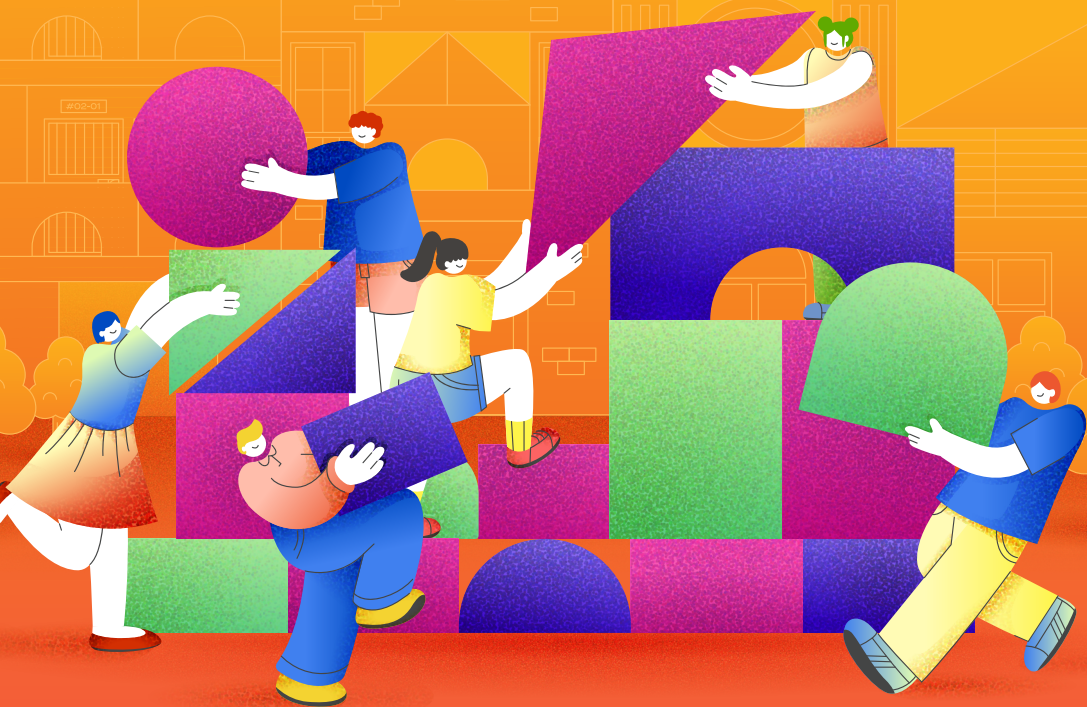


SOS SUICIDE PREVENTION SYMPOSIUM 2026

SONDER

WHERE RESILIENCE MEETS COLLECTIVE HOPE



ORGANISED BY:



Samaritans
of Singapore

SUPPORTED BY:

*SCAPE

SONDER

[sohn-dehrr]

noun

(n.) The realisation that each passerby has a life as vivid and complex as your own.



FOREWORD

Dear Sonderers,

On behalf of the organising committee, I am delighted to welcome you to Samaritans of Singapore's Suicide Prevention Symposium 2026! We are grateful to have you with us today as we come together to better understand the challenges facing our society and explore how collective action can strengthen prevention efforts.

The word *sonder* describes the profound realisation that every person we encounter is living a life as complex, rich and meaningful as our own. It reminds us that behind every interaction is a unique story shaped by experiences, relationships, hopes, challenges and circumstances that may not always be visible to others.

This understanding lies at the heart of suicide prevention. It calls on us to look beyond assumptions, listen with empathy and recognise the humanity in one another. It reminds us that every person matters, every story matters and every conversation has the potential to make a difference.

In Singapore, suicide continues to be a serious concern across every stage of life. Behind every statistic is a young person weighed down by pressure and uncertainty, an adult carrying multiple responsibilities, an older person navigating loneliness or loss, and a family or community trying to make sense of what has happened. These realities remind us that the work of suicide prevention cannot rest on the shoulders of any one service, profession or sector. Supporting those struggling with suicidality requires a collective response to strengthen the networks of care around those at risk. By working together, we can widen the safety nets before anyone reaches a point of crisis, ensuring that fewer fall through the cracks.

This symposium was created with this purpose in mind. By creating opportunities for these perspectives to intersect, we gain a richer understanding of the challenges before us and uncover new possibilities for collaboration and action.

The theme of this year's symposium, *SONDER: Where Resilience Meets Collective Hope*, reflects the belief that while resilience helps individuals navigate life's challenges, hope is often nurtured through the support of others. It is found in our relationships, our communities and our shared commitment to creating environments where people feel seen, heard and supported.

This year's programme brings together three interconnected themes: lived experience and human connection, shared responsibility within families and communities, and new pathways forward in suicide prevention. Throughout the day, participants will hear from individuals with lived experience, explore the realities of suicide loss and suicidality, and consider the needs of vulnerable children, working adults and older persons. The programme will also examine the pressures of caregiving, the challenges of fragmented care and the ways digital innovation and human connection can work together to strengthen support for those in need.

I hope the discussions and connections formed at this symposium will inspire meaningful action in your respective fields and communities.

Thank you for being part of this important conversation. Together, may we continue building a future where more people feel supported and connected and nobody needs to struggle alone.

Warm regards,



Terry Siow
Chief Executive Officer
Samaritans of Singapore

Organising Committee:

Chan May Peng, Chan Xin Yi, Charlene Heng, Chew Chun-Liang, Jonathan Ho, Khairunnizam Bin Khamis, Letazia Chia, Lim Xiu Xuan, Matthew Lim, Merwin Chew, Shawn Lai, Sherylyn Chua

Programme Schedule

Time	Ground Theatre	Treetop	The Gallery
0830	Registration		
0930	Welcome Remarks by Mr Terry Siow Chief Executive Officer, Samaritans of Singapore Opening Remarks by Mr Tan Kiat How Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Digital Development and Information & Ministry of Health		
1000	[Opening Keynote] Right Here, Right Now: Addressing Suicide Among Young Adults Where Life Pressures Collide by Prof Jo Robinson AM		
1100	Coffee Break #1		
1130	Segment 1 – Human Stories: The Power of Connection		
	[Experiential Workshop] Beyond Words: Creative Pathways to Healing by Ms Christine Tok and Ms Wynn Chan	[Fireside Chat] Walking Forward: Living with Suicide Loss Guest Speakers: Individuals with lived experience of suicide loss Moderated by Ms Fu Danfeng	[Fireside Chat] Between Living and Leaving: Understanding Suicidality Guest Speakers: Individuals with lived experience of struggling with suicidality Moderated by Ms Sheila Kaur
1230	Lunch Break		

Time	Ground Theatre	Treetop	The Gallery
1330	Segment 2 – Shared Responsibilities: Communities that Care		
	[Talk] Before They Even Begin – Why Do Children Kill Themselves? by Dr Jared Ng	[Panel] Living Longer, Feeling Forgotten – When Growing Older Feels Like A Mistake Panellists: Ms Chee Wai Yee, Dr Chris Tan Ze Jia, Ms Lim Li Pheng, Felicia, Ms Rebecca Chong Moderated by Mr Chew Chun-Liang	[Panel] Always Coping But Never Okay – Who Supports Those Who Support Others? Panellists: Ms Cheo Yee Wei, Ms Joyce Lek, Dr Rayner Kay Jin Tan, Mr Yong Weng Hong Moderated by Mr Phua Chun Yat
1430	Coffee Break #2		
1500	Segment 3 – Reimagining Hope: Pathways Forward		
	[Panel] Imagine Care That Continues Beyond Crisis Panellists: Dr Bhanu Gupta, Ms Andrea Chan, Ms Elizabeth Chia, Mr Heng Jee Tai, Jeremy Moderated by Mr Francis Foo	[Immersive Theatre] Imagine A World Without Gaps in Care Facilitated by Mr Chng Yi Kai and Ms Charlene Heng	[Panel] Imagine Trust in the Age of A.I. Panellists: Ms Bertha Chan, Mr Chuah Yeow Seng, Prof Jo Robinson, Dr Onno Kampman Moderated by Assoc Prof Feng Mengling (Mornin)
1615	[Closing Keynote] To Be or Not To Be: Shakespeare, Spirituality and the Search for Hope in a Troubled World by A/Prof Daniel Fung		
1655	Closing Remarks by Mr Ethen Ong Acting Executive Director, *SCAPE		

OPENING KEYNOTE

**Prof Jo Robinson AM**

Professor and Head of
Suicide Prevention and
Scientific Director of
the Orygen Policy Centre

*Orygen, the Centre for
Youth Mental Health
and the University
of Melbourne*

Right Here, Right Now: Addressing Suicide Among Young Adults Where Life Pressures Collide

Suicide remains a major public health challenge, with rates stubbornly high among young people. Addressing this requires an understanding of the social determinants driving youth self-harm and suicide, alongside prevention approaches that are co-designed, evidence-based, and scalable.

In this presentation, Professor Robinson will introduce a new programme of work co-developed with young people that employs robust methodologies and has the capacity to be delivered at scale. Central to this is the *Right Here Right Now* study, a national survey of nearly 3,000 young Australians examining key social determinants and individual risk factors, including cost of living pressures, housing insecurity, climate anxiety, intimate partner violence, and online experiences.

These issues are similarly relevant to young adults in Singapore. Findings from this study are informing Australian government policy development and shaping targeted “just in time” interventions to support young people where and when help is needed.



CLOSING KEYNOTE



A/Prof Daniel Fung

Senior Consultant,
Institute of Mental Health

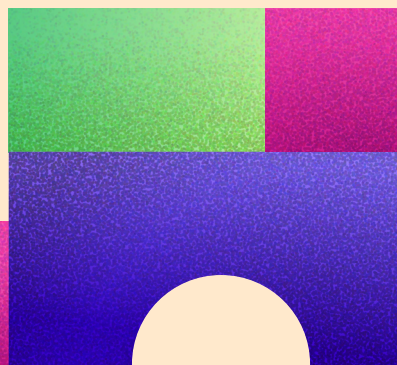
Chief Wellness Officer,
NHG Health

To Be or Not To Be: Shakespeare, Spirituality and the Search for Hope in a Troubled World

More than four centuries ago, Shakespeare's Hamlet posed one of humanity's most enduring questions: "To be or not to be?" Today, that question continues to echo in different forms as rising numbers of young people struggle with loneliness, despair, disconnection and uncertainty about the future.

In this closing keynote, child and adolescent psychiatrist A/Prof Daniel Fung explores what suicide is really telling us about ourselves, our families and our society. Drawing from psychiatry, psychology, philosophy and spirituality, he examines why suicide cannot be understood solely as an individual mental health issue, but also as a reflection of deeper questions about meaning, belonging, purpose and hope.

Moving beyond crisis intervention alone, this keynote challenges us to consider how families, schools, communities and society can create the conditions that help people flourish. Ultimately, the question before us is not only how we prevent suicide, but how we build a world in which more people find reasons to live.



Experiential Workshop

BEYOND WORDS: CREATIVE PATHWAYS TO HEALING

This co-presented experiential workshop brings together Art Therapy and Music Therapy to provide participants with a glimpse of how creative approaches can support individuals experiencing emotional distress, disconnection, and challenges in expressing their inner worlds within a therapeutic safe space. Navigating suicidal thoughts can be complex and hard to articulate, particularly when words feel limited or out of reach. In these moments, visual art and music can provide alternative, non-verbal avenues for expression, emotional holding, connection and deeper self-understanding.

The session offers an overview of these two modalities and how they can help support suicidality and suicide bereavement. With the pairing of shared knowledge as well as hands-on experience with colours, lines and sounds, the credentialed art therapist and music therapist will bring you through a short but impactful journey to explore and express different intensity of feelings and thoughts in a short but impactful activity.

**Ms Christine Tok**

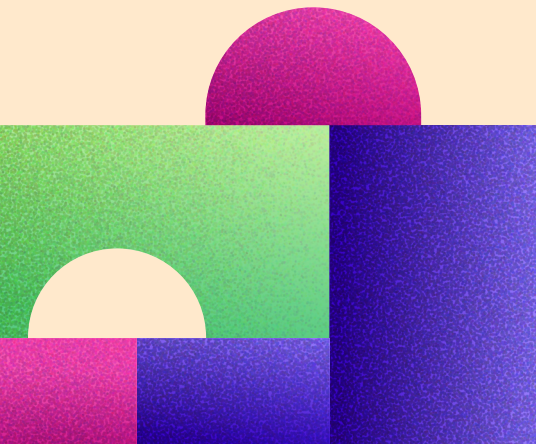
Programme Manager &
Senior Art Therapist

The Red Pencil (Singapore)

**Ms Wynn Chan**

Music Therapist, Health and
Care Professions Council

The Red Pencil (Singapore)



Fireside Chat

WALKING FORWARD: LIVING WITH SUICIDE LOSS

Guest Speakers

Individuals with lived experience of suicide loss

Moderated by

Ms Fu Danfeng
Senior Counsellor,
Samaritans of Singapore

What does it mean to continue living after losing someone to suicide? Beyond grief, suicide loss often brings shock, guilt, unanswered questions, stigma, and a profound sense of isolation that can reshape relationships, identity, and daily life. In this deeply personal sharing, lived experience takes centre stage offering insight into the realities of suicide bereavement that statistics and textbooks alone cannot capture. Through reflections on loss, healing, and resilience, this session explores how compassionate support, understanding communities, and meaningful conversations can help those bereaved by suicide find a way forward.

Fireside Chat

BETWEEN LIVING AND LEAVING: UNDERSTANDING SUICIDALITY

Guest Speakers

Individuals with lived experience of struggling with suicidality

Moderated by

Ms Sheila Kaur
Senior Counsellor,
Samaritans of Singapore

What does suicidality truly feel like from the inside? Behind every statistic is a deeply human experience. An experience shaped by overwhelming emotional pain, loneliness, ambivalence, and the exhausting effort of trying to survive when hope feels out of reach. This session invites participants to hear directly from lived experience, offering an honest and deeply personal perspective on suicidality beyond clinical definitions. Through these reflections, we explore the importance of human connection, compassion, and the power of feeling seen, heard, and understood in moments of profound distress. It is an opportunity to reflect on how our communities, services, and systems can respond in ways that truly meet people where they are.

Talk

BEFORE THEY EVEN BEGIN – WHY DO CHILDREN KILL THEMSELVES?

This talk explores a difficult but increasingly important question: how can young children become suicidal? Drawing from developmental psychology and clinical psychiatry, Dr Jared Ng examines how children understand distress, relationships, failure, and hope differently from adults. The session will offer insights into the emotional world of vulnerable children, and why the presence of even one safe adult can make a profound difference.



Dr Jared Ng

Medical Director, Psychiatrist
and Senior Consultant
Connections MindHealth



Panel

LIVING LONGER, FEELING FORGOTTEN – WHEN GROWING OLDER FEELS LIKE A MISTAKE

As Singapore becomes a super-aged society, suicide among seniors is emerging as an important yet often overlooked issue. Behind the statistics are older adults navigating major life transitions such as retirement, bereavement, declining health, loneliness, and shrinking social circles. All of which can quietly and cumulatively impact psychological wellbeing. Many seniors may also struggle in silence, shaped by generational attitudes toward vulnerability and help-seeking, making signs of distress easy to miss, and early intervention increasingly critical. This breakout session examines how existing community touchpoints, assessment tools, and established escalation pathways can be better leveraged to strengthen upstream support for seniors. Rather than building entirely new systems, the conversation focuses on how communities, agencies, and care networks can work more intentionally together to improve integration, awareness, and coordinated responses. Ultimately, supporting mental wellbeing in later life is not only about preventing suicide, but it is about preserving dignity, connection, belonging, and a continued sense of purpose as people age.

Panellists



Ms Chee Wai Yee

Executive Director
The Compassionate Network



Dr Chris Tan Ze Jia

Senior Consultant, Chief and
Program Director for APCATS
(Aged Psychiatry Community
Assessment and Treatment Service)
Institute of Mental Health (IMH)



Ms Lim Li Pheng, Felicia

Assistant Director /
Cluster Lead, Mental Health
Monfort Care



Ms Rebecca Chong

Director, Caregiving and
Community Mental Health Division
Agency for Integrated Care (AIC)

Moderator



Mr Chew Chun-Liang

Director, Strategic Development
Samaritans of Singapore

Panel

ALWAYS COPING BUT NEVER OKAY – WHO SUPPORTS THOSE WHO SUPPORT OTHERS?

Recent 2025 data show that the largest increase in suicide deaths is among adults aged 30 to 39, highlighting growing risk within the working age population. Many in this age group are working, caring for family members, and managing health or personal challenges at the same time. While they may appear to be coping, these pressures often build up quietly and remain unseen until crisis. This session explores how suicide risk develops when multiple demands come together in everyday adult life, why early warning signs are often missed, and how current structures can unintentionally delay help. The discussion will highlight practical ways practitioners and organisations can recognise risk earlier and support adults before crisis occurs.

Panellists

**Ms Cheo Yee Wei**

Counsellor
Samaritans of Singapore

**Ms Joyce Lek**

Former Director of People and Culture
Singapore Cancer Society

**Dr Rayner Kay Jin Tan**

Assistant Professor
Saw Swee Hock
School of Public Health,
National University of Singapore

**Mr Yong Weng Hong**

Executive Director
MindForward Alliance
Singapore Ltd

Moderator

**Mr Phua Chun Yat**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Allkin Singapore

Panel

IMAGINE TRUST IN THE AGE OF A.I.

As AI, social platforms, and digital tools reshape how people seek help, suicide prevention is being asked to reimagine what care looks like in the age of AI. Increasingly, individuals—especially youths—are turning to online and to AI for support. This is not inherently problematic; when used well, technology can extend reach, sharpen early detection, and strengthen frontline responsiveness. This panel explores how AI and digital innovation are reshaping and reimagining frontline suicide prevention—enabling smarter, faster, and more scalable services. Drawing on SOS's experience, including its AI supported CareText service, the discussion will examine how technology can augment human judgement, support earlier intervention, and strengthen continuity of care, rather than replace human connection.

At the same time, the panel will confront the ethical, relational, and safety risks that emerge as care is increasingly mediated by technology: over reliance on AI, misinformation, blurred accountability, and the erosion of trust and human presence. Bringing together leaders from the suicide prevention, digital, and technology sectors, this dialogue will explore shared responsibilities, safeguards, and ethical boundaries as we collectively reimagine care in the age of AI—going hi tech while staying hi touch, and ensuring compassion, trust, and human presence remain non-negotiable in suicide prevention.

Panellists

**Ms Bertha Chan**

APAC Engagement Lead,
Trust & Safety
Google

**Mr Chuah Yeow Seng**

Director, Crisis Care Services
Samaritans of Singapore

**Prof Jo Robinson**

Professor and Head of Suicide
Prevention and Scientific Director
of the Orygen Policy Centre
Orygen, the Centre for Youth Mental
Health and the University of Melbourne

**Dr Onno Kampman**

Senior Manager / Head of AI
for mindline.sg
MOH Office for
Healthcare Transformation

Moderator

**Assoc Prof Feng Mengling (Mornin)**

Director of AI for Public Health
Saw Swee Hock
School of Public Health,
National University of Singapore

Panel

IMAGINE CARE THAT CONTINUES BEYOND CRISIS

Youth in crisis often enter the system through short term, high intensity interventions such as emergency services or helplines. However, long term recovery and well being depend heavily on what happens after the immediate crisis has stabilised. Today, many young people navigate fragmented pathways across crisis care, community services and therapeutic support, which can result in gaps in continuity and uneven outcomes.

This panel looks ahead to how youth crisis responses and pathways forward can be reimagined. Bringing together perspectives from practitioners supporting youths in different ways, the discussion will explore how the social service ecosystem can move towards more coordinated, holistic and youth centred care. Panellists will reflect on current limitations, emerging practices, and what stronger, more connected pathways could look like in the future to better support youths beyond acute crisis.

Panellists

**Ms Andrea Chan**

Group Head, Counselling
and Psychological Services
TOUCH Community Services

**Dr Bhanu Gupta**

Senior Consultant & Chief,
Department of Emergency & Crisis Care
Institute of Mental Health (IMH)

**Ms Elizabeth Chia**

Lead Researcher, Research Services,
Specialised Services Group
SHINE Children and Youth Services

**Mr Heng Jee Tai, Jeremy**

Senior Clinical Psychologist,
Thriving Families @ Children's Society
Singapore Children's Society

Moderator

**Mr Francis Foo**

Centre Director
The Collective Nest Limited
(a wholly-owned SOS subsidiary)

Immersive Theatre

IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT GAPS IN CARE

How do we balance empathy with boundaries? Using meaningful games, theatre-making, and social role-play, participants will explore the experiences of care providers and the systems that shape their work. Through real-life scenarios and collective reflection, the workshop unpacks the relationship between personal boundaries and wider systemic conditions, allowing participants to develop a deeper understanding of care, burnout, and the ecosystems that sustain—or strain—those who provide it.

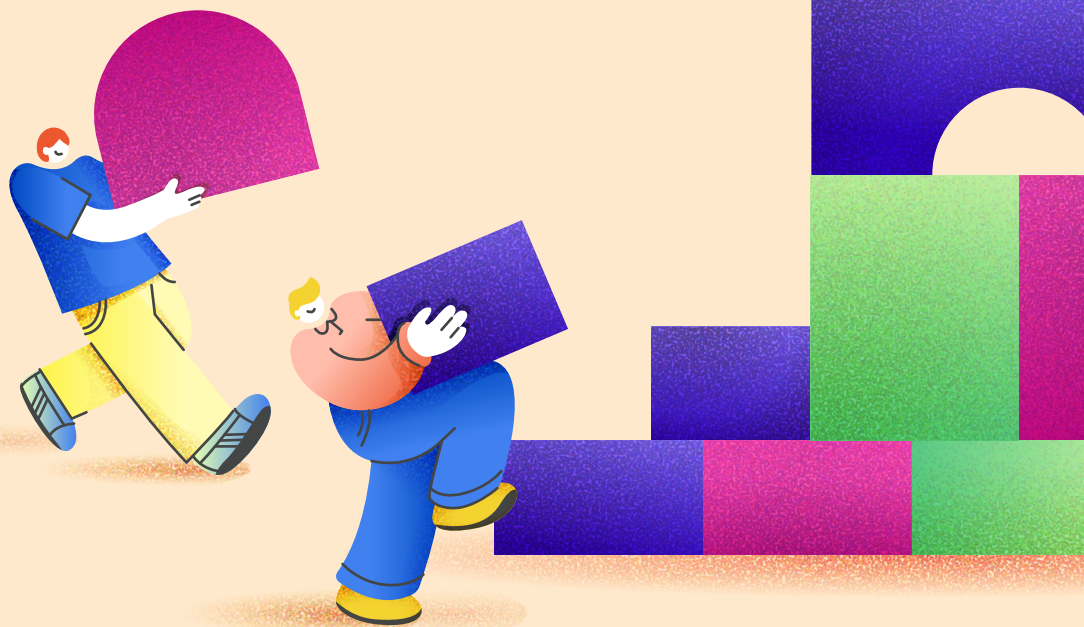
Facilitated by



Mr Chng Yi Kai
Theatre Artist



Ms Charlene Heng
Deputy Director,
Samaritans of Singapore





Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) is a secular, non-profit suicide prevention centre. Since its establishment in 1969, SOS has developed into a professionally run and managed organisation. It adopts a holistic approach to suicide-related topics, focusing on prevention, intervention and postvention, an intervention conducted after a suicide for loved ones and friends. With the mission to be an available lifeline to anyone in crisis, SOS offers emotional support to people in crisis, thinking of suicide, or affected by suicide. All information shared with SOS is treated as confidential and people can choose to remain anonymous.

About SOS's Programmes and Services

24-hour Helplines

24-hour services supported by trained volunteers and staff, offering a listening ear at any time of day. These calls and texts are anonymous and everything shared remains confidential.

24-Hour Hotline

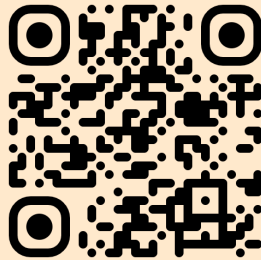
1767

24-Hour CareText (WhatsApp)

9151 1767

Be A Samaritan (BAS) Programme

- A first-responder community programme that equips individuals with confidence, knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to signs of distress.
- BAS Junior is curated specially to reach out to youths aged 13 to 16 with the aim to educate and equip them with the skills to be the first-responders amongst peers.



bit.ly/SOS-BeASamaritan

Specialist Counselling

A free-of-charge specialist counselling service for individuals experiencing emotional distress, crisis, and/or the loss of a loved one to suicide.

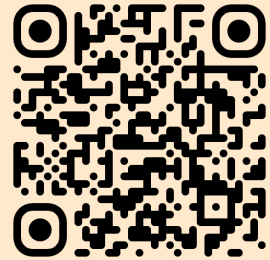


bit.ly/SOS-Counselling

About SOS's Programmes and Services

Light in the Dark Support Group

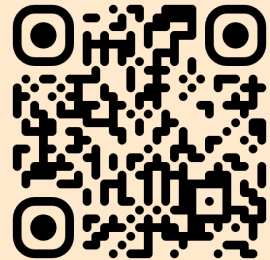
- A 6-session structured support group for individuals struggling with suicidal thoughts.
- The sessions cover the following topics:
 - Introduction & Sharing of Lived Experiences
 - The Suicidal Mind
 - Understanding Warning Signs
 - Enhanced Coping Skills
 - Strength and Hope
 - Caring for Self



bit.ly/SOS-LightInTheDark

Healing Within Support Group

- A 6-session structured support group for individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide.
- The sessions cover the following topics:
 - Unpacking the Language of Grief
 - Common Grief Reactions
 - Grief in Our Body
 - Stories of Strength
 - Discovering the Imprints
 - Wall of Hope and Next Steps

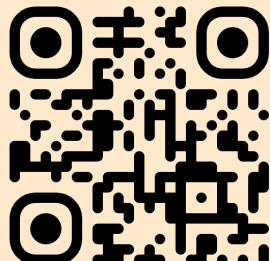


bit.ly/Healing-Within

Healing Bridge Support Group

An on-going support group for individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide.

- There are no fixed topics covered in this programme, but it focuses on processing emotions that come up during the sessions.
- New members can join the group any time as participants share their struggles and find ways to support one another in their grief journeys.



bit.ly/Healing-Bridge

Venue Sponsor

***SCAPE**

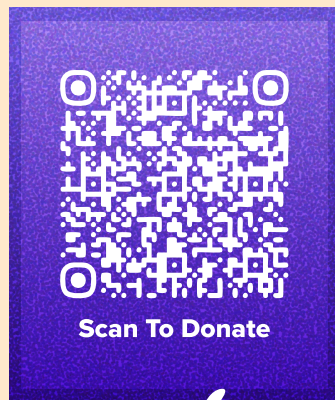
Diamond Partner

BINJAItree

Support Our Cause

Support the cause to help us continue providing our services free of charge to those who need them most.

All eligible donations will be entitled to 2.5 times tax deduction of the donated amount. Minimum donation is \$10.





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