

The Happy Kakis groupwork: A Blended Intervention Approach to Alleviate Social Isolation Among Older Adults

Presented by: Christopher and Ignatius
THK Family Service Centre @ Tanjong Pagar



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THYE HUA KWAN
MORAL CHARITIES

Vision: An empowered community where quality care and support services are accessible to all.

*Mission: **THK**MC serves people with diverse needs by providing impactful community services with full respect to race, language and religion.*

THE HAPPY KAKIS
GROUPWORK

Presenters' Introduction

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- Certified practitioner of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy
- ACLP Certified
- Facilitator & Researcher for The Happy Kakis Groupwork



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THE HAPPY KAKIS
GROUPWORK

Agenda

1

**The Happy Kakis
Story**

2

**Effects of Social
Isolation and
Group Work
Interventions**

3

**Methodology and
Findings**

4

**Implications
(Values and its
meaning)**



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THE HAPPY KAKIS STORY



2021 Needs Assessment Survey

Gaps in services: **77% of elderly care** provided to households with elderly persons, was by **informal (non-professional) support** such as family members, neighbours, and domestic helpers, with only 11% of the elderly persons experienced formal (professional) support such as day-care and others (e.g.: respite care). The remaining **12%** of the elderly did not receive any care or were **deemed to be able to stay alone at home**.



2022 Focus Group Discussion

The gaps in services mentioned above, resulted in social isolation and unattended loss & grief of the elderly.



2023 Early intervention to social isolation (Phase 1)

Make visible the elderly's values so that they can explore a meaningful lifestyle to alleviate the symptoms of social isolation.



2024 Man Searching For Meaning (Phase 2)

Viktor Frankl. Influenced by Logotherapy. Worldly creations/encounters. Happiness is ensued. Attitude/meaning in life. Celebration.

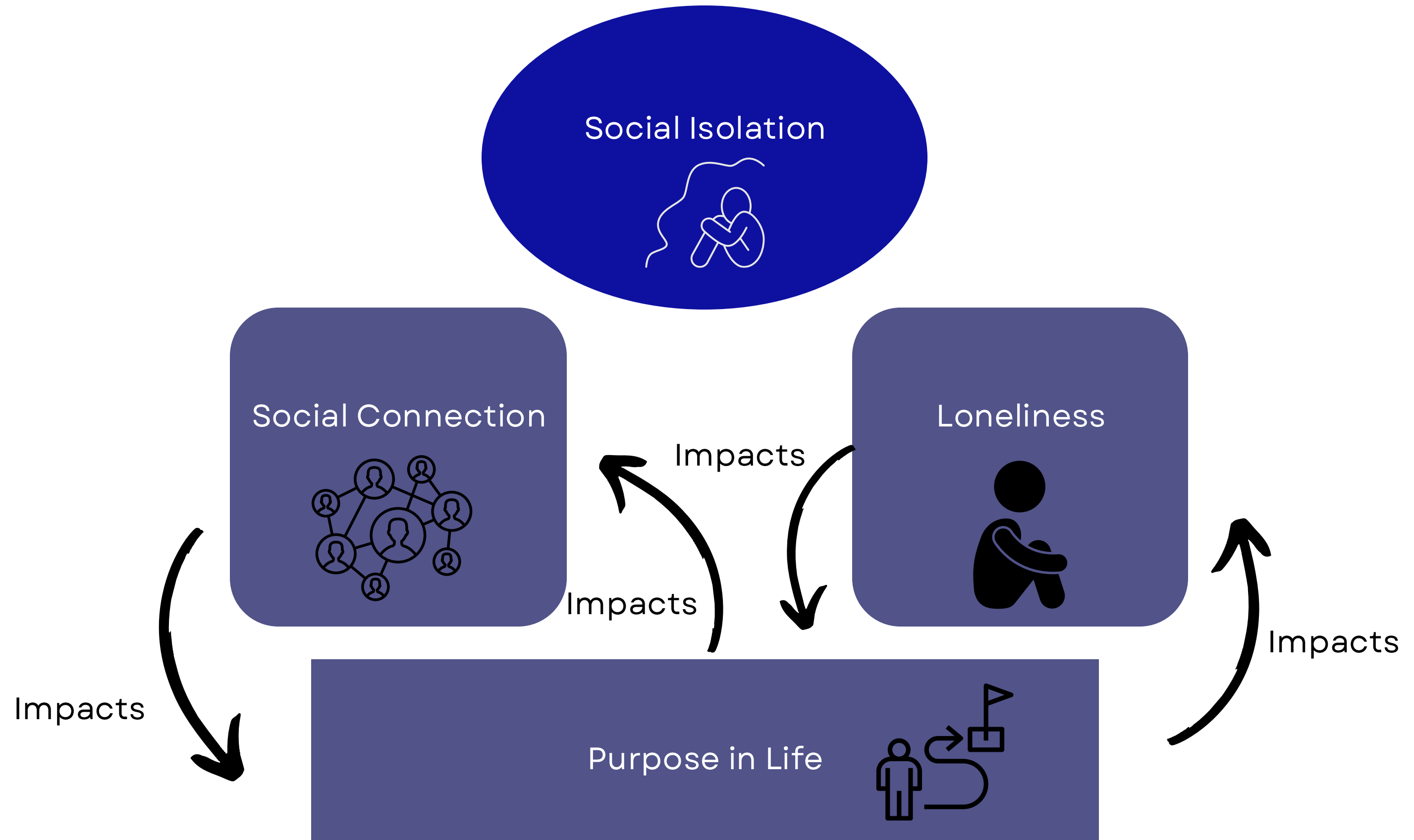


2025 Non-death loss and grief (Phase 3)

Disenfranchised loss:

- ambiguous loss, nonfinite loss, chronic sorrow and tangible/intangible non-death losses.

Literature Review



From Cacioppo et al., (2014) & Macià et al., (2021)

WHAT DOES SOCIAL ISOLATION LOOKS LIKE?

“I DO NOT HAVE FRIENDS, ONLY MY DAUGHTER WHO IS VERY CLOSE TO ME. ONE TIME I WAS WALKING IN THE RAIN, LOST IN THE RAIN. I AM DIVORCED, MY CHILDREN ARE IN OTHER COUNTRY, I AM LOST.

TODAY WHEN I THINK BACK, I FELT SO SAD FOR MYSELF. I AM LOST IN THE RAIN, WALKING UP AND DOWN, DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO, CRYING...”

WORDS FROM A PARTICIPANT

Effects of social isolation



“I felt so sad for myself. I am lost in the rain, walking up and down, do not know what to do, crying...”

Emotional Distress



“I would not have cut myself if there was a program like this...”

Self-Harm



“Suicide is a selfish thought, tears from your love ones will never stop.”

Suicide

Theoretical Framework

SOMATIC

- FIVE SENSES
- MINDFULNESS
SELF-COMPASSION
(MSC)

RESOURCE

- INTERNAL. LIFE
SKILLS, RESILIENCE
AND OTHERS
- EXTERNAL
- BRONFENBRENNER
(1979)

PHYSICAL

- PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES
- OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPIST-LIKE
ACTIVITIES

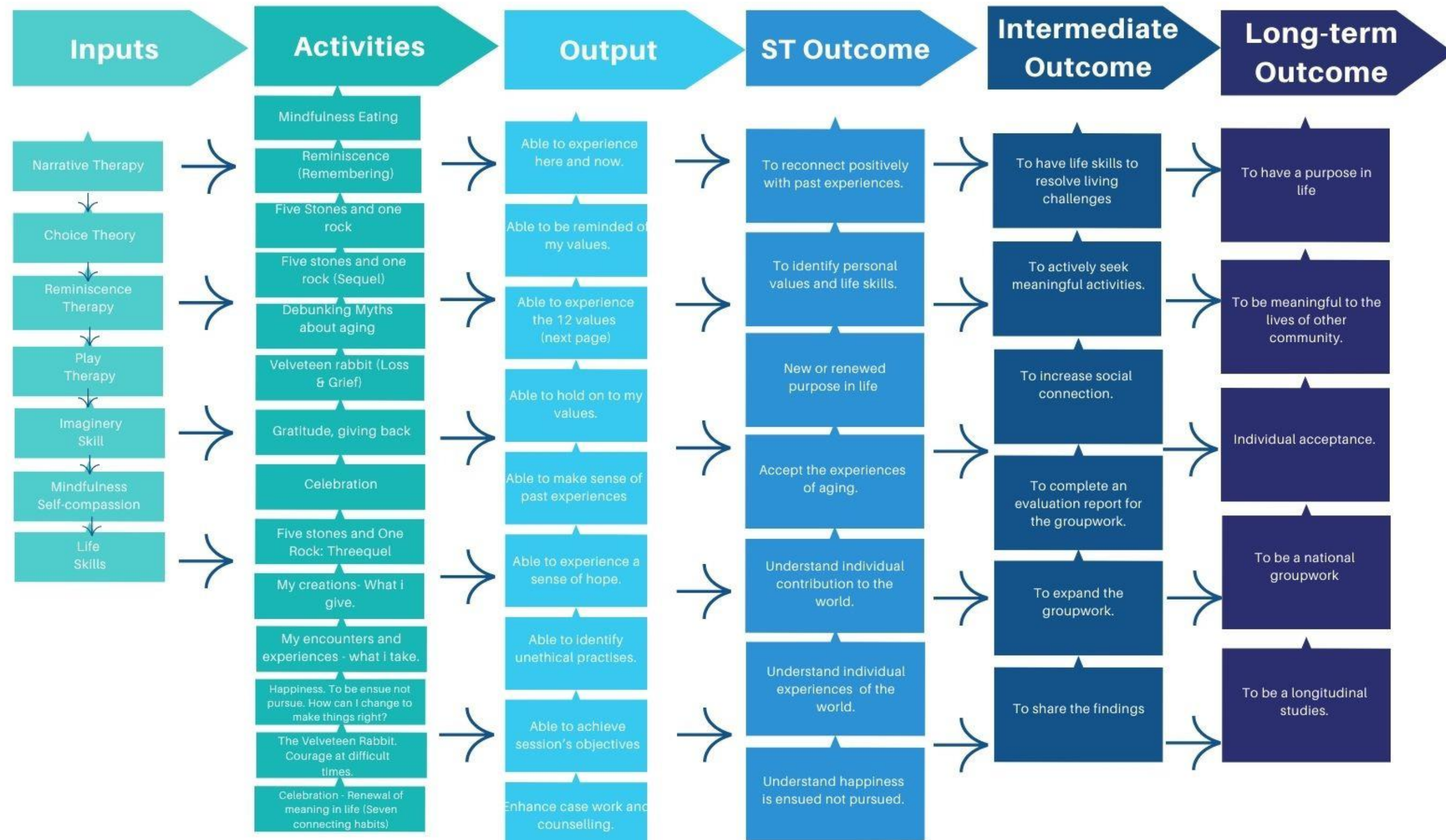
INFLUENCED BY THE INTERPERSONAL NEUROBIOLOGY WORKS OF DR. DAN SIEGEL

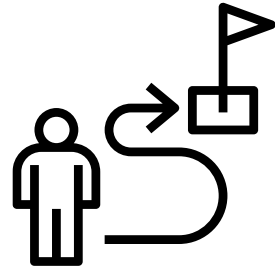
Adapted from Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979), Neff & Germer (2018), Siegel (2010), & Siegel (2020)

THE HAPPY KAKIS
GROUPWORK

Logic Model/TOC for The Happy Kakis

THE HAPPY KAKIS GROUPWORK THEORY OF CHANGE





Groupwork Interventions.



What I give to the world?



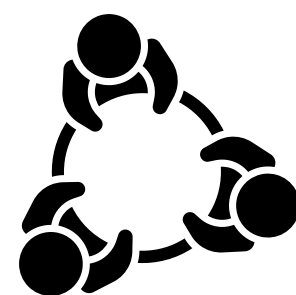
What I receive from the world?

Adapting elements of Reminiscence Therapy; Sharing of life experiences and new experiences created in Phase 1.
(Influenced by Viktor Frankl's work.)

(Gaggioli et al., 2014)



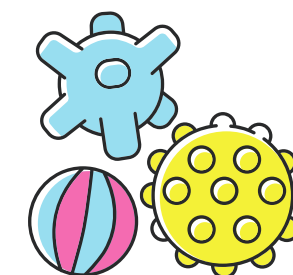
Plenary Group Discussion



Breakout Group Discussion

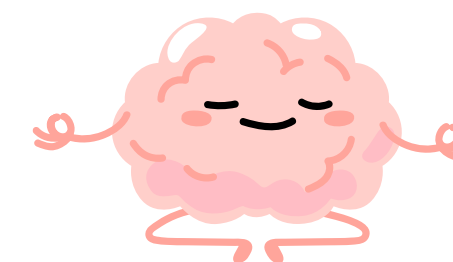
Elements of play therapy to work with projections through activities like creating art jars and building Lego structures.

(Oaklander's ,2007)

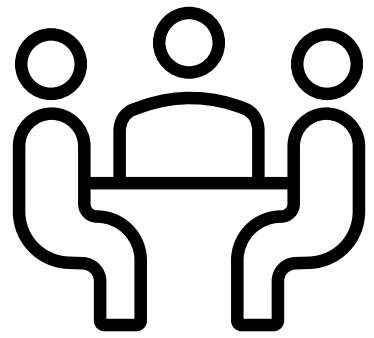


Mindfulness-based activities (mindfulness journey); improving emotional well-being and focusing on here and now.

(Geiger et al., 2015; Nelson, 2017)



THE HAPPY KAKIS GROUPWORK



Journaling

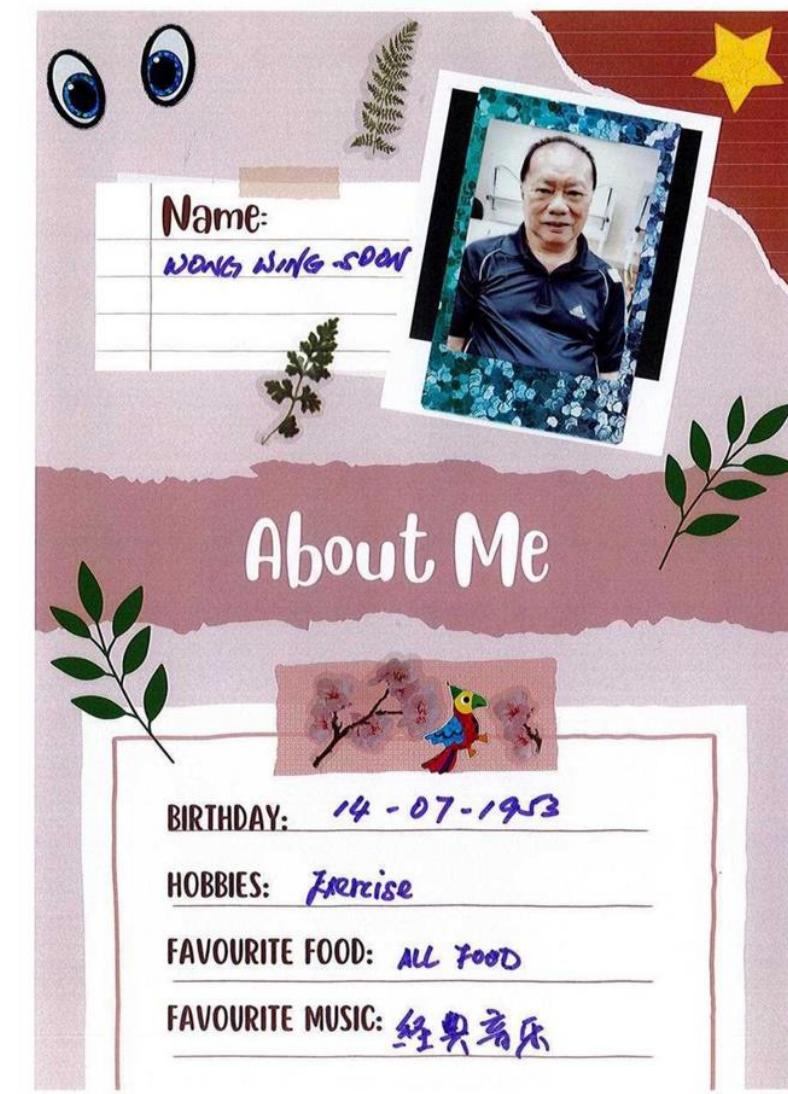
Reflective-based of writing down thoughts, feelings, experiences, and observations.

Narrative is reflecting on present moments, making sense of past present moments, in the present. A powerful way to improve our well-being.

In Journal writing, the themes of what we write about reveal the structure of our narratives.

James Pennebaker

(Pennebaker, 1997 as cited in Cangialosi, 2002; Michael Brady & Sky, 2003)



In Loving Memory

Wong Wing Soon

14.07.1953 25.04.2024

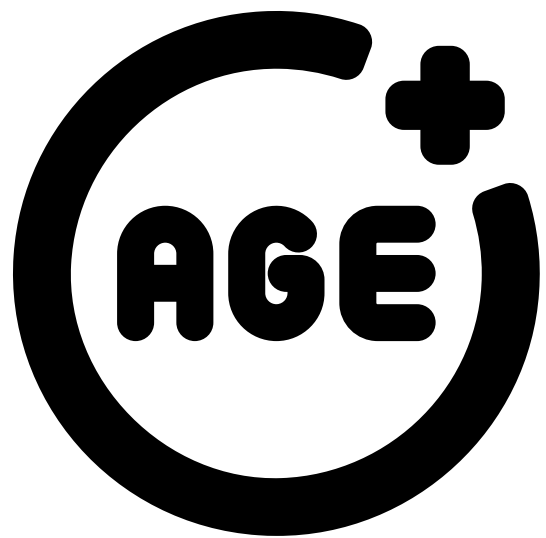
Profile of Groupwork Participants



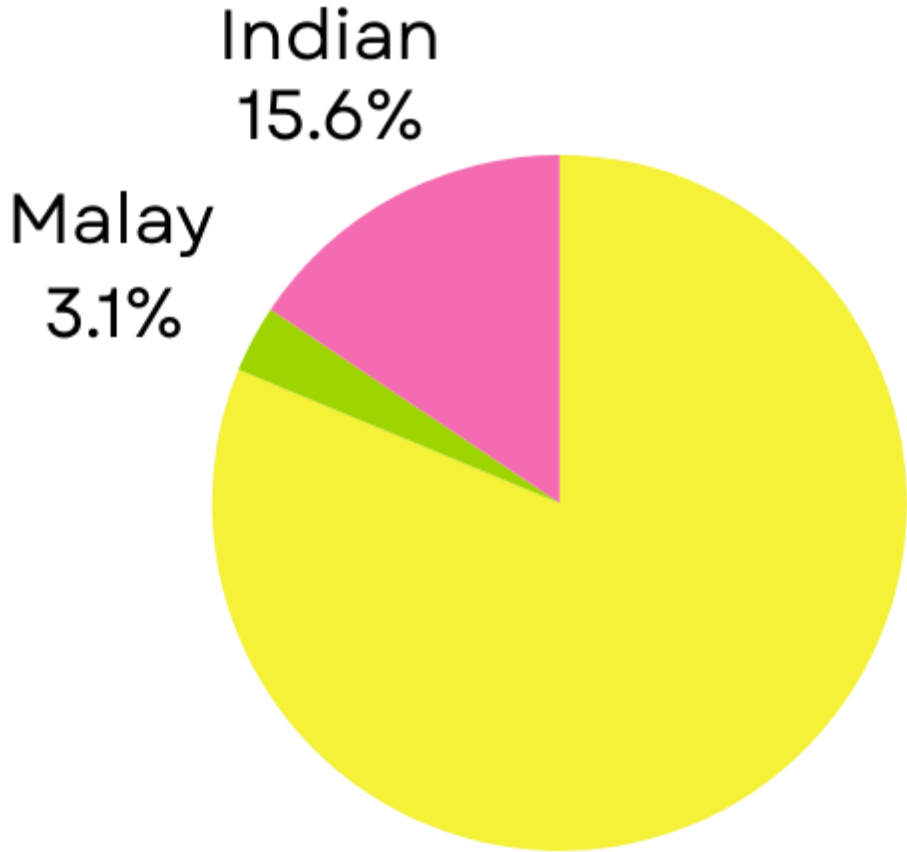
15



18



51 to 89



Chinese
81.3%

What could be helpful to alleviate the symptoms of social isolation?

Methodology

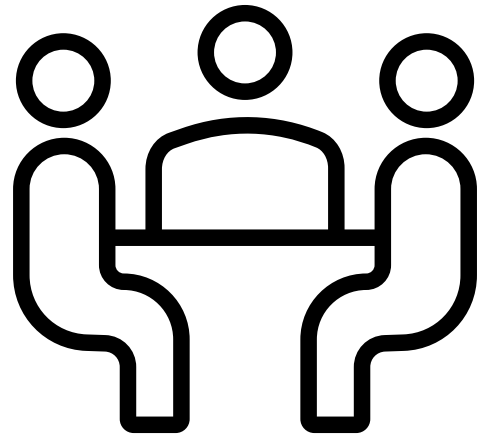
Quantitative analysis of Pre & Post-test



1. Lubben Social Network Scale-6 [LSNS-6] (Lubben et al., 2006)
2. UCLA Loneliness Scale [ULS-6] (Neto, 2014)
3. Purpose In Life-Short Form [PIL-6] (Schulenberg et al., 2010)

Administered via Microsoft Forms

Qualitative (Thematic Analysis)



1. Groupwork session notes
2. Transcripts of small-group discussions
3. Journal Entries
4. In between & Post-groupwork observations



Methodology

Quantitative analysis of Pre & Post-test

7. LSNS-6 *

	0 (none)	1 (at least one person)	2 (at least two persons)	3 (at least three or four person)	4 (at least five to eight persons)	5 (nine or more persons)
1. How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. How many relatives do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. How many of your friends do you see or hear from at least once a month?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. How many friends do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. How many friends do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[LSNS-6]

ULS-6 *

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
1. I lack companion-ship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I do not feel part of a group of friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I feel left out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I feel isolated from others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I am unhappy being so withdrawn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. People are around me but not with me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ULS-6

PIL-SF

Please rate according to this scale listed in each question.

9. In life, I have..... (1 star= no goals or aims, 7 stars= clear goals or aims)

☆☆☆☆☆☆

10. My personal existence is.... (1 star= utterly meaningless and without purpose, 7 stars= Very purposeful and meaningful)

☆☆☆☆☆☆

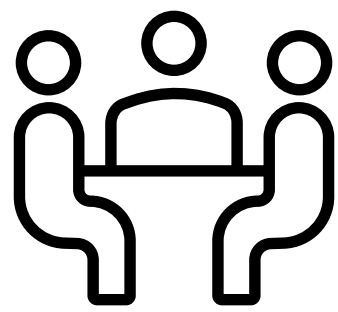
11. In achieving life goals I have.... (1 star= made no progress whatsoever, 7 stars= Progressed to complete fulfillment)

☆☆☆☆☆☆

12. I have discovered.... (1 star= no mission or purpose in life, 7 stars= A satisfying life purpose)

☆☆☆☆☆☆

PIL-SF



Methodology

Qualitative (Thematic Analysis)



Transcripts from participants' sharing



Inputs from Journal

1. How would you rate the overall session today?
您如何评价今天的活动?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

2. I am able to understand and link the session to my values identified in phase 1.
我能够理解到活动与我在第一期所鉴定的价值观联接起来。

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

3. What are your realizations/takeaways from this session?
您从今天的活动中有什么领悟或收获?

Self-respect, self-compassion, and self-validation and self-forgiving are the meaning of life which is perpetual joy, eternal love and inner peace through authentic living.

Findings (Quantitative)

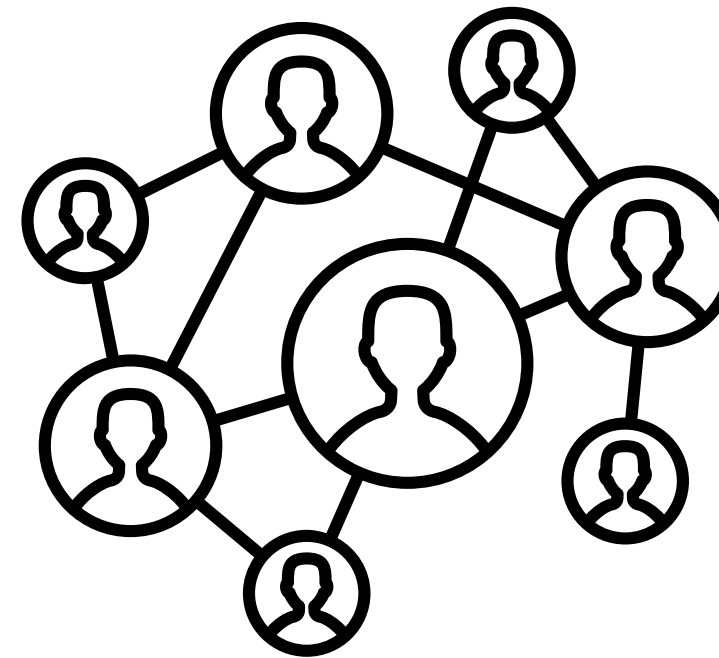
From the 2 groupwork phases, we had 32 unique participants who participated in at least 1 groupwork session across both phases. We used the pre and post test data of participants who participated at least half of the sessions in a groupwork phase in order to ensure the validity and credibility of the test measures (N=18).



**Loneliness
(ULS-6)**

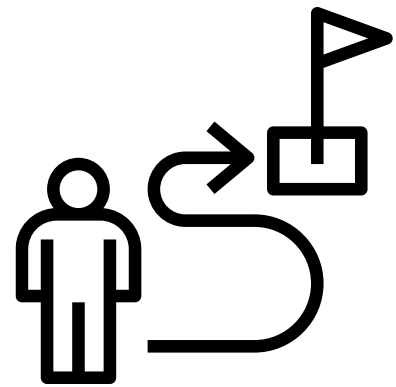


67% reported a decrease in loneliness across both phases



**Lubben Social
Network (LSNS-6)**

67% of participants reported an increase across both phases



**Purpose- In-
Life (PIL-SF)**



83% reported an increase in purpose in life across both phases



Findings (Quantitative) Cont'd

We obtained **N=18** which met the requirements for the pre- and post-test measures. With assumptions for normality not met, the non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted.

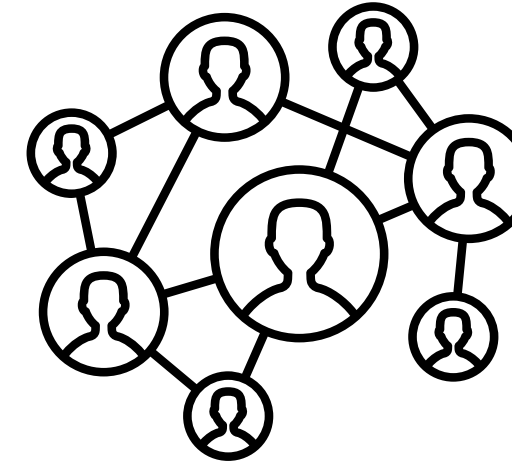


**Loneliness
(ULS-6)**



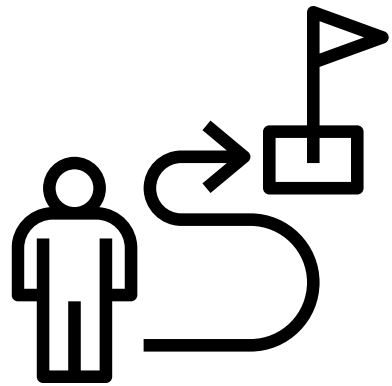
Results are **statistically significant**
across 2 phases

$p = .002, r = -0.8$ (large effect)



**Lubben Social
Network (LSNS-6)**

Not statistically significant



**Purpose- In-
Life (PIL-SF)**



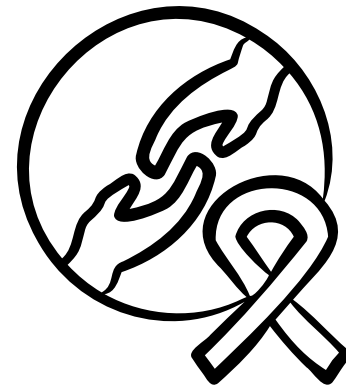
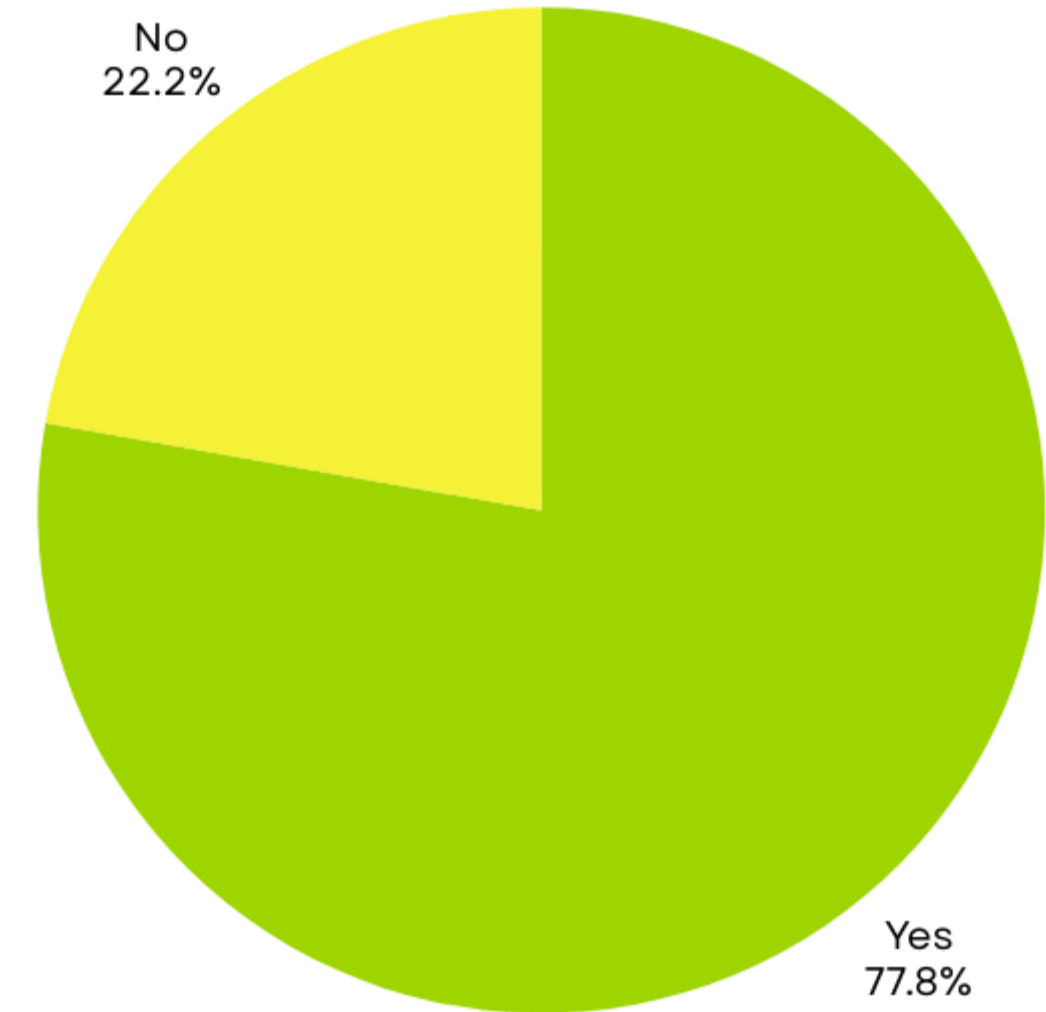
Results are **statistically significant**
across 2 phases

$p < .001, r = 0.9$ (large effect)

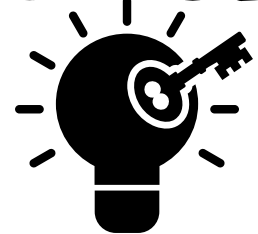
Profile of Participants

N=18

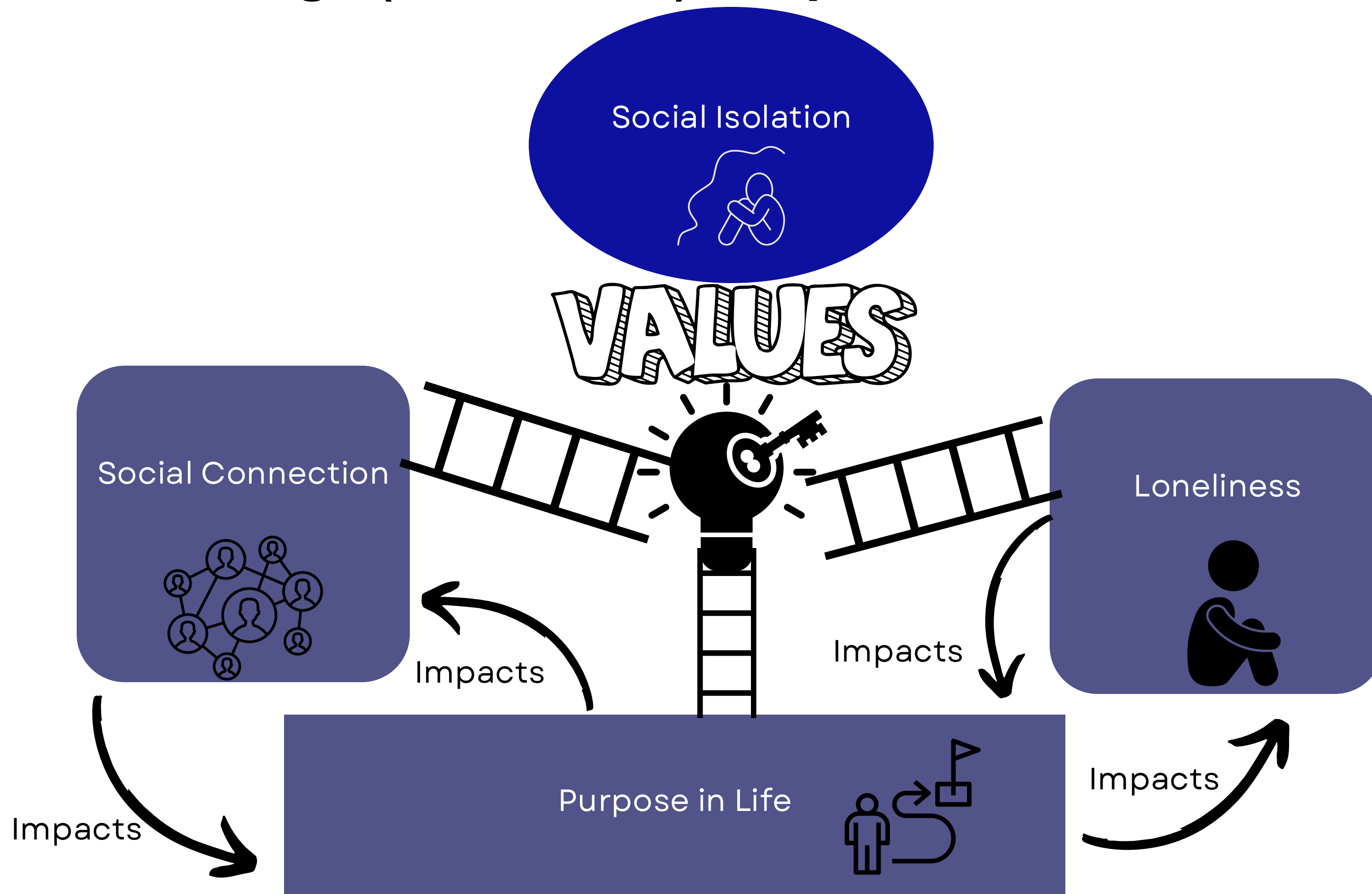
A significant majority of participants had a history of risk or safety concerns (i.e Suicidal Ideations/ Domestic Violence)



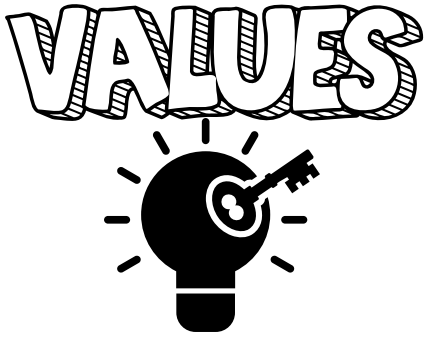
VALUES



Findings (Qualitative) - Importance of Values



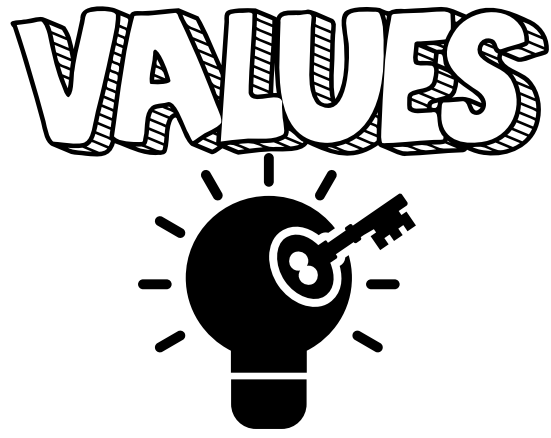
From Cacioppo et al., (2014) & Macià et al., (2021)



Findings (Qualitative) - Values verbalised by Participants

		Values (No. of ticks)																									
	Participants' own words	Kindness	Memories	Trust	Good things take time	Think Happy thoughts	Respect	Appreciation	Integrity / Honesty	Religion	Consideration	Courage	Nothing is impossible	Passion	Helpful	Friendship	family	Peace	Love	Empathy	Responsibility	Healthy	Happy	Independent	Strong	Humour	Comments
1	Participant KCH	1	1	1			1		1											1							
2	Participant CCK			1															1	1							Left blank
3	Participant P	1			1																	1		1			
4	Participant TGL	1				1		1											1								
5	Participant NSG		1																1				2	1			Left blank
6	Participant CSH												1						1			1	1				Left Blank
7	Participant AM	1	1								1		1					1	1								
8	Participant LYK	1	1			1	1			1	1				1								1		1		Left Blank
9	Participant R	1					2	1	1	1	1	1			1						1						
10	Participant CKS	1					1	1		1									1						1	1	
11	Participant ML	1										1	2	1					1								
12	Participant LHS	1									1	1			1										1		
13	Participant NYHL	1							1									1					1				
14	Participant V		1			2		1		1		2			1					1							
15	Participant WWS			1					1				2		2	1	1										
16	Participant KSM		1			1	1									1	1		1								
17	Participant RS												1		1												
18	Participant LHT																										
19	Participant SN																					1	1				
20	Participant Y							1					1														
21	Participant HAM			1											1												
	Total	10	6	4	1	5	6	5	4	4	5	6	9	1	6	3	2	3	7	2	3	2	7	1	4	1	0

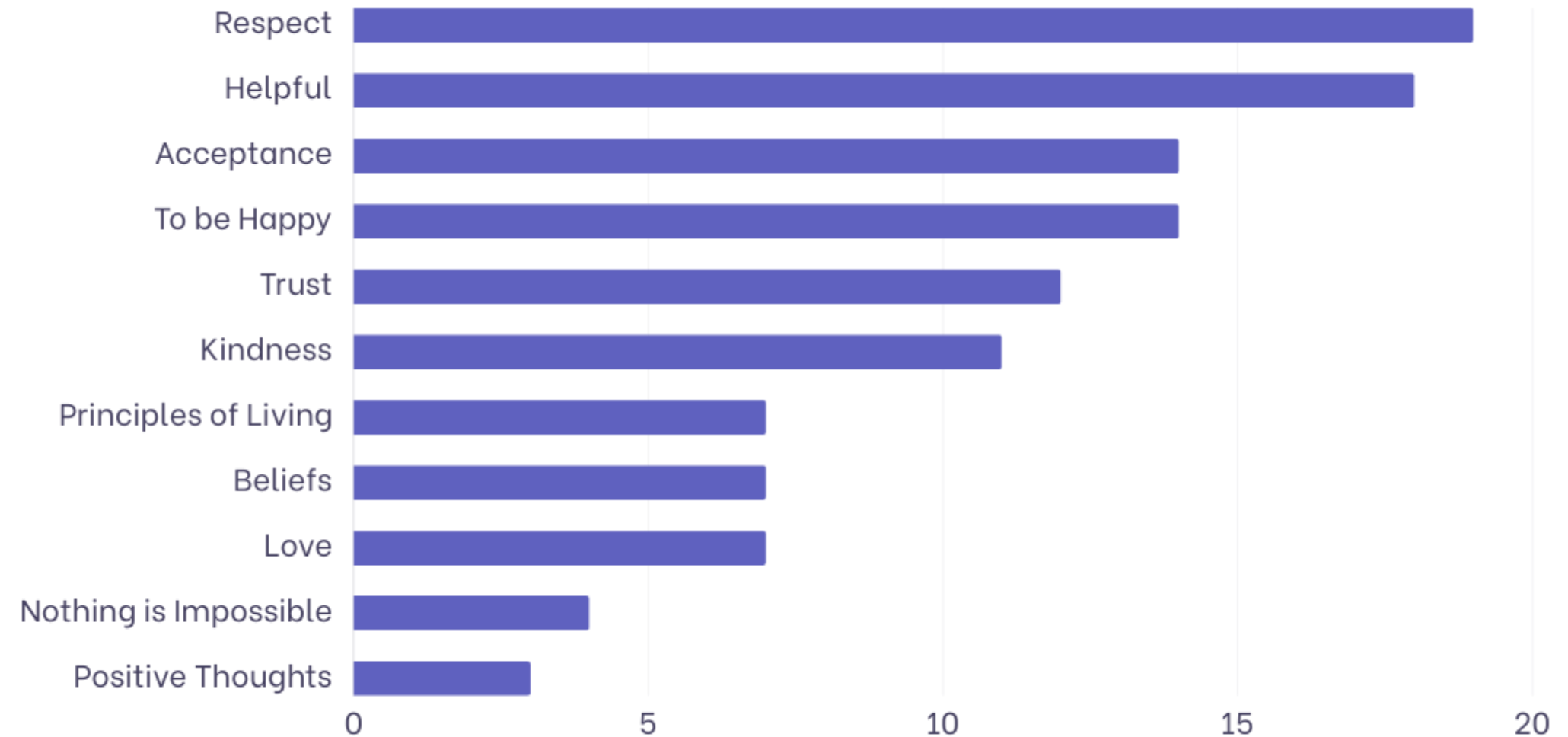
Legend
From Session 3 Journal
From Moral Compass - Blue
From Session 4 - Journal questions: What is your favourite station and why?
From Session 6

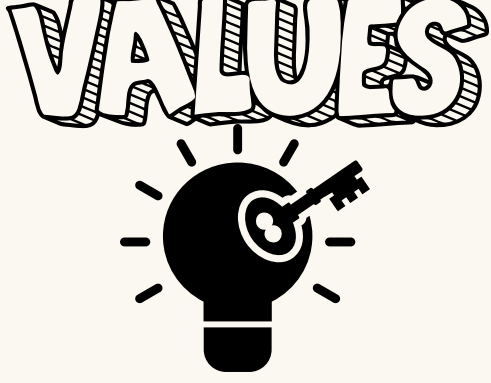


Findings on 11 Values

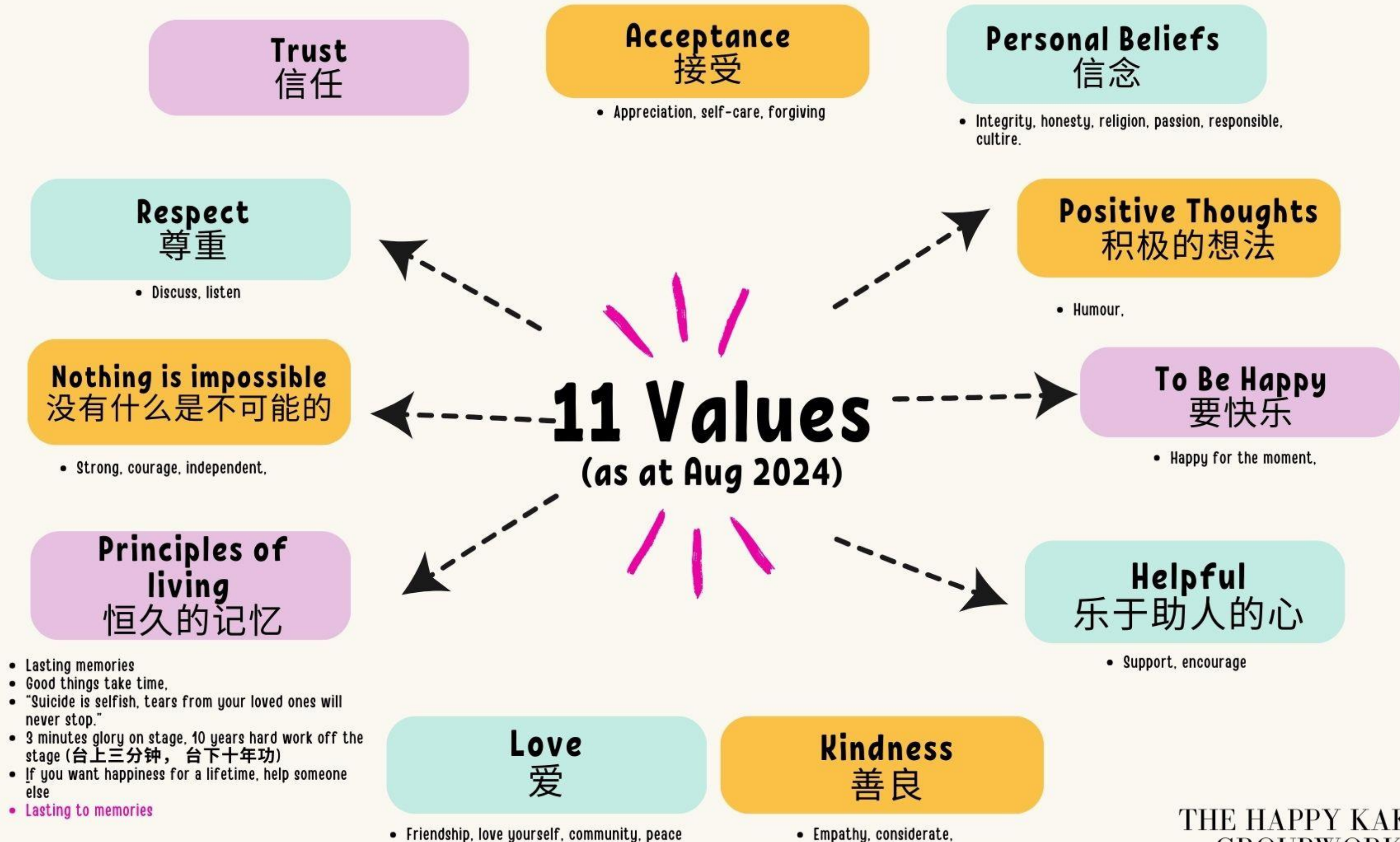
We noted that the 11 values verbalised and documented by participants were helpful to them in overcoming some challenges in life.

11 values





11 Asian values helpful to alleviate the symptoms of social isolation.



The value of kindness



The value of kindness first appeared in a Whatsapp message.


It was then captured in subsequent journal writings during session 3 and 4 of the The Happy Kakis Groupwork 2023.

In addition to the source of support data like what's app message and journals, it is also appropriate to mention about the effect of groupwork process. The participants not only felt kindness from the participants but they also felt kindness from the facilitators.



Suppressed "to be happy" value - 1st year

Name: LHT



About Me

BIRTHDAY: 14-01-46

HOBBIES: SWIMMING

FAVOURITE FOOD: ANY

FAVOURITE MUSIC: OLD SONGS



Reasons to laugh

- 😊 Relieves stress and unhappy emotions
缓解压力和不愉快的情绪
- 😊 Strengthens immune system
增强免疫系统
- 😊 Reduces pain
减轻疼痛
- 😊 Brings you closer to people
拉近你与“他”人之间的距离
- 😊 *to enjoy myself; second to forget unhappy things.*





Renewed “to be happy” value - 2nd Year

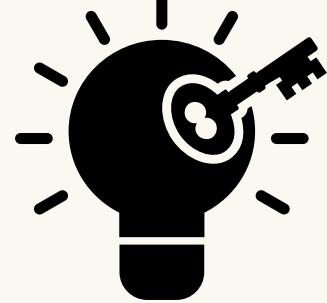
“I TEACH YOU A WAY TO DEAL WITH PHONE
SCAMMERS...

TELL HIM OVER THE PHONE:

***“BROTHER... PLEASE DO NOT SCAM ME...
I AM POORER THAN YOU!”***



VALUES



Trust
信任

Acceptance
接受

Personal Beliefs
信念

Helpful
乐于助人的心

Appreciation, self-care, forgiving

Acceptance
接受

Integrity, honesty, religion, passion, responsible, culture.

Respect
尊重

• Discuss, listen

Trust
信任

Love
爱

Positive Thoughts
积极的想法

• Humour,

Nothing is impossible
没有什么是不可能的

• Strong, courage, independent,

11 Values

Kindness
善良

To Be Happy
要快乐

Positive Thoughts (as at Aug 2024)
积极的想法

• Happy for the moment.
Positive Thoughts
积极的想法

Principles of living
恒久的记忆

- Lasting memories
- Good things take time,
- "Suicide is selfish, tears from your loved ones will never stop."
- [3 minutes glory on stage, 10 years hard work off the stage](#) (台上三分钟, 台下十年功)
- If you want happiness for a lifetime, help someone else
- Lasting memories

Principles of living
恒久的记忆

Respect
尊重

Helpful
乐于助人的心

Love
爱

• Friendship, love yourself, community, peace

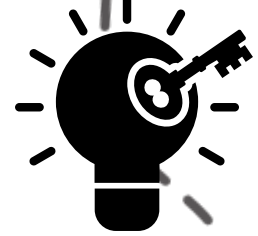
Kindness
善良

• Empathy, considerate,

To Be Happy
要快乐

support, encourage

VALUES



The origin of values

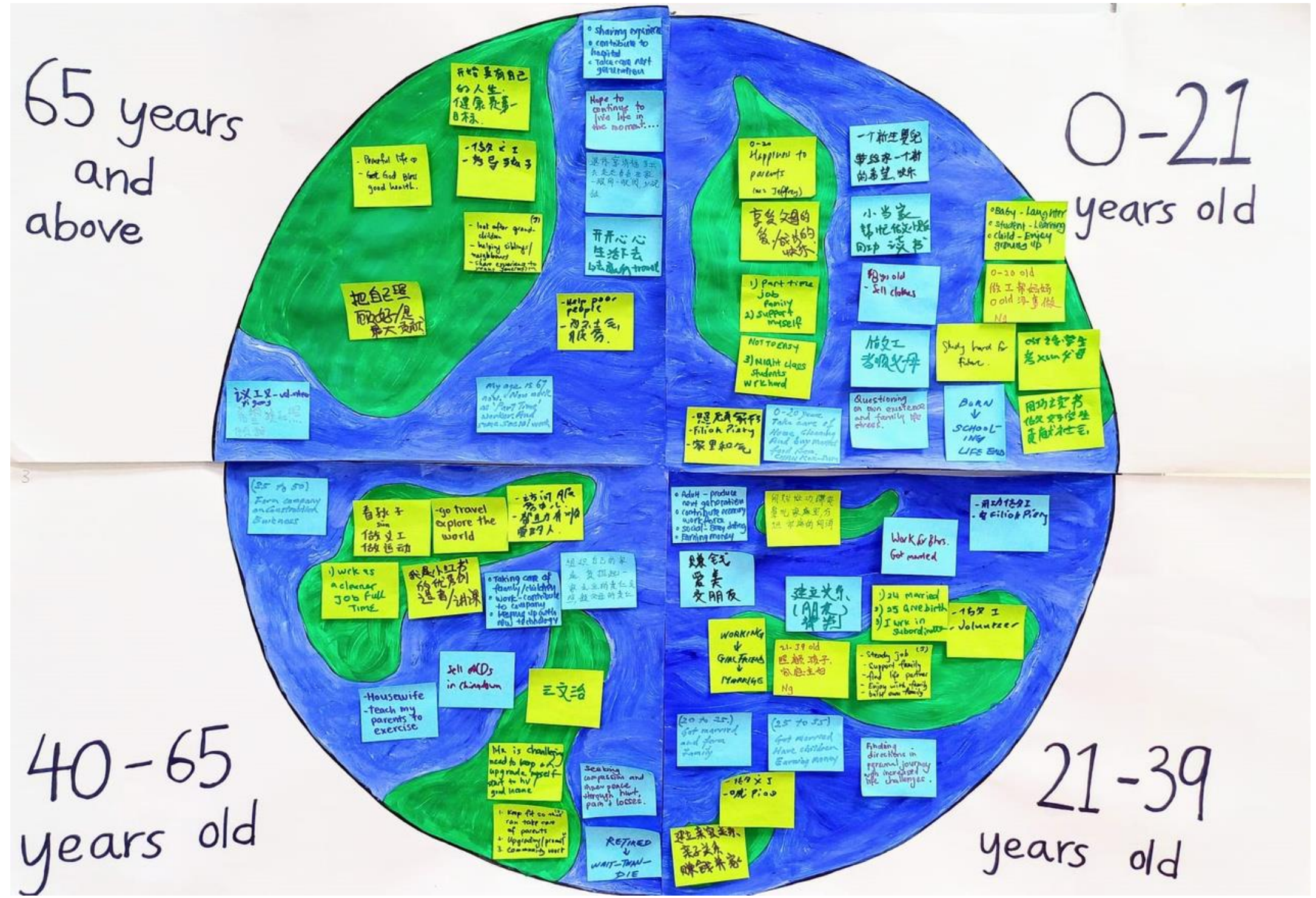
We are curious when were the values formed and how it gets drawn to alleviate the effects of social isolation...

Domestic violence and suicidal ideation

VALUES



The origin of values



"The seeds of values are sown in times of perceived need, nurtured, and drawn upon when needed."

The Happy Kakis Groupwork

Covid-19 Simulation



SINGAPORE SWITCHES OFF

Implications

“It feels like the whole family is living in isolation. We do not eat together. That period of time quite sad and boring. I spent a lot of time cooking for myself but I also do not feel happy. I miss my family...”

-Value of love and belonging

“We were isolated at home. But my husband with dementia likes to go out, if I do not let him out, he will beat me. I will usually follow him so that he does not get lost. If I cannot go out who is to look for him...”

嫁鸡随鸡 嫁狗随狗

-Value of living by principles.

(“Married to a chicken – follow the chicken; married to a dog – follow the dog;

Once a woman has attached herself to a man, she should be faithful to him regardless of all circumstances.”).

Words from 2 Covid-19 Survivors



Implications

“Attempting suicide is a very selfish act. The tears of your love ones will never stop...”

-Value of love

Words from a suicide attempt survivor.

自杀是很自私的想法，爱你的人的眼泪是不会停的。

THE HAPPY KAKIS
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Implications

While holding this candle, it is really meaningful. I had been living in darkness for the past 20 years, I could see light now. What I wanted to say, no matter how old you are, as long as you are alive you have hope. I may be in my late 50s but my life has just began. I am feeling I am not late...because I am very lucky because I am just starting to live my life. My remaining journey, I will want to live courageously and to experience things I have not.

-Value of positive thoughts

Words from a domestic violence survivor



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Thank you!



Let's Collaborate!

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THYE HUA KWAN
MORAL CHARITIES

THE HAPPY KAKIS
GROUPWORK