



TRI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF



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INTRODUCING “INCANDESCENT”

EMCC (Eagles Mediation & Counselling Centre) is proud to reintroduce our physical newsletter, and we are naming it ‘*Incandescent*’. So, what does *Incandescent* mean and what does it signify?

incandescent
/ɪnˈkænˈdes(ə)nt/
adjective

1. emitting light as a result of being heated.
“plumes of incandescent liquid rock”
synonyms: white-hot, intensely hot, red-hot, burning, fiery, on fire, blazing, ablaze, a flame;
2. full of strong emotion; passionate.
“she felt an incandescent love for life”

A newsletter must reflect the work it represents and tell its stories. At EMCC, our core services of Mediation, Counselling and various upstream initiatives seek to serve and restore individuals, couples, families and organisations. EMCC desires to be a source of light that brings hope to the community we belong to. Personal problems may escalate and heat up, but these issues are also opportunities for growth and reconciliation. We are motivated to help people rekindle that incandescent joy for life.

Relationships do not just happen. To have a satisfying and nurturing relationship, effort is required from all parties. This newsletter is our effort to reach out, and share stories, thoughts and information that will be beneficial to our stakeholders. Articles on self-care, relationships and issues of the day will be regular features in *Incandescent*.

This is an exciting time for EMCC and we invite you to journey with us. Our social media platforms and website have a refreshed look, and we can be found on Facebook, [@EMCC.There.Is.Hope](#) and our website (www.emcc.org.sg). The website had a makeover in July 2017, and promises to be more interactive in the days to come. Do visit our website to find out more about EMCC and our services. Just scan the QR code below!

In this issue’s feature story, we share how EMCC enters a new phase as we bid our General Manager, Benjamin Chan, farewell. We will also talk about Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT) 2017 workshops that we have concluded, and its impact on our work. Like all newsletters, an ‘Events Happening’ box will tell you how you can get involved.

We hope you enjoy the First Issue of *Incandescent*.

Lai Mun Loon
Head, Professional Services



A man in a white long-sleeved shirt and khaki pants is walking towards the right. He is wearing a blue wristband on his left wrist. The background shows a large, light-colored building with arched windows and a dark, textured overhang above him. The sky is clear and blue.

finishing well

excellence and commitment

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION AT EMCC

On 30th June, 2017, Mr Benjamin Chan stepped down as General Manager of EMCC. For the past four years, EMCC had spoken extensively about professionalism, excellence and longevity in the work of the agency. In commitment to leadership succession and renewal, Ben has handed over the reins of the agency to a new leadership team lead by Head of Corporate Services, Ms Pearl Pang and Head of Professional Services, Mr Lai Mun Loon.

Pearl has extensive experience in various sectors as well as intimate knowledge in the running and workings of non-profits in Singapore. Mun Loon has been with EMCC for the last 5 years and is the incumbent Senior Manager of Mediation Services.

In 2017, it would be six years since Benjamin Chan came on board EMCC. He was instrumental in shaping the agency and moulding it into what it is today.

Before Ben left EMCC at the end of June 2017, we spoke to him and he shared about what purpose and finishing well really meant.

Q: How were you introduced to the work of EMCC?

A: It was by providence that led me to EMCC. Prior to being here, I worked at Yong-En Care Centre. It has always been my calling to serve and give back to the community. Being a family man and a father, I am very much aligned with the work of restoring relationships and making them better.

Q: Tell us about your 6 years working in EMCC

A: When I first started, the staff did not know me other than as the new person taking over from their previous boss. I set out goals and laid out long-term plans for the team. It was exciting for the team and myself when we began to see our plans coming to fruition. It is a great sense of fulfilment and I speak for the staff working

alongside me in this journey that we have lived out our vision and we are growing from strength to strength.

Q: What is the most memorable experience you had?

A: In 2013, the staff and I set out a road map of what we like to see EMCC in three years and beyond. Everyone had their purpose and task cleanly mapped out. Everyone played an instrumental role in pursuit of the vision we shared. We would all make a difference in our own ways but collectively I think when the team identified themselves as having a significant and meaningful part to play; that to me, was certainly memorable.

Q: What are your hopes and visions for EMCC?

A: I hope in the days ahead, we will continue to have that same sense of purpose. I believe that EMCC will grow from strength to strength and make greater impact to the community we serve.

Q: What are your plans in retirement

A: I am not sure yet, to be honest. As a Christian, I will pray and await my next assignment.

Q: Please share a word of encouragement to the staff at EMCC

A: EMCC is like a family and every family member builds one another up. We are only as strong as the sum of our parts. We all play our different roles but with perseverance, we can achieve so much more than we think we can. Remember that everyone's success contributes to the organisation's success. In all you do, seek excellence.

I would also like to thank the Management Committee for their years of support. I could not have had the opportunity to be part of this amazing work if not for that belief in me. For that I am truly grateful. Here's to many more years of mending hearts and restoring lives. Indeed, THERE IS HOPE.

HAPPENED

FEEDBACK INFORMED TREATMENT

Fully implemented in EMCC since 2014, Feedback-Informed Treatment, or FIT, was a defining moment of client-centricity in the Centre. An intentional tool for soliciting immediate feedback from clients at the beginning and end of every session, counsellors seek real-time feedback, at the beginning of the session, on how the client think and feel in 3 aspects of the person - the individual, interpersonal, and the social aspects.

Just as the session ends, counsellors, again, seek feedback on a scale on the various aspects of the session: if it was useful for the goals, topics, approach and even their perspective of whether the counsellor heard or understood them.

Feedback can be confronting, but we believe that when used correctly, helps counsellors to be more effective professionals in aiding clients to reach their therapeutic goals. FIT has given EMCC a tool to know exactly where clients are, whether they end therapy successfully, dropout prematurely, or are stagnating.

Since its implementation, we have noticed that clients stay longer, are engaged, and more importantly, experiencing change in their lives. This feedback helps us know that our counselling modality, as well as approach is effective. Feedback engages clients by returning a voice to them about their therapy, keeps them in session because they are engaged, decreases drop-out and deterioration of client well-being.

This was exciting for us, both the research behind FIT, as well as its effectiveness when we implemented it in-centre. On 24 and 25 April 2017, EMCC hosted a workshop conducted by Dr. Daryl Chow who is with the International Centre of Clinical Excellence, to share with fellow professionals about the value of feedback in therapy, and how clients are best served when feedback is used correctly.

At EMCC, we have deployed the use of technology in a web-based software, along with tablets for the convenience of clients, and counsellors to track the progress as accurately as possible.

We are happy to share this feedback philosophy, the implementation and experience with fellow professionals. It is exciting to be part of a movement that empowers clients by giving them a voice in their therapy. We are looking forward to fixing the dates for next year's FIT workshops, and we hope to see more helping professionals.

If you are a helping professional, we hope to see you there!

Our workshop 2 participants are all smiles after their session



TOP:

A much needed group photo for our participants after workshop 1 of our FIT workshop

RIGHT:

Dr Daryl Chow conducting the workshop



Participants interacting to try and decipher a problem flashed on screen by Dr Daryl Chow

HOME TO GLORY

On 27 July 2017, we learnt that Mr. David Kan (Manager, Marriage Journey at EMCC) had passed on suddenly at home. We extend our deepest condolences to his family. He is greatly missed by us at EMCC.

As we mourn the loss of this passionate man, we remember his legacy – Bringing Hope to Relationships and Marriages, be it through sharing his insights as an invited speaker, in articles he writes for the media or when he facilitates EMCC workshops like Seven Principles Program and Bringing Baby Home workshops, and through his many years founding, leading and directing Family Life First. He has fought the good fight and finished his race.

With heavy hearts, we say goodbye to our dear brother and would like to share with you the last article that he wrote.

The late Mr. David Kan's last letter to the Straits Times Forum:

PREPARE COUPLES FOR UPS AND DOWNS OF MARRIAGE LIFE

The Statistics on Marriages and Divorces reported a notable increase in the age of divorcees in the last decade (Marriages in Singapore see slight dip, while divorces edge up; ST online, July 18).

The main reasons cited for civil divorces are “unreasonable behaviour” and having “lived apart or separated for three years or more”. Couples whose relationships stand the test of time are those who embrace their differences through acceptance, trust and complementation, a research paper by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in 2004 showed. Good relationships begin with deep friendships that initiate dialogue rather than remaining in gridlock. Successful couples learn quickly the need to “hold hands” rather than have the upper hand. They commit themselves to effectively repair and de-escalate negativity. This is a process which takes much time and effort but strengthens commitment and nurtures attunement in spousal relationships.

Extensive empirical studies found that pre-marital education and marriage enrichment initiatives do make a difference in couples' lives and relationships. They establish and nurture a strong foundation of mutual understanding, appreciation and emotional bonding. These are upstream efforts, learned skills and intentional practices that will help couples before problems arise. Programmes like marriage preparation and enrichment must be a mainstay in our culture, given society's pace, haste and distractions.

Let us catch couples before trouble brews, and prepare them for the ups and downs that come along with life. For far too long, by the time couples seek help, there would already have been a cascading of trust, a betrayal or, worse, an emotional checkout.

When we build strong safety nets, and educate people about it, it eventually promotes marital stability, satisfaction, and relationship quality; all of which are longer-term attributes of successful relationships.

David Kan
Manager, Marriage Journey
Eagles Mediation & Counselling Centre



HAPPENINGS

OCT

14

7pp workshop at EMCC (Public Run)

NOV

11

Group MPP (1/2) at EMCC

NOV

18

Group MPP (2/2) at EMCC

2017



*Please note that names used in this story are pseudonyms

CLIENT STORY

Pregnancy, while a joyous event, can take a toll on relationships that created it. This was what happened with Victor and Isabel. As the excitement wore off, and the focus was on the baby, the marriage inevitably took a backseat - a vulnerability that resulted in Victor finding his heart caught up with someone else.

Isabel was devastated, Victor was clueless; she felt betrayed, he felt lost. They had stopped meeting each other's emotional needs. 66% of couples report a dip in marital satisfaction after the arrival of a baby, with Victor and Isabel at this place before the baby was born, it was important they sought help immediately.

And they did. In their first session, Victor came clean about his sense of neglect and immense pressure he sensed from her, while Isabel sought to affirm him, as she realised she had much expectations on him, but had withdrawn the connection with him.

Counselling was a safe place for them to talk, an opportunity to share what they were afraid of, and process why it was. In the sessions, both discovered how some behavioural patterns were destructive and how they could manage this together.

More importantly, it taught them the value of holding hands, than the 'upper hand'.

In repairing relationships, resilience is built as faith is restored. Victor and Isabel did not just survive that ordeal, but their marriage found a renewed sense of intimacy than before. Today, as a family of 4, they look back and are thankful for that day they decided help was needed for them, and help was available for them.

It is through your support that EMCC can exist to ensure that professional services like mediation and counselling can be accessible to all. The gift of finances you entrust us with ensures that our fees are kept affordable for clients. We need your continued support to keep our services affordable to more people who are struggling to save their relationships, but either have no means or knowledge to.

With a small gift of \$50 a month, you can subsidise one couple needing a session. If we could ask for more, many others can receive the help they need. Allow us to invite you to join us on this quest to make professional services accessible to all. If you would like to make a monthly contribution, please detach the form at the back of the newsletter and send the completed form to us. If you would like to make a one-time contribution, please go to giving.sg/EMCC. Like Victor and Isabel, 'Trust is a peculiar resource; it is built rather than depleted by use'. We want to build it together with you.

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

This year, we will require \$470,000 to support our work in helping couples and families in crisis, through our integrative counselling and mediation services. We are constantly on the lookout for people who share the same passion as us and want to contribute in a tangible way.

If you would like to make a one-time or monthly donation, kindly fill up the form below and mail it back to us

1. CHEQUE

Please make your crossed cheque payable to "EMCC", indicate your full name, NRIC and contact details at the back of the cheque (for tax-deductible receipt), and mail it to our address.

2. ONLINE

Please go to <http://www.giving.sg/EMCC> and follow the instructions there. If you would like to volunteer with us, please go to <http://www.giving.sg/EMCC> to check for volunteering opportunities, or email us at reachus@emcc.org.sg.

DONATION FORM

Title: Dr / Mr / Mrs / Mdm/ Ms _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

NRIC/FIN/UEN No: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ City: _____

Contact(O): _____ (H): _____

Email: _____ (H/P): _____

Yes, I would like to donate based on the following arrangement: (Please tick to select an option)

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I like to Donate: (Please tick only 1 option)

S\$25 S\$50 S\$100 S\$200 S\$500 S\$ _____ (Please fill in the amount)

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Credit Card type: Visa Master Card Issuing Bank: _____

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(Please note that for each successful deduction, a partial bank processing fee of \$0.80 will be charged to your account.)

DONOR SIGNATURE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that by signing this Direct Debit Authorisation, I have read and understood the Terms and Conditions governing this authorisation as reflected overleaf. I also agree that my particulars can be used by EMCC (Eagles Mediation & Counselling Centre) and its appointed partners for the purpose of administration of this donation.

Donor's signature as in bank record

Date



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Singapore 179030

Please fold along dotted area and seal securely before posting

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

DEAR DONOR,

Your commitment and support of EMCC through a regular donation will assist us in our mission to provide care and hope to the many families struggling to overcome difficulties and pain.

Please note that your full donation will be received directly by Eagles Mediation and Counselling Centre

DEDUCTION FREQUENCY

The first deduction will be made within 3 working days for credit cards and a month for GIRO upon signing of this Authorisation Form. Subsequently, your account will be debited in accordance with the frequency that you have chosen overleaf (Monthly/Half-yearly/Annually). On the 15th of every month, we will deduct your authorised donation. For unsuccessful transactions there will be a retry on the 28th of every month.

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE RECEIPT

You will receive your tax-deductible receipt at the beginning of every calendar year from us for all donations received in the previous calendar year. Monthly receipts will not be provided for your deductions. Please refer to your credit card statements from your issuing bank for confirmation of deductions made.

CASH DONATIONS

Those who wish to make a separate cash donation can contact EMCC at Tel 6788 8220 or email reachus@emcc.org.sg for details.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will keep all information (i) name, gender, nationality, date of birth; (ii) email address, postal address, telephone numbers; (iii) credit card number and expiry

date in this Direct Debit Donor Programme confidential. This Programme adheres to a very strict policy regarding donor privacy. We will use this information in order to: (i) administer your accounts with us; (ii) process donations made by you, orders or applications submitted by you; (iii) send you information and calling you in regards about our events, programmes, fund raising, products and services; (iv) verify your identity; (v) carry out donor profile analysis; and (vi) contact the winners of our competitions (if any) and to help us plan other fund raising and/or promotional activity. No information, in whole or in part, in its paper or electronic format, will be disclosed, used, modified or reproduced for any other person of organization, except in connection with these purposes stated.

Once again, thank you for your time and generosity in supporting EMCC.