

# MIND SCIENCE CENTRE

## FY2021 NEWSLETTER #2

**NUHS**  
Centre of Excellence

**NUS**  
Yong Loo Lin  
School of Medicine,  
Academic Research Centre



"In the financial year of 2021, Mind Science Centre (MSC) has achieved amazing milestones. Some of the key events include the Fundraising Juke-Box Musical, the inaugural curation launch of Mind Art Experiential Lab and multiple collaborations with our partners like National Parks Board (NParks), Voices of Singapore and many more. We look forward to extending the impact of our work in the year ahead and to further our mission to build an Undefeated Mind in the community across ages."

**Ms Mae Kng**

Assistant Director, Mind Science Centre

## OUR IMPACT IN FY21

A total of

**7663** people impacted  
by our initiatives



**165k** post reach



**22** Publications



**1296** new mailing list subscribers

## NEWS BULLETIN



### New therapeutic gardens opening to benefit more in Singapore

In our research collaboration with NParks, it was found that urban nature contributed positively to the health and well-being of residents. As such, it was noted that parks and gardens are important avenues to help people cope with stressors and build their mental resilience, especially during pandemic times. Our research finding has contributed towards Singapore cityscape planning and initiatives that will benefit the community in the long run.

[READ THE NEWS](#)



### Higher risk of depression amongst students due to pandemic

A study by MSC found an alarming high percentage of National University of Singapore students at risk of depression, where they reportedly experienced high level of stress and loneliness as a result of the pandemic and restrictions imposed to curb the COVID-19 spreading. This highlighted the psychological impact brought about by the pandemic and the importance to find ways to address the underlying factors, such as family roles and communication styles.

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### Professor Kua Ee Heok on Channel 8 Frontline Dementia Feature

Dementia may seem daunting but there are ways to slow down the debilitating symptoms. Active ageing is the key to it and Prof Kua was invited to speak about the Age Well Everyday Programme on Channel 8's prime time documentary - Frontline. Seniors can engage in early intervention by participating in activities like exercise, Tai Chi, dance, art, ink painting, music reminiscence and gardening. Watch the interview starting at 00:28 of the highlight video cut.

[WATCH THE INTERVIEW](#)

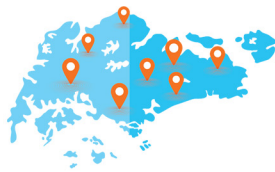


Click [HERE](#)  
to donate [NOW](#)

Keen to make a difference in the mental health scene of Singapore?  
Support our research and community programmes today!  
For more information, get in touch with us at [Wileen@nus.edu.sg](mailto:Wileen@nus.edu.sg)

# PROGRAMMES

## AGE WELL EVERYDAY (AWE)



**8**  
AWE Sites



**949**  
Participants



**112**  
Volunteers



**133**  
E-Learning  
Participants

### *"Active Ageing in the community, by the community, for the community."*

While the life expectancy in Singapore has risen over the years, it is the quality of life at old age that matters most. Successful ageing is multi-dimensional, encompassing: (i) the avoidance of disease and disability; (ii) the maintenance of high physical and cognitive function; (iii) the sustained engagement in social and productive activities.

AWE holistically encompasses a series of community activities for seniors to engage in active ageing. This includes health education, physical exercise, mindfulness practice, art and music reminiscence, horticultural therapy, choral singing and therapeutic forest. These community activities are targeted at adults aged 40 & above and in particular seniors, retirees, caregivers and even people with mild cognitive impairment.



#### AWE Volunteer Appreciation 2021

On 11 December 2021, the annual AWE Volunteer Appreciation was held over Zoom. With the help of our volunteers, who actively organized activities for the community based on the AWE content learnings, MSC was able to fulfil the promise of translating research into intervention programmes that is beneficial to the community. The highlight of the day was the acknowledgement of the long-serving volunteers and e-learning graduates across our partnered centres. Join us in celebrating their achievements!



#### AWE E-Learning Portal

The e-learning modules are available all year round on the UniLEARN platform. The full suite programme comprises of 6 online modules (Depression, Stroke, Dementia, Caregiving, Lifestyle Management I & II), 2 Mindful Awareness Practice sessions and a webinar session with qualified healthcare professionals. These modules are open for the general public to enrol in to acquire knowledge on the relevant topic areas. Singaporeans aged 50 and above are eligible for National Silver Academy subsidised fees.



#### AWE Train the Trainer Workshop

This workshop for existing AWE volunteers to upskill is currently in works to enhance its content and curriculum. The workshop will feature insightful talks by experts, updates on new activities for AWE programme and assessments for competencies. To participate in the workshop, volunteers will have to be nominated by the respective partnered centres. Upon completion of the curriculum, the volunteer will be certified as an AWE Trainer and assigned to provide training for new AWE volunteers at the partnered centres. Stay tuned for more information.

[READ MORE](#)

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

[STAY TUNED](#)

As MSC continues the efforts to strengthen community mental resilience through our programmes, we would like to invite you to be part of our cause and keep you updated on our events and programmes!

1. Scan QR code to sign up for our mailing list.
2. Like and follow our FB page and website.



[medicine.nus.edu.sg/hmsc](https://medicine.nus.edu.sg/hmsc)

@mindsciencecentre





# MIND ART EXPERIENTIAL LAB (MAELab)



Alexandra Hospital, 378 Alexandra Road  
Block 29 Level 2, Singapore 159964



**753** Visitors



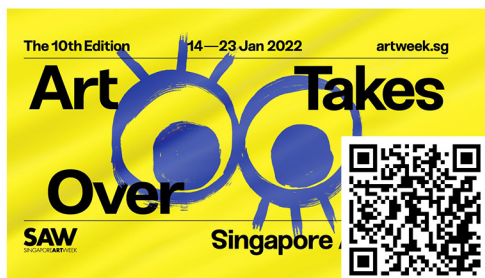
**22** Volunteer  
Docents



Click HERE  
for more details

The innovative space, where art meets science to create meaningful insights to mental resilience, has opened its doors to public since its official launch last September. Despite the pandemic restrictions, we have hosted a total of 534 visitors for the physical tour and a total of 219 visitors over the virtual tour. The current curation will be ending soon, so do book your visit soon if you wish to find out more about the ageing brain and the benefits of art and mindfulness to our cognition.

A new curation is in its planning stage and its working title is 'Teens & Kin'. As the title suggests, it will be taking a focus on youth mental health and resilience. Growing up in the midst a fast-paced urban society, Singaporean youth contend with a wide range of stressors – ranging from academics, body-consciousness, inter-personal communication issues, and many more. At the critical cusp of transition from dependence to independence, the perceived influence that an individual's peers have during these years belies the important role that the family unit also plays during these formative years. Anchored by research findings from MSC's Singapore Youth Epidemiology and Resilience (YEAR) study, the exhibition is set to share insights for approaches towards building resilience, while inspiring hope and aspirations within adolescents.



## Singapore Art Week Exhibition Feature

MSC is proud to be one of the exhibitions featured during the Singapore Art Week, which seeks to engage people in enriching discussions, talks, public art walks and tours. Our ongoing curation titled 'Arts, Mindfulness & the Ageing Brain' was well-received by the public. Visitors gained insights into the lifestyle changes they can engage in as interventions to mitigate the effects of ageing, especially with activities like art and mindfulness.



## Channel 8 Morning News Feature:

### Benefits of Tea-Drinking by Dr Feng Lei

Our inaugural curation at MAELab captured much media interest and one of the research exhibits centered on Tea-drinking benefits, was featured on 晨光第一线. The lead researcher of the study - Dr Feng Lei - was invited to speak about the benefits of drinking tea and how it can potentially reduce the risk of cognitive decline in the elderly. This topic has since garnered much public interest. Watch the feature to find out more!



## Art Residency Programme Updates

In 2021, MAELab awarded a research grant through the Art Residency Programme for Dr Daphna Kehila's research proposal on Arts-Based Programme for Home-Based Care Dyads in Singapore. The research has since concluded with a published paper. Read the paper to find out how artmaking and mindfulness can be used to improve the communication and relationship between the care dyad. The intervention has shown potential benefits for stress reduction and self-care of caregivers too.

[VIEW MORE](#)

[WATCH THE FEATURE](#)

[READ THE ARTICLE](#)

# MINDGYM

**49** MindGym Workshops



**738** MindGym Participants

MindGym, a contemplative space to cultivate mental fitness, has rolled out a series of talks, workshops and publications that aim to raise awareness about mindfulness-based interventions as informed by research. Daily mindfulness practice can help to improve cognitive functions and strengthen mental resilience. Read below to find out more about our signature MindGym workshops.



## Finding Peace in a Frantic World

This 8-week virtual workshop uses the framework of the Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) programme, and is based on the self-help book of the same name. The key learning points have been distilled concisely for students and working professionals who are seeking a practical introduction on how Mindfulness can improve physical well-being and strengthen mental resilience. Be ready to step out of "mindless" mode and appreciate the beauty of here and now.



## Mindful Self-Care Programme

This three-session virtual programme is our latest initiative, in collaboration with the Centre for Healthcare Professionals Training! If you are looking for an introduction to the concepts and practices of mindfulness, this will be the perfect programme for you. Join Dr Virginia Lien to find out more about how you can manage stress more effectively in work and home situations by turning off the auto-pilot mode and renewing your energy on a daily basis.



## Self-Compassion for Healthcare Communities

This six-session online course will enable its participants to learn how to care for yourself adequately, through practicing mindful self-awareness, effective emotional regulation and self-compassion. Join Dr Virginia Lien, adjunct Associate Professor Mabel Yap and Dr Tanya Tierney to explore how you can discover your compassionate voice, build resilience and recover from burnout situations. Stay tuned for more information.

**STAY TUNED  
FOR THE NEXT WORKSHOP TIMING**

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## RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



### Social connectedness as a mediator for Horticultural Therapy's biological effect on community-dwelling older adults

Past studies have shown that dementia and depression have two prominent risk factors, which are elevated levels of inflammatory biomarker and a lack of social connectedness. Though Horticultural therapy (HT) has been shown to improve these risk factors, the underlying mechanisms of how it works remained unknown. 59 seniors were recruited for the study, with 29 of them went through 15 one-hour sessions conducted at Singapore's parks and nature reserves, where trained facilitators were engaged to bring the seniors through activities like gardening and nature walks. Mediation analyses were performed using psychosocial data and blood sample at baseline, three months and six months into the HT intervention. The team found that improved social connectedness mediated the effects of HT on the inflammatory biomarker (IL-6) level. Hence, social connectedness is critical in mitigating this biological risk factor of dementia and depression in seniors. This finding supports the need for more community-based initiatives to engage seniors to improve social connections in healthy ageing.



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## Impacts of COVID-19 and Partial Lockdown on Family Functioning, Intergenerational Communication and Associated Psychosocial Factor among Young Adults in Singapore

The pandemic has changed the ways we live our life and engage in social interactions. During circuit breaker, our social space was confined to our home, which can either foster stronger family bonds or aggravate existing family problems. As such, the new norm called for the need to understand what are the changes in family functioning and its associated psychological impacts. A cross-sectional online survey was conducted with 390 National University of Singapore students to examine the factors associated with family functioning among young adults in Singapore during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results identified intergenerational communication and satisfaction with social support as the two key factors impacting family functioning in a pandemic. With these insights, targeted support can be provided to the community to assist families in coping with the new way of life.



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## Impact of Social Media on Health-Related Outcomes Among Older Adults in Singapore

The worldwide spread of digitalization has led to the harnessing of technology to improve health outcomes. An exploratory study was conducted to determine the experiences of social media apps' use among older adults in Singapore and understand their perceptions of its impact on health-related outcomes. 16 seniors, aged between 60 and 80 years, who are experienced in the use of internet-enabled technology, took part in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews. It was found that personal and social contexts determine older adults' social media use. The use of social media apps was perceived to positively impact health through its ability to keep older adults cognitively engaged, improve health communication, and increase social connectedness. However, opinions remained mixed on older adults' vulnerability to social media addiction. This study's findings provide practical insights into how social media can be deployed to improve health-related outcomes in older adults.

## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



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**24 FEBRUARY 2022**

### Round Table Discussion – Harnessing Human Potential & Health through Urban Nature

With limited land resource, Singapore has, over the years, found ways to integrate pockets of nature into its cityscape and living up to her reputation as a sustainable Garden City. The positive effects of urban greenspace exposure to health shown in various existing research has provided a clear signal to us that mapping pathways between nature and mental health is of priority. As such, MSC will be prioritizing research in the multi-disciplinary area of mental health, life science, urban planning, social capital and health economics. The 4-hours of productive sharing brought about a comprehensive road map for future cross-disciplinary collaborations. These research can potentially be translated to policies that promote public health through initiatives that encourage more interactions with nature.



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**11 MARCH 2022**

### A Night to Remember: An Undefeated Mind

MSC has proudly debuted its signature fundraising event of the year – a Juke-Box Musical titled 'An Undefeated Mind'. Months of preparation bloomed into a full-house turnout on the fateful night and the audience were blown away by the amazing performance from our talented cast and production team. The story captured the hearts of the viewers and the key message was deeply etched in their minds, evident from all the positive feedbacks received from the guests and audience who attended the show. The musical successfully raised interest from the public and people are approaching MSC to find out more about our programmes and initiatives. Read the post-event article for more information!

## Our Mission

With our key focus in Research, Education and Upstream Intervention Services, we strive to make a difference in the mental health scene across the age continuum. We are the first mental wellness centre in the world focusing on the Asian culture, lifestyle, phenotype and issues, so as to develop innovative holistic solutions that are uniquely Asia. Our ongoing research seeks to discover the potential benefits of engaging in *Mindfulness, Art Reminiscence, Taichi, Horticulture, Rainforest Therapy, Choral Singing and Chinese Ink Painting*.

Support our meaningful cause by funding our research work!



# THE PHILANTHROPIST SERIES



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to read more



*"I had been blessed and it's my responsibility to do my best for those who aren't so fortunate."*

- Dr Collin Ang, Managing Director of Decision Science Agency

In our first feature, we are honoured to have a chat with Dr Collin Ang. Beyond his day-to-day job, he has also taken up additional leadership roles to serve as a member of the Advisory Board & Fundraising Committee of MSC to help the centre achieve greater heights and contribute to Singapore's mental health scene. There's much to learn from Dr Ang's story, so let's take a moment off your busy schedule to read on and get inspired. Having the ability to give is a blessing, and gifting others in need is a selfless choice.

## WHAT'S SHAPING UP!

**Chairperson**

**Professor Kua Ee Heek**  
Tan Gook Yik Professor in Psychiatry and Neuroscience, NUS  
Executive Consultant, NUS  
NUS Executive, NUS Science Centre

**The Panelists**

**Professor Tan Tin Wee**  
Chief Executive, National Superconducting Centre, Singapore

**Ms Lily Fu**  
Regional, Senior Manager, Community  
Vice President, University of the Third Age, Kuala Lumpur, Selangor

**Associate Professor Thang Leng Leng**  
Head, Department of Psychology, NUS  
President, Psychological Society, Singapore

**Mr Daniel Lim**  
Co-founder, Evident Asia  
Chief Growth Officer, Radioscope Labs

### Living with Dementia - Coping Strategies for Caregivers 24 April 2022, 2.30pm - 3.30pm

In this new webinar series, we will be bringing you distinguished panellists from various fields with the aim to establish a platform for Asia-centric knowledge about living with Dementia. This information will be made readily available for the public through our website as well. This initiative was made possible by the generous donation from Professor Hong Hai. The inaugural topic will take a focus on the caregiver experience, as well as the useful coping strategies. Our panellists will be there to share their experience, provide some tips on how to care for people with dementia and introduce some useful self-care methods for caregivers. Research data on local studies will also be presented.

**CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE WEBINAR  
ON 24 APRIL**

**5th TOW TIANG SENG DISTINGUISHED LECTURE**

**Ageing with Dignity**

**8th MAY Sunday**

**Mr Teo Chee Hean**  
Senior Minister  
Coordinating Minister for National Security

**WEBINAR: 2.30pm - 4.00pm**

**BOOK LAUNCH**

**SPEAKER: Professor Kua Ee Heek**  
MBBS, M2, FRCPsych, FRSE, BSM

### 5th Tow Tiang Seng Distinguished Lecture Series: Ageing with Dignity 8 May 2022, 2.30pm to 4pm

The pervasive theme of the AWE programme on positive ageing is dignity. This is the first dementia prevention study in Asia and has been selected for presentation at the World Congress of Psychiatry in Bangkok this August. The lecture will trace the genesis of the AWE programme, evidence-based data on dementia prevention and the translational significance of the study. Be inspired by Keynote Speaker - Prof Kua and our panellists as they share fresh insights into the significance and meaning of living well with dignity. We will be launching our latest book titled "Ageing with Dignity" written by AWE trainers and volunteers, edited by Prof Kua and Associate Professor Rathi Mahendran, in memory of our Patron, the late Mrs Teo Poh Yim.

**REGISTER NOW**



### MIND + PARENT: Raising a Resilient Child Launching in 2022

Research has found that good parenting is often the most significant factor for boosting resilience. Parental warmth, responsiveness and sensitivity foster the development of self-regulation, and can buffer the effects of other stressors. The Singapore Youth Resilience Scale was developed and validated as a resilience scale that incorporates the contextual and cultural aspects unique to the adolescent population in Singapore. In particular, 10 key factors were identified as determinants of resilience. The booklet will explain what each factor involves, answer some commonly asked questions that parents have and most importantly, provide strategies on how parents can encourage and build resilience in their children.

**STAY TUNED**

*"The ability to give is a blessing."*

- The late Mr Wee Sin Tho, Founding Chairman of Mind Science Centre

As an organization dedicated to build mental resilience across the demographic profiles in the community, we have invested in continuous research and rolled out evidence-based intervention and prevention programmes. These efforts have touched the lives of more than 2,800 seniors, healthcare workers and youths. As we are fully dependent on philanthropic support and grants, we sincerely appeal for your generous support of a memorial donation, which will go a long way in enabling MSC to persevere in our mission.

The key areas your generous support will be channelled to:

- Forging Early Childhood Resilience
- Helping Seniors Age Well
- Mind Art Experiential Lab (MAELab), MindGym
- Sustainable administration of Mind Science Centre

**Together, we will make a difference to the mental health scene in Singapore!**  
**Click on the QR code to donate today!**

