

Mentee Feature: **Norli**

Title of Article: **Ex-Drug Offender Determined to Change Her Life after Seeing Her Child in a Coma**

Each time after Norli's discharge from Girl's Home, prison and the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) since she was 14 years old, Norli would always have the intention to change her life for the better.

However, no matter how strong her will and effort was to achieve this goal, she found herself stuck in the vicious cycle of getting caught by authorities once more.

At 35 years old, Norli was sentenced to six years in prison due to repetitive drug abuse counts.

As she was serving her final sentence in prison, Norli saw her youngest child in a coma due to a high fever.

"I did not know what to think or what I had to do. When I saw my child in the hospital, it was extremely disheartening, with wires surrounding him and tubes inserted into his mouth to aid his breathing," said the mother of seven.

"I still remember the 10 minutes that I was there speaking to him but he could not respond to me. The doctor even mentioned that he might not recover to a normal, healthy state, and even if he did recover, that he would have health issues in the future."

After Norli characterized this as the most painful moment in her life, she vowed to never be separated from her children ever again.

With regret from the mistakes in her past, Norli was introduced to Beautiful People, a volunteer movement that builds life-long relationships, empowering the community they serve to achieve their dreams.

Norli joined Beautiful People's *Free for Good* programme during her 6-month pre-release programme. Norli is incredibly grateful that she had access to the support and guidance from Big Sisters of the Free for Good programme.

"They (Big Sisters) provided a safe space for me to share my concerns and problems that I was experiencing. They are always there for me whenever I need help, be it physically or a listening ear. They have also helped me by sharing resources on job opportunities or help with regards to supporting my family."

Through the *Free for Good* programme, Norli has become an individual who is more confident and eventually became a motivational speaker and author.

Her full life story is captured in her book, 'From Stereotypes to Archetypes' that is published by *Architects of Life*, a ground-up social initiative that works closely with youths, ex-convicts and their families.

Norli has also just completed writing her new book, 'Glimpse of Hope', where Norli shares her journey from her childhood days up until she became a mother.

In addition, Norli has given motivational speeches through Women of Courage Asia, Genius Central Singapore as well as with Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) in a drug prevention programme.

Currently, Norli is working as a full time lab assistant, and spends most of her time with her children at home.

"After my discharge from prison, I did not manage to see my children grow up. This is the time for me to spend time with my children, to replace the time lost in the past."

Photo Caption: Norli currently gives motivational speeches in a drug prevention programme as well as participates in Free for Good.

Featured Quote: "When I saw my child in the hospital, it was extremely disheartening, with wires surrounding him and tubes inserted into his mouth to aid his breathing," said the mother of seven. I still remember the 10 minutes that I was there speaking to him but he could not respond to me."

“Ketika melihat anak saya di hospital, ia sangat menyedihkan, dengan wayar di sekelilingnya dan tiub yang dimasukkan dalam mulutnya untuk membantunya bernafas.

Saya ingat lagi, dalam 10 minit yang saya di sana, saya cuba untuk berbual bersamanya tetapi dia tidak dapat menjawab.”

– Cik Norli.



BANGKIT DARI PENGALAMAN SILAM: Cik Norli kini memberi ceramah motivasi bagi program pencegahan dadah menyertai program *Free For Good*. – Foto BM oleh KHALID BABA

Bekas penagih dadah tekad ubah hidup setelah lihat anak koma

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KELUAR masuk Rumah Tumpangan Remaja Perempuan (Girls' Home), penjara dan Pusat Pemulihan Dadah (DRC) beberapa kali sejak beliau berusia 14 tahun, Cik Norli sering berniat mengubah hidupnya untuk menjadi lebih baik.

Namun, tidak kira betapa kuat usahanya, beliau seringkali terperangkap dalam kitaran yang sama.

Pada usia 35 tahun, Cik Norli dijatuhi hukuman penjara enam tahun dengan tempoh tahanan lebih lama dalam penjara kerana penyalahgunaan dadah berulang kali.

Ketika menjalani hukuman terakhir pada 2014, semuanya berubah apabila Cik Norli melihat anak bongsunya terlanjar di katil hospital dalam keadaan koma akibat demam panas.

“Saya tidak tahu apa untuk fikirkan atau apa yang saya harus lakukan.

“Ketika melihat anak saya di hospital, ia sangat menyedihkan, dengan wayar di sekelilingnya dan tiub yang dimasukkan dalam mulutnya untuk membantunya bernafas,” kata ibu kepada tujuh orang anak itu.

“Saya ingat lagi, dalam 10 minit yang saya di sana, saya cuba untuk berbual bersamanya tetapi dia tidak dapat menjawab.

“Doktor juga sampai berkata mungkin beliau tidak akan pulih seperti biasa, jika beliau pulih mungkin terdapat masalah kesihatan lain dalam masa akan datang,” tambahnya sambil berkata anak bongsunya, yang kini berusia 14 tahun, sudah pulih.

Menyifatkannya sebagai pengalaman yang paling menyakitkan dalam hidupnya, Cik Norli memutuskan ketika itu untuk tidak mahu berpisah dengan anaknya lagi.

Kesal akan kesilapannya itu, Cik Norli diperkenalkan kepada *Beautiful People*, sebuah gerakan sukarela yang membina hubungan pembimbing untuk mengubah hidup serta memperkasakan anggota masyarakat yang terpinggir untuk mencari dan

mencapai impian mereka.

Menyertai program *Free For Good* semasa enam bulan terakhir tempoh tahanannya, Cik Norli berkata beliau bersyukur mempunyai akses kepada sokongan dan bimbingan daripada “Big Sister”.

“Mereka menawarkan ruang yang selamat bagi saya untuk berkongsi keprihatinan saya serta masalah peribadi saya.

“Pada bila-bila sahaja saya perlukan bantuan mereka, mereka selalu ada, tidak kira secara fizikal atau sekiranya saya hanya memerlukan telinga mendengar.

“Mereka turut membantu saya dari segi mengongsi sumber-sumber tertentu contohnya untuk mencari pekerjaan ataupun sekiranya saya memerlukan sokongan untuk keluarga saya,” katanya sambil menambah bahawa waktu itu beliau mula melihat harapan yang besar bagi dirinya.

Melalui sokongan program *Free For Good*, Cik Norli telah menjadi seorang individu yang lebih yakin menjadi penceramah motivasi dan pengarang.

Kisah penuh inspirasinya itu dikongsi dalam buku, *From Stereotypes to Archetypes* yang dihasilkan *Architects of Life*, sebuah perusahaan sosial yang bekerja rapat dengan golongan belia, bekas banduan dan keluarga mereka.

Beliau juga baru sahaja menghabiskan buku barunya yang bertajuk ‘Glimpse of Hope’, di mana Cik Norli berkongsi perjalanannya dari zaman kanak-kanak hingga setelah menjadi ibu.

Selain itu, beliau turut memberi ceramah motivasi melalui *Women of Courage Asia*, *Genius Central Singapore* dan juga bersama Biro Narkotik Pusat (CNB) dalam program pencegahan dadah.

Kini beliau bekerja sebagai pembantu makmal sepenuh masa dan meluangkan banyak masanya bersama anak-anaknya di rumah.

“Ketika saya keluar masuk penjara, saya tidak dapat melihat anak-anak saya membesar.

“Ini adalah masanya untuk saya meluangkan masa dengan mereka untuk menggantikan masa yang kita kehilangan dulu,” ujarnya.