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Beautiful People

Because our dreams matter

Dear Beautiful People Family,

It has been a good start to the new year with a tremendous turnout of the new potential volunteers at this year's Meet and Greet. A whole new team helped organise this and the talent within shone very brightly.



The sharing was a great highlight for many when they heard first hand how relationships changed both mentor and mentee and how we have all grown through the challenges and trials, as well as celebrations and milestone achievements. But we mainly grow through the trials. Perhaps that is one of our hallmarks: believing that when it seems dark, there is always a dawn if we continue to walk together. After all, we do say "It's all good news in the end. If it's not good news, it's not the end!" This is the essence of a mentoring relationship and a family culture. Our roles in Beautiful People are not to change anyone, not to evaluate anyone, and not to make anyone do anything. Our role in Beautiful People is to simply be with one another, learning, listening and growing together – and through this, we are all changed for the better.

This coming year, we will be seeking to consolidate a shift that has been brewing in Beautiful People for a while. It is in a way, coming back to our roots: community-based mentoring and building inter-connected networks with the mentees and their families. We began like that 11 years ago and those youth are now adults; many are now parents and we are also in touch with their kids. Some of their kids also play and learn together – although that would under 'normal circumstances' probably not happen. We did not begin as programmes attached to homes. We began as a loose network of befrienders running activities to engage youths to be in a positive relationship with us. We won their trust eventually, and they stayed in touch because they wanted to, and not because they had to. We cannot choose our families but we all choose our friends.

We need to recover the intention that we are mentors and friends worthy of our little sisters and brothers' commitment. The governmental policy shift towards 'community based integration' means that many homes are emptying out. More kids are going to be identified early and offered guidance in the community where they will live with families – biological, extended or foster, and we are the people who will offer to walk with them through their key transitions – so they end up in a better place. Beautiful People must evolve to better support our co-leaders, trios and networks of mentors to be this frontline support to our little brothers and sisters. It will take effort from all of us and an openness to change for the sake of better relationships and the lives of our mentees.

I expect this year to be a year of new beginnings for many of us. It will mean stepping out of our comfort zones for some, for others it will be an exciting opportunity to try out some ideas that have been brewing in your heart. [We would like to hear from you what some of these thoughts and ideas might be by clicking on this link.](#)

I am confident that we will do it together and together we will find the way. We always have and always will.

Wishing you an abundant 2018!

**Your friend and sister,
Melissa**



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