

Keeping everyone abreast on what's happening in the ACP community

EDITOR'S NOTE / MANSOR MOHD MOHTER

## Can't Take That Away From Me

The month of March has barely ended and our lives have changed dramatically from when 2020 started. With the death toll already exceeding ten thousand worldwide and many more deaths reported every day, it seems that the carnage of COVID-19 pandemic is set to rise even more.

On a personal level, I was affected too. For instance, I started working from home, I stopped going to the cinema and I was nearly swayed into the panic-buying mode (I said "nearly" because when I reached the supermarket, I realized that I do not cook).

It is understandably difficult to not be mentally and emotionally affected by this situation given the constant stream of bad news, the loss of human connection (#socialdistancing) and greater overall uncertainties. In times like this, I have to force myself to focus on the good side.

My silver lining:

1. My colleagues checked in on each other on a daily basis and we reminded each other to log our temperature.
2. My dear friend, Rajes, made *rasam* (South Indian soup with plenty of health benefits) and had it delivered to my doorstep.
3. I reflected on what "*living well*" means to me and ensure I am indeed, *living well*.



Source : [vegrecipesofindia.com](http://vegrecipesofindia.com)

COVID-19 may have taken away many lives all over the world and altered our lives in many ways. However, it has not taken away the love, kindness and generosity of my family, friends and loved ones. And for that, I will continue to be grateful in 2020.

And to all the readers of this newsletter, I hope you too can focus on all that have not been taken away : love, hope, sense of humour and relationships. Until then, take care!

Alex is a Programme Executive from Fei Yue Community Services. Part of his job scope in the Eldercare Services Division includes facilitating ACP for his clients.

It had been almost a year since I conducted my first ACP facilitation. Looking back, I am grateful for the journey of growth and discovery as I assist clients to make important decisions for their future care plans. ACP facilitation had helped me to grow in several areas too.

One of the ways ACP facilitation has helped me grow is that I now have a more balanced view of seniors in Singapore. Before my stint in ACP, the bulk of my work dealt with low-income and vulnerable seniors who had poor family support. As a result, there is a tendency to perceive the experience of old age very negatively: filled with many indignities, sorrow and regrets. However, as my ACP clients come from a broad spectrum across socioeconomic background, I now have a more balanced view of our seniors.

I had the privilege to meet seniors whom have aged gracefully and maintained close ties with their family members, friends and relatives. They inspire me to reflect on how we could better encourage seniors to lead wholesome lives even in their twilight years, and how I myself, can strive towards such a lifestyle in the future.

Prior to ACP facilitation, I have limited knowledge on end-of-life planning and mental capacity issues. Since ACP stands at the intersection of these two areas, it compelled me to delve into these topics further so that I can offer value-added advice and assistance to clients. This includes writing of Wills, understanding Mental Capacity Act, Lasting Power of Attorney, Advance Medical Directive, causes of dementia, management of behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), caregiver grants and subsidies, palliative care and life-sustaining treatments. All these knowledge had served me beyond my job as an ACP facilitator! I gradually realised that there are many volunteers, friends and relatives who are seeking sound advice to plan for their elders or themselves too.



Overall, I found that facilitating ACP is not a static role involving repetitive tasks. Instead, it has given me a platform for me to grow not only professionally, but personally too. We can serve as guideposts for others who are journeying through life like us. I hope that with rising awareness in recent years, ACP facilitation will be the key cornerstone of end-of-life planning.

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