

BECOMING A TEAM LEADER

By Mary Joy

I love my work as a care staff in **Ahuva Good Shepherd - Children's Home (CH)**. But Covid-19 has turned many lives upside down, including mine. During the circuit breaker, staff were instructed not to go out, for our own safety, as well as that of others. I could not even go out to buy my personal essentials or visit my sister and friends. It was miserable and worrisome.

We had to work in split teams, with different shifts and work hours, which meant adjustments. Then, I was tasked to lead a team. Although I was not confident to lead, I accepted the challenge.

I am very thankful that my team supported me along this journey of being a leader, and together we came up with lots of activities to keep the children engaged. The happy faces of the children melted my heart. I felt appreciated, and am encouraged to continue to lead the team to keep the children safe and well.

I have adjusted to this new normal life where we have to abide by prevailing safe management measures such as wearing a mask, and checking in with the TraceTogether token. Instead of complaining, I think positively and accept my responsibility to help fight against the virus. I live with renewed hope, grateful that I am safe and well under the management of Marymount Centre, even though I miss my family in the Philippines.



Ahuva Good Shepherd - Children's Home

Set up in 2006, Ahuva Good Shepherd - Children's Home (CH) provides a safe and nurturing residential environment for girls, aged 4 to 18. They had experienced challenges in their families, like financial difficulties, divorce, family violence, abuse and parents' incarceration.



EVERYDAY IS A *New* DAY

By Nur Syafeeqah

When I joined the staff team at **Ahuva Good Shepherd - Small Group Care (SGC)** I was cautioned by well-meaning people of the challenges posed by the children who have experienced and endured abusive relationships. I was undeterred, because I believe that it is a job that is very much needed to be done in order to provide unwavering support to the children and help them persevere.

Trained in Trauma-Informed Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support (TIPBIS), I still find it hard to find a balance between practising empathy and helping the children to recognise and alter their aversive behaviours at the same time. Stepping back helps me focus on my role to equip the children with effective and positive skills to manage their aversive behaviours as a result of the trauma they experienced.

I would readily admit that it is a very tough job, however there are moments I would always treasure, like when a child described me as “firm but gentle”. Aw... Seeing how each child responds to her individual intervention plan, taking small steps to change what is possible for her, motivates me to get out of bed to welcome another day.

The children have influenced me to live one day at a time, to discover more about myself as I journey with these young girls who have been significantly traumatised. Their resilience is amazing; their attitude towards life impressed us so much that we believe every day is a new day.

Ahuva Good Shepherd - Small Group Care

Since June 2017, Ahuva Good Shepherd - Small Group Care (SGC) has been providing care and a safe place for girls aged between 7 and 12 years, assessed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) to have moderate to high needs, stemming from abuse. The usual length of stay is up to 18 months.



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One day I was taken from school to Good Shepherd Centre (GSC) with my mother and younger sister to seek shelter from family violence. At first, I was confused, maybe even angry with the adjustments I had to make to fit in to life in a crisis shelter. I didn't imagine that the sojourn would bring about significant growth in me.

What is growth? During the 9 months in GSC I learnt to be more grateful and appreciative of what I had. I learnt not to take the simplest things for granted. The experience gave me new perspectives that I can take on in life. Instead of looking at things one dimensionally, I am now more capable of putting myself in other people's shoes and see things more objectively.

I believe this is partly due to the fact that fellow residents are from diverse backgrounds, some of whom are not conversant with English or local languages. Yet, the staff of GSC treat everyone with the same respect and compassion.

When home-based learning (HBL) was implemented, I freaked out. There was no wireless network (Wi-Fi) or even a power socket in our room. That was when a knight in shining armour came to my help. The staff allowed me to use the office Wi-Fi connection and power outlet in the common area. I was extremely grateful since it meant that I could study with peace of mind. That brought some normalcy into my life.

There were events and activities in GSC that really helped with my growth. For example, in art therapy I learnt techniques that I could use whenever I felt overwhelmed. I ventured out of my comfort zone, recognizing and embracing my weaknesses. Festive celebrations were organised for the residents; they got me feeling happy, warm and fuzzy. My worries and fears are now gone. I have learnt to trust the process, enjoy the moment with the people around me. I strongly believe I matured and grew emotionally, all thanks to the dedicated and selfless care from the staff of GSC.

Good Shepherd Centre

Good Shepherd Centre (GSC) was set up in 1986. GSC offers abused women and their children a peaceful sanctuary to work through their crisis and trauma. The centre provides a wide range of programmes to

support them in their healing, and regaining their dignity. We empower them to tap on their inner strength and resources to rebuild their lives and create a future for themselves.

