

# THIS IS THE BEST OF YOU

Compiled by Sim Yi Wen

Life often comes with its fair share of ups and downs, with some surprises peppered in around the corners. What seems like the lowest point in our lives can sometimes become a turning point for us to get better. Every experience in life goes a long way in shaping us and teaching us the lessons that we need to learn.

The Best of You is a social movement for you to appreciate the people and experience that have shaped you into who you are today, and in this issue, we will be sharing some of the stories received from our previous call for submissions. Here are the stories of Mohammad Shahiran's battle with drugs, and Samuel Seong Koon's triumph over cancer. Each has their own story to tell, but you'll soon see that the biggest takeaway from their stories is that if you should ever find yourself at the bottom of the pit, remember that the only way to go is up. And with a little help on the side from family and friends, there is always a new lease of life.

## Mohammad Shahiran bin Junaidi

If you feel like there is nobody in your life who believes, supports, and loves you unconditionally, think again.

Like many typical Asian families, my parents are proud with high hopes and aspirations for my future. As the youngest son in a brood of five, I was the family's delight. They rejoiced with me in my triumphs, encouraged me despite my weaknesses and taught me to have faith when life disappoints. Unfortunately, these did not shelter me from the temptations of life.

A curious and defiant soul, I succumbed to peer pressure and consumed drugs at a tender age of 16. What started off as a challenge from friends unfolded in chaos. I got hooked.

I still remember the hurt look in my mother's eyes when she first learned about my addiction. Both my parents were devastated, but they stood by me with faith in their hearts, believing that one day I would come to my senses. They exhausted all ways to convince me to stop using drugs, knowing that it will only ruin my life.

"Is this something I really like doing? Do I feel happy?" These were the questions I asked myself as I continued to fall prey to drugs. I knew something was wrong but my ears were deaf and my heart was numb. I could not find ways to bail myself out of the mess.



I spent 10 years being in and out of jail before I decided that it was high time to call it quits. I craved for a second chance in life.

Knowing that I cannot do it alone, I sought help from the folks at ISCOS, a co-operative for ex-offenders. Upon completing a subsidised training programme, they found a job for me. Today, I am sober and back on my feet, happily married with a daughter, and recently secured a roof over our heads.

Through it all, my parents were always there for me. I could never thank my parents enough for all their love and support at my lowest points in life. They are the reason that spurred me on to turn over a new leaf. They are indeed the best of me. Now a parent myself, my biggest hope is to emulate such wholehearted love towards my child.