraswathi Raja Krishnan. We learned the important lesson that we must not “play psychiatrist” but to listen attentively to our clients. She helped us learn to understand the more common psychiatric conditions experienced by offenders and their symptoms. We learned about mood disorders (depression & bi-polar disorder); schizophrenia; anxiety disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder etc. These mental conditions were indeed a mouthful for most of us, volunteers but they began to take on flesh and form over the two days of learning.

We enjoyed the role play as client or counselor or observer in class. It was really fun. We left the two days of training, convicted that we need to treat our clients with tender loving care and patience and not to attempt to tread into issues beyond our expertise. We learned to refer them instead to the experts for diagnosis for we are but laymen and our role is nudging our clients to seek professional help. Yet, that is an awesome responsibility for us for often, we volunteers are their first line of contact to connect them to prison officers or professionals at Institute of Mental Health (IMH) who can place them on the road to recovery through mental health treatment. We are humbled by the realization that we are all mentally

unhinged to some extent but that what matters is that we are still able to function as social beings and responsible persons. It is when we are unable to function in that sense that we deem that professional help is necessary for our client or for ourselves so that we can live out the wonderful potential that God has made us for.

Finally we learn to laugh at ourselves for often we are not too sane in the way that we respond and behave. It just remind us that indeed it is the sheer grace of God that has kept us in the shoes of volunteers seeking to help the drug addicts rather than in the shoes of drug addicts waiting for volunteers to visit them behind bars.

In conclusion, we learn that many a time, offenders who are suffering from mental disorders may consume illegal drugs out of desperation to self medicate themselves in order to avoid another stigma slapped on them. Being labelled as an offender is already a stigma that is hard to live under. Being labelled as a mentally ill offender is a double whammy!

May God help us to be more compassionate volunteers as a result of attending this very helpful course.

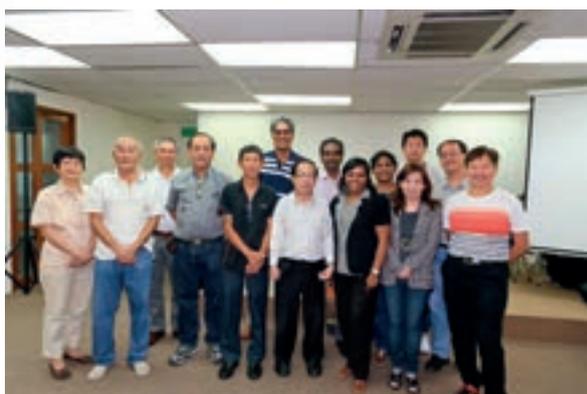
Florence Ng
Volunteer
Incare and After care

ORIENTATION AND BASIC TRAINING COURSE

In January 2013, being a new member, I was required to attend the three day Christian Counselling Services (CCS) in-house training for new volunteers. It was conducted over three Saturdays which included a visit to the High Point Community Services Association, a Christian Halfway House. In the brief introduction, May Chew spoke on the history and development of CCS

Reiterating the Motto and Vision was a good reminder that CCS is not just any secular motivational organisation but one with conviction for the salvation of souls, and transformation of lives and training for good works – all to the Glory of God!

The sessions conducted by Ms Ang Poh Wah our trainer touched on essentials every VIO (Volunteer Incare Officer) and VAO (Volunteer Aftercare Officer) ought to know. Her rich experience and clear interactive discourse were immensely informative and helpful. From it one can derive a clear overview of work scope, expectations and plot possible directions in situational response.



Participants of CCS 1st Orientation and Basic Training Course – January 2013

The training focused mainly in two specific areas:

- 1) The counsellor's role and responsibility in effective communication and counselee's profiling and the need to gain and maintain trust:
 - a. Through verbal and non verbal expressions
 - b. Through developing good listening skills and the practice of active and reflective listening.
 - c. Through clear identification and evaluation of counselee's emotional state, mindset and perception of society.
- 2) To understand the framework of the route of recovery so as to provide a healing, supportive process sustaining counselee's breakthrough to independence and normal migration back into society.
 - a. Through understanding the framework of recovery.
 - b. Through awareness of various problems and obstacles associated with it.

The visit to the High Point halfway house was an eye-opener for those who had never had any close contacts with the ex-drug offenders and to hear the testimony of community living in a Christian halfway house.

The course provided and prepared us with a mindset for the task ahead as Christian Counsellors.

David Goh
Volunteer
Incare

MY JOURNEY TO RECOVERY

My name is Ivy Quek. I have been in and out of the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) four times, but I never thought of wanting to change my life. Even if I wanted to, I did not know how. I have been moving in circles all my life and did not seem to be able to get out of the darkness in my life.

I was last released in 1997. In 1998, I was baptized, but I seldom attended church. In 2003, I fell back into drug addiction again. For years after that, life was miserable and I was living like a zombie. The moment I woke up, I would start looking for drugs. I felt that life had no more meaning, and many times, I wanted to end my life. One day, in my darkest moment, I cried out: God, help me, I am your child, and I am dying!" And I heard a small voice telling me: "Go and kick off the drug addiction." However, I was penniless, and I did not know where to go to kick off the drug addiction.

Praise God, while I was at the bottom of my life, my daughter visited me one day. I told her truthfully that I was back to drug addiction and I needed help badly. I told her to contact Sis May to help me. So, in 2009, it was arranged for my first admission to IMH. I spent three weeks in a detox programme. After the detox programme, I was channeled to the Turning Point. I was on the Turning Point programme for 8 months. It was truly a turning point in my life.

So today, I want to thank God for preserving my life and that I am able to give my testimony.

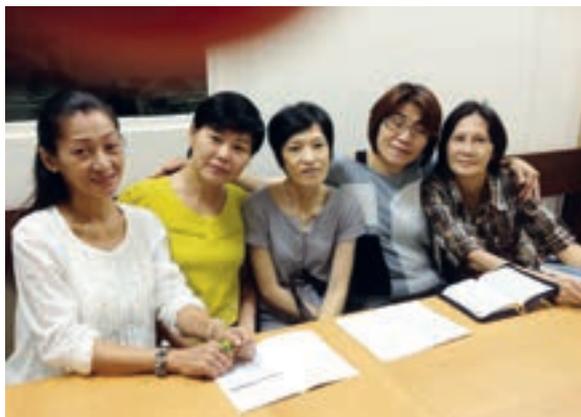
Through the work of Aftercare in CCS, and through the help from Sister May, I started Bible study through the Crossroad Bible Institution (CBI) programme. To date I have completed the two CBI courses: "Great Truths of the Bible" and "The Survey of the Bible."

I started to learn to play Ukulele as well as learn to sew bags, using used banners. I have started earning and making a small income working from home.

All goodness comes from God. I thank Jesus for His love for me and the help from those around me - my two daughters and also the love and encouragement from Sister May. I thank God, that she has never given up on me.

Hallelujah! This is the unconditional love from God who never abandons us. All Praise and Glory goes to Abba our Heavenly Father. Amen.

Ivy Quek
Overcomer
CCS



Ivy (2nd from the left) with her friends, Daneille, Vera, Esther and Stephanie, the first batch of "CBI" participants



Ivy, Brother Paul with Daryl and his team mates from ITE



Performing at 35th Anniversary Fund Raising Dinner in October 2012

我的名字是 Ivy Quek。我进出DRC 戒毒所 4 次。从未想要改变我的生活。即使我要，我不知道从那里改变。我的生命中一直转圈子，似乎不能够走出黑暗。

我最后一次出狱是1997年。1998年，我受洗礼后我很少上教堂做礼拜会。2003年我再次吸毒。多年之后，生活很悲惨。让我尝到生不如死的滋味。日子过的象行尸走肉。每天张开我的眼睛的时候就开始寻找毒品。那时我想结束我自己的生命，我认为生命没有意思。在我人生最黑暗的时刻我对上帝哭泣：“主啊！救我，我是您的孩子，我快死了”我听见一个微小的声音对我说“孩子去戒毒！”。不过，我是身无分文，我不知道去哪里去戒毒。

我感谢主，在我的生命堕落深谷的时候我的女儿来看我，我坦白告诉她我又回到了毒瘾，我迫切需要帮助。我告诉她联系Sister May求助。就在2009年我被安排去接受IMH 3个星期排毒治疗。是我的第一次的排毒治疗。治疗过后我被送去 Turning Point (转折点中途之家)住了8个月。那是我生命中的 Turning Point(转折点)。

所以今天我要感谢主保存我的生命，让我有机会分享我的见证。通过CCS 的 AfterCare与 Sister May的帮助，我就开始

从CBI课程学习圣经，同时我学弹奏ukulele (尤克里里琴)及学缝袋子。在家里工作获到微薄的收入，自食其力。

一切的美好来自上帝。我感谢耶稣基督对我的爱和帮助我让我的灵命成长的人- 我的2个女儿及爱护和鼓励的Sister May，她从没有放弃我。

Hallelujah! 上帝对我的爱是无条件，不离不弃。所有称赞和荣耀是属于我们的Abba天父。阿门。



Ivy at the sewing machine supplied to her by ITE in the Business Collaboration Programme

NEWS UPDATES

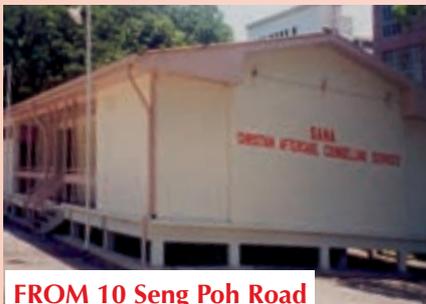
AGM 2013 was held on 22 April at 76 Playfair Road #07- 05 LHK2 Building

CCS Executive Committee 2013-2015

President - Mr. Patrick Chow
Vice President - Ms May Chew
 - Pst Darren Lim
Hon. Secretary - Mr. Michael Liu
Hon Treasurer - Mr. Terrence Teo

Committee Members - Ms Jenny Lim
 - Ms Eleanor Wong
 - Mr. Lemuel Ho
 - Ms Candice Yeo

WE MOVED IN JULY 2012



FROM 10 Seng Poh Road



T0 Citimac Industrial Estate

STAFF MOVEMENT



Farewell
to
Ray Loke



Welcome
to
Hazel
Cheong

OUR HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS!



Mr. Joseph Tay our immediate past President Receiving the National Day Award (Home Team Volunteers) from the Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Teo Chee Hian.



Award recipients at the Prison Volunteers Award Ceremony



Ms Danielle Jean Kua received the Yellow Ribbon Award

Notice Board

CHRISTMAS WILL BE CELEBRATED AT

- a) CWP on 7 Dec 2013
- b) A2HU1 on 7 Dec and 08 Dec 2013
- c) A2HU2 on 8 Dec 2013
- d) A2HU3 on 7 Dec and 08 Dec 2013
- e) CCS on 2 Dec 2013

**The First Volunteers Night was held on Sept 2013
20 Volunteers attended**

NEED EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING?

Call

85997142 F&B

98269998 Auto Works

96313112 Operations

62221305 Training/
Others

After care Social Enterprise
Tasty Treats Cafe at Simpang Bedok has closed. Thank you for your support.

Aftercare support group meetings - 1st and 3rd Monday of every month



FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

Dear Reader, Supporter, Member, Friend,

We wish you and your family a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We thank you for your support to the ministry of the Christian Counselling Services. We are working to make this newsletter, C-Link, as beneficial as it can be for you. We welcome your comments and contribution of articles and photographs which will add value to this our tri-annual publication.

May God bless you and your ministry for His Glory!

The Editorial Team, President and Executive Committee and Staff

CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING SERVICES
基督教辅导服务协会



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E: admin@ccslink.org \ W: www.ccslink.org

PRINTED MATTER



MY RESPONSE 我的回应

- I would like to receive your quarterly Newsletter 我愿意收到贵会季刊
- I would like to donate the amount of 我愿意奉献给贵会 S\$_____*
- I would like to make a monthly pledge of 我愿意每月固定奉献 S\$_____*
- I would like to be trained as a VAO /VIO 我愿意成为贵会义工
- I would like to help in your ministry as 我愿意受训成为贵会的辅导员

Name 姓名: _____

Address 地址: _____

Church 教会: _____

Tel 电话: _____(O) _____(H) _____

*Please cross your cheque and make payable to: " **Christian Counselling Services** "

Send with your response form to:
605B Macpherson Road #08-16/17
Citimac Industrial Complex, Block B, Singapore 368241