

Desistor Network – Mentoring Community of Practice 5

WE CARE: Nurturing Recovery, Embracing Life Beyond Addiction

Date: 16 March 2024 | Location: Kembangan-Chai Chee Community Hub

SUMMARY

In a profound gathering at WE CARE Community Services, experts, survivors, and community members convened to explore the intricacies of addiction recovery and the pivotal role of comprehensive support. Leslie Goh, alongside senior counselors Yvonne and Joseph, unveiled an in-depth look at overcoming addiction, highlighting the organization's multifaceted strategies to foster long-lasting recovery and societal reintegration.



Picture 1: Sharing by Leslie and colleagues

The session began with a powerful introduction to addiction as a chronic relapsing disorder, challenging common perceptions and emphasizing the journey toward total abstinence. Founded in 2006, WE CARE has grown into a beacon of hope, offering an array of services that cater to the complex needs of individuals battling various forms of addiction. The organization's secular and inclusive approach ensures that anyone seeking help can find a supportive and understanding community.

2. Empowering Through Care: Key Support Services

Leslie Goh underscored the charity's commitment to aiding those in recovery through:

- **Holistic Treatment Modalities:** From one-on-one counselling sessions to diverse therapy programmes, WE CARE addresses both substance use and behavioral addictions, recognizing the importance of treating co-morbid conditions for a full spectrum recovery.

1. Introduction

- **Creating a Recovery Ecosystem:** Highlighting the strategy of maximizing touchpoints, Leslie detailed how each interaction with WE CARE—be it through self-help support groups, therapy sessions, or social activities—enhances the individual's recovery experience, promoting a sense of belonging and progress.
- **Inclusive Support for Families and Individuals:** Understanding that addiction affects not just the individual but their entire network, WE CARE extends its services to significant others, offering specialized support groups and educational programmes to rebuild relationships and foster mutual understanding. WE CARE's Innovative Programs: A Pathway to Recovery



Picture 2, 3, 4: Rehabilitative environment and eco-system

3. WE CARE's Innovative Programs: A Pathway to Recovery

The session shed light on several key initiatives designed to support individuals on their journey to recovery, including:

- **SOAR & SMART Recovery:** Focused programs providing structured support for individuals battling substance and alcohol addiction.
- **Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention:** Aiming to equip individuals with strategies to manage triggers and maintain sobriety.
- **Empowerment Through Learning:** Highlighting the importance of skill-building workshops and community activities in fostering a sense of purpose and belonging.



Picture 2: Members actively asking questions about the programme and its impact on beneficiaries.

4. Insightful Interactions: Deepening Understanding Through Q&A

Diving Deeper into Recovery Challenges and Solutions

The Q&A session emerged as a cornerstone of the event, opening up a dialogue that extended the discussion beyond the structured presentations. Attendees, ranging from those in recovery to family members and community supporters, brought forth a spectrum of questions that shed light on the multifaceted nature of addiction recovery.

Addressing Relapse Concerns

One poignant question came from a participant who was worried about the potential for relapse, a common concern among those supporting loved ones through recovery. The WE CARE team, drawing upon their vast experience, emphasized that while relapse can be part of the journey, it does not signify failure. They highlighted the organization's focus on relapse prevention strategies and the development of robust support systems to navigate challenges more effectively.

Understanding the Role of Mental Health in Addiction

Another attendee inquired about the intersection of mental health disorders and addiction, seeking clarity on how WE CARE addresses co-morbidity. The response illuminated the organization's holistic approach, emphasizing the importance of treating both the addiction and any underlying mental health conditions simultaneously. Through collaboration with mental health professionals and tailored therapy programs, WE CARE ensures a comprehensive treatment plan that addresses all aspects of an individual's well-being.

Exploring the Path to Total Abstinence

A question from an individual in recovery highlighted the struggle with the concept of total abstinence. The team at WE CARE provided a compassionate and realistic perspective, acknowledging the challenges

while reinforcing the importance of abstinence in breaking the cycle of addiction. They shared success stories and strategies for maintaining sobriety, including engagement in support groups, therapy, and finding new, healthy hobbies and interests to fill the void left by addiction.

Navigating Recovery as a Young Person

Concerns about the unique challenges faced by younger individuals in recovery sparked an engaging discussion. The WE CARE professionals pointed out the tailored programs designed to resonate with younger demographics, such as their work with schools and youth-focused outreach. They stressed the importance of creating relatable and accessible support networks, fostering environments where young people feel understood and empowered to pursue their recovery.

Support for Families and Loved Ones

A recurring theme in the questions was the role of family and friends in the recovery process. WE CARE's response highlighted their family and friends support groups, emphasizing the dual focus on providing guidance to loved ones on how to effectively support those in recovery while also addressing their own needs and well-being.

Summary of the Q&A Session

The Q&A session not only provided valuable insights into the practical aspects of recovery and the services offered by WE CARE but also fostered a sense of community among attendees. It underscored the organization's commitment to addressing the nuanced needs of those they serve, emphasizing the importance of understanding, compassion, and collective support in the journey towards recovery.



Picture 5: *An engaging and interactive dialogue*

5. Summary

The enlightening session at WE CARE Community Services offered a comprehensive view of the journey from addiction to recovery. Through its innovative programs and dedicated support, WE CARE stands as a pillar of hope, empowering individuals to lead fulfilling lives beyond addiction.

6. Looking Forward

The commitment of WE CARE to enhancing and expanding its services reflects a continued dedication to the community's well-being. As WE CARE advances, its role in shaping a future where everyone has access to the support they need to overcome addiction remains central.

To learn more about how you can support or benefit from WE CARE Community Services, visit [<https://www.wecare.org.sg/>].

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