

ART THERAPY MEETS: A CREATIVE SHOWCASE OF ART THERAPY FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Four-part interactive art exhibition focused on art therapy for mental health well-being and to showcase artwork inspired by youth impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences (“ACE”)
- Members of the public are invited to contribute to a community art mural to raise awareness for the social inclusion for mental health persons-in recovery

Singapore, 18 July 2019 – MINDSET Care Limited (“MINDSET” or “思健”), the registered charity of the Jardine Matheson Group (“Jardines” or “怡和”), together with Singapore Association for Mental Health (“SAMH” or “新加坡心理健康协会”), today unveiled “*Art Therapy Meets*” – a four-part art exhibition at Our Tampines Hub running through the weekend to raise awareness of art therapy and its impact on mental health and well-being.

The exhibition, together with guided tours, allows participants to gain awareness about how past experiences can impact an individual’s well-being, the importance of active care and the benefits of art therapy. On display include 25 artworks by individuals who have gone through or are still undergoing art therapy, as well as artworks created by art therapists who were inspired by their professional engagement with youth impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences (“ACE”).

MINDSET’s Chairman, **Mr Alex Newbigging** shared, “Jardines, through MINDSET, is committed to supporting mental health – whether it is fighting stigma or supporting persons-in-recovery. When MINDSET funded the startup of **SAMH Creative MINDSET** in 2014, we wanted a dedicated centre for the arts to allow persons-in-recovery to uncover and express their emotions through creative means. We are glad that today, SAMH not only provides an art-based programme but an art therapy service that is open to anyone seeking support for their mental well-being. Through *Art Therapy Meets*, we want to share the benefits of art therapy with members of the public.”

Ms Ngo Lee Yian, Executive Director of SAMH said, “*Art Therapy Meets* is an exhibition with guided tours to educate and provide a meaningful reflective experience to the community. The

public can learn about the lifelong impact of adverse childhood experiences on well-being, as well as how art therapy supports mental wellness. There is also space for the public to create and contribute to our community art manifesto to raise awareness on the importance of social inclusion for the mental well-being of our community.”

Art Therapy Meets runs from 20 to 21 July 2019 at Festive Walk East, Our Tampines Hub as part of the *Tampines Arts Nation – PassionArts Festival 2019*. Besides the *Art Therapy Meets* exhibition, members of the public can participate in activities like *Scaling the Merlion* where one paints on the scales of the merlion and *Neon Singapore* which makes use of recycled items to form a mega installation.

An avenue for self-discovery

Art therapy is beneficial for everyone, whether it is someone who has a major mental or physical illness or someone who simply wants to improve his or her mental well-being. This is because everyone undergoes stress due to different factors in life, and stress affects human development.

Art therapy allows one to process his or her life experiences and develop deeper insights into what makes him or her feel unhappy or unwell.

Among the artworks displayed at *Art Therapy Meets* is one created by Grace*. She attended art therapy to enhance personal growth and connect with her emotions better. Grace’s artworks are self-reflective and depicts her journey with art therapy. One of her artworks combines a variety of leaves from nature with the rigid structure of wires. For Grace, the leaves signify emotional freedom as she undergoes art therapy while the wires represent the restriction of entering the rigid world she knows of as her therapy sessions come to an end. Her silver lining is depicted by the intricate and beautiful shadows the wires create when light is cast on it. Observing the shadows, Grace feels more comfortable and assured as she faces the uncertainties in her future.

At *Art Therapy Meets*, participants can sign up for a guided and interactive tour of the exhibition. The four segments of the exhibition are:

Past

The experiences and voices of adversities in childhood often go unheard. Since the landmark Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study was published more than two decades ago, many others have reaffirmed the link between toxic stress in childhood and the lifelong implications for both psychological and physiological well-being.

These artworks by art therapists are a response to their professional experiences working with vulnerable young persons impacted by poverty, abuse, neglect and also household dysfunctions that cut across social divisions. Their artworks are reflective inquiries into their professional practice and articulate the art therapists' explorations of complex relationships between individuals and within communities. As art therapists, they are inspired to advance the informative ACE Study to a wider audience and contribute towards cultivating resilience in and support for individuals and communities impacted by ACE.

Lives

Learn about art therapy through a series of artworks by seven individuals who underwent art therapy to support their well-being. These pieces capture the emotions and aspirations of these individuals in their self-discovery and recovery journey.

You

Self-reflection is an integral part of art therapy. Participants will carry out a reflective art activity based on what they have learnt and experienced in the first two segments - Past and Lives.

Community

Social belonging is integral to our well-being. The art-making process is a bridge that “loops” people together beyond our individual differences and celebrates rather than discriminates. Despite our different quirks and imperfections, participants and members of the public come together to create a shared identity that is both vibrant and beautiful. Create an art loop and make a connection with someone today.

More than just art

Launched in 2014, SAMH Creative MINDSET is a partnership between MINDSET and SAMH with a S\$500,000 startup funding by the Jardine Matheson Group which focuses on helping mental health persons-in-recovery through the use of art.

In December 2018, the new SAMH Creative MINDSET Hub facility was opened in Our Tampines Hub. Open to the public, services offered at the hub include art-based programmes, art therapy and sports.

Art therapy uses art-making as a window for observation, conversation and reflection. For example, this process can involve both therapist and client reflecting together on the choice of art materials and application, while keeping in mind the client's situations and needs.

Art therapy also makes use of the psychodynamic approach, which relies on the interpersonal relationship between client and therapist more so than other forms of psychotherapy.

The focus on art is not new to MINDSET. Last year, MINDSET launched 'Colours of MINDSET', an art exhibition which showcased 20 acrylic paintings created by persons-in-recovery and 13 collaborative works between Jardine employees and persons-in-recovery aimed at raising awareness of mental health conditions through art. The exhibition was held in Marina Bay Link Mall and Our Tampines Hub for a week for members of the public to explore.

For more information on art therapy, please visit:

<https://www.samhealth.org.sg/our-services/creative-services/samh-creative-mindset-hub/>

**Grace's real name has been changed for anonymity*

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About MINDSET Care Limited

<http://mindset.com.sg/>

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MINDSET Care Limited (MINDSET) is a registered charity established by the Jardine Matheson Group of companies to make a tangible difference in the area of mental health. Led by Jardine Ambassadors, MINDSET aims to raise awareness and understanding of mental health issues to change attitudes, while at the same time, provide practical support to individuals, families and charitable initiatives in the mental health sector. MINDSET was awarded the Charity Governance Award 2018 and Charity Transparency Awards 2016, 2017 and 2018 by the Charity Council. MINDSET is also named a Champion of Good by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre.

The Jardine Matheson Group companies in Singapore are: Jardine Matheson (Singapore), Jardine Cycle & Carriage; Cycle & Carriage Singapore, Jardine Engineering Corporation; JOS; Innovix Distribution; Schindler Lifts (Singapore); Gammon Construction; Hongkong Land; MCL Land; Mandarin Oriental, Singapore; Dairy Farm Singapore (Cold Storage; Giant; Guardian Health & Beauty; and 7-Eleven); Maxim's Catering Limited, a company incorporated in Hong Kong; Genki Sushi Singapore; and Starbucks Singapore.

About Singapore Association for Mental Health

<http://www.samhealth.org.sg/>

Established in 1968, the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) is a non-profit and non-government social service agency that provides a comprehensive range of mental health services, which include rehabilitative, outreach and creative services, to the community in Singapore. SAMH aims to reintegrate persons with mental health issues back into society through community-based mental health programmes and services that provide rehabilitative care for these individuals, and support for their families and caregivers. With a vision to promote mental wellness for all, SAMH is committed to improve the lives of, and promote acceptance and respect for, persons with mental health issues and improve the mental resilience of the community.