

International Conference on Existential-Humanistic Psychology 2018



Let's Grieve: Trauma, Loss, and Growth

21 - 22 July 2018

HELP University Subang 2

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Dear all,

It is with great honour that I welcome you to the International Conference on Existential-Humanistic Psychology 2018 (ICEHP 2018), organised by HELP University, alongside our partners Lighthouse: Psychological Wellbeing Centre (Malaysia), Ming Chuan University (Taiwan), True Colors Clinic (Taiwan), Utah Valley University (U.S.), and International Institute of Existential-Humanistic Psychology (U.S.).

When Malaysia's first International Conference on Existential-Humanistic Psychology was held in 2016, we were elated that the conference was well received by the public, and has since created a tiny ripple effect in the field of psychology throughout the nation. Life, death, meaning, suffering, and other givens of our very existence – these are difficult conversations that we often shy away from. Yet, these are also the most fundamental questions that hold the frames of our lives.

I am grateful and humbled to be able to bring ICEHP back to Malaysia this year, and am excited to witness and be a part of the growth of existential-humanistic psychology in this region - more importantly, to initiate conversations about these questions.

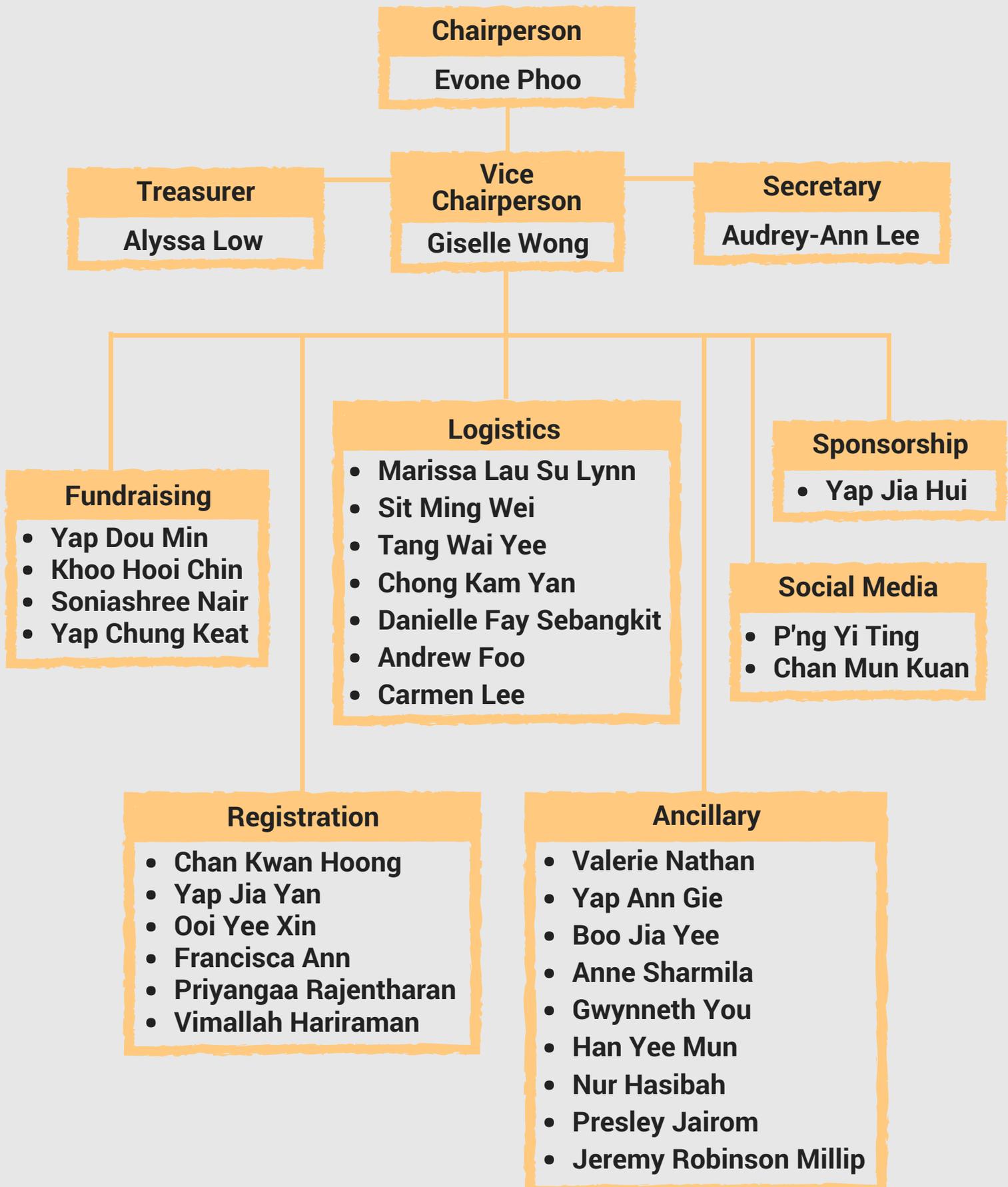
My utmost appreciation to the ICEHP committee members, without whom this conference would not be possible. Most of all, my deepest gratitude to HELP University, who has been most supportive of our passion and beliefs all these years.

It is my hope that you will find this conference a personal experience for you: A conference where not only knowledge will be gained; but where meanings are experienced, and stories are shared.



Evone Phoo
Chairperson of ICEHP 2018

ORGANISING COMMITTEE



PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

DAY I



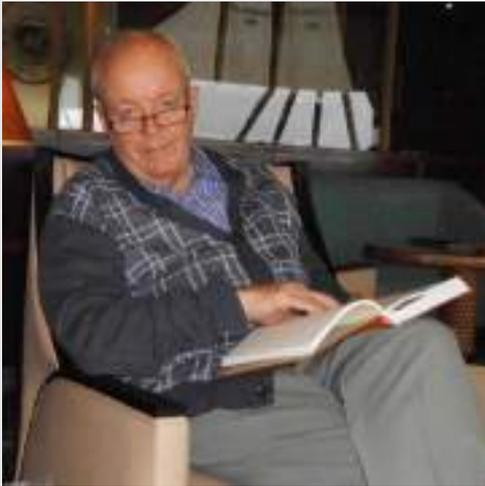
08:00 – 09:00	Registration & Arrival of Guests
09:00 – 09:30	Opening Ceremony
09:30 – 12:30	Keynotes
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch Break & Activities
14:00 – 15:30	Concurrent Oral Presentations
15:30 – 17:00	Concurrent Workshops (Part 1)

DAY 2

08:00 – 09:00	Registration & Arrival of Guests
09:00 – 12:00	Keynotes
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch Break & Activities
13:30 – 15:00	Concurrent Workshops (Part 2)
15:00 – 16:30	Concurrent Workshops (Part 3)
16:30 – 17:00	Closing Ceremony

DAY I

KEYNOTE SESSIONS



Let the Cry be Heard!

Speaker:
Paul McQuillan

Venue: CLTG



Yesterday Once More: Love, Loss, and Meaning

Speaker:
Evone Phoo

Venue: CLTG



Data Mining Stories: What to Listen for in People's Storied Lives

Speaker:
Fredrick A. Boholst

Venue: CLTG

DAY I

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

14:00 - 14:30

Grief Experience of Monks & Nuns

Presenter:
Chandana Namal Kumara

Venue: FLH 2.7

Attachment Styles, Affect, and Meaning in Life

Presenter:
Deborah Chow Hwee Cheun

Venue: BLH 2.2

Gratitude, Meaning, Resilience

Presenter:
Gui Yi Fan

Venue: ALH 2.5

14:30 - 15:00

Journeying into the Grieving and Coping Mechanisms of Young Adult Widowers

Presenters:
Mia Crisel V. Dalago,
Dorothy May A. Villamor,
Kaye Anne Criselle A. Bayta

Venue: FLH 2.7

Moving On and Letting Go: A Study on the Relationship of Personality, Coping Strategies, and Non-Death Grief in Romantic Dissolution

Presenter:
Damian Chuah Tjun Kit

Venue: BLH 2.2

Grief and Growth - Negotiating through the Noon

Presenter:
Irene Khoo Saw Kean

Venue: ALH 2.5

15:00 - 15:30

The Effect of Imaginal Intergroup Contact on Attitude Change towards Suicide Survivors

Presenter:
Hui Yen Ling

Venue: FLH 2.7

Mediating effect of Selfless Altruism on the relationship between Spirituality and Self-Transcendence

Presenter:
Megaaneesh A/L
Sundrasagran K G

Venue: BLH 2.2

Grieving Death: Sudden Death of Celebrities and Public Grief

Presenters:
Yong Poh Ling,
Remy Tan Ting Sen

Venue: ALH 2.5

DAY I

WORKSHOPS

**“Grasping at
Meaning” in
Human Science
Research: Basic
Principles of
Phenomenology**

***Speaker:
Scott D. Churchill***

Venue: FLH 2.7

**Battle Against
Cancer: A
Survivor’s Story**

***Speaker:
Choo Mei Sze***

Venue: BLH 2.2

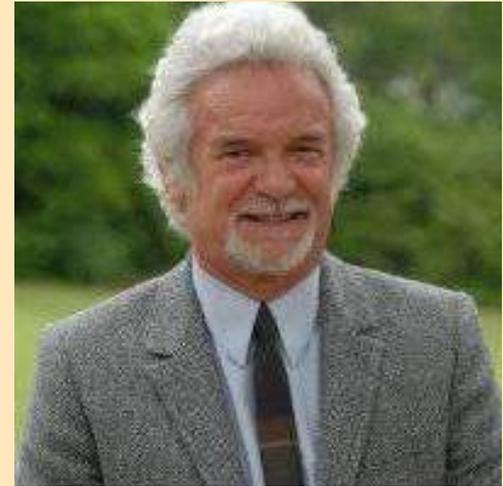
**What Can the
Brain Tell Us
about Near
Death
Experiences?**

***Speaker:
Choy Tsee Leng***

Venue: ALH 2.5

DAY 2

KEYNOTE SESSIONS



**Death's Journey,
from Philosophy
to Application in
Therapy**

***Speaker:
Anasuya Jegathevi
Jegathesan***

Venue: CLTG

**Existential
Shattering**

***Speaker:
Mark Yang***

Venue: CLTG

**Who Will I Be
Then?
Phenomenological
Reflections on
Coping with
Trauma, Loss, and
Grief**

***Speaker:
Scott D. Churchill***

Venue: CLTG

DAY 2

WORKSHOPS

13:30 - 15:00

The Last Breath Begins With the First Breath: Buddhist and Existential-Humanistic Perspectives on Living and Dying

Speaker:
Belinda Khong

Venue: FLH 2.7

Post-Traumatic Growth: Overcoming Grief and Loss with Mindfulness

Speakers:
Eugene Tee & Sandy Clarke

Venue: ALH 2.5

15:00 - 16:30

Finding Meaning: Supplementing Psychology with Logotherapy

Speaker:
Paul McQuillan

Venue: FLH 2.7

Teaching By Story: The Fundamental Tenets of Humanistic Psychology Embodied in Story and Psychodrama

Speaker:
Mark Yang

Venue: ALH 2.5

ABSTRACTS OF KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Let the Cry Be Heard! - *Paul McQuillan*

Viktor Frankl, the founder of Logotherapy, published "The Unheard Cry for Meaning" forty years ago in response to what he perceived as a growing sense of meaninglessness worldwide. He suggested that Logotherapy, used in conjunction with other therapeutic approaches, was needed to address this deepest of human needs, to find meaning in life.

This keynote will provide a brief overview of Logotherapy and thus provide a platform to link major approaches to therapy, grief and personal growth in a way that allows the cry for meaning to be heard beyond the conference.

Logotherapy's three-dimensional concept of the human being locates conscience, hope, love, attitude and other specifically human capacities within the noetic dimension. This Frankl termed the *geistig* or the depth of humanity that lies beyond the psychological and the somatic, and some call simply the defiant power of the human spirit. His psychotherapeutic credo was that even behind the tragedy of severe brain damage or mental illness, the noetic dimension remains intact.

There can be no proper therapy without a philosophy of life that surrounds and supports it, Frankl maintained. Western spirituality and concepts of the self will be compared and contrasted with an Eastern approach. Logotherapy will be presented as a therapy that combines both approaches philosophically and therapeutically.

Yesterday Once More: Love, Loss, and Meaning - *Evone Phoo*

The impermanence of life – the fact that everything we hold on to so dearly today, may cease to exist at any moment. This given of life seems even more poignant in times of loss; and as we are faced with loss and uncertainties, we often find ourselves turning to the good ol' days, immersing ourselves in nostalgic reveries.

This presentation will explore the phenomenon of nostalgia, a complex emotion that many of us might experience from time to time, and its existential functions in our life. By understanding the complexity of this phenomenon, we might come to appreciate how nostalgia could play a part in meaning-making, as we embrace the bittersweetness of being in this transient world of dew.

ABSTRACTS OF KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Data Mining Stories - What to Listen for in People's Storied Lives **- *Fredrick A. Boholst***

This one-hour presentation discusses McAdams' Saliency Markers in analyzing psychobiographical data. The discussion, however, embeds these markers within the bigger context of Alan Elm's expressive, defensive, and healing function of the stories that writers tell and how the listener of stories may employ the psychobiographical methods in the co-construction and co-reconstruction of storied lives.

Death's Journey, from Philosophy to Application in Therapy **- *Anasuya Jegathevi Jegathesan***

Existentialism and Death are related and intertwined, many misconstrue this to be a negative dark view. However, this is not the way in which the Existentialist views death. Heidegger argues that through confronting the finiteness of our lives, what emerges is 'the totality of our potentiality-for-Being'. To the existentialist, the very finiteness of our lives is what allows us to focus on our potential and develop into the totality of the beings that we are.

Existentialist focus on the meaning of the phenomenology of a person in Being, the here and now is where the potential of growth and being is. Addressing Death and the issues that arise from death in therapy is a topic that is welcomed by some and avoided by others. The truth is that Death should be addressed by all therapists as it is the one unavoidable future of all born in this world.

ABSTRACTS OF KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Existential Shattering - *Mark Yang*

The mental health field is quite familiar with trauma but less acquainted with the concept of Existential Shattering. Existential shattering occurs when the foundational, but often unreflected meaning systems that we've constructed comes unexpectedly crashing down causing tremendous suffering. In our unreflective state, we view trauma as ill-fated but understand intuitively that suffering is an inescapable aspect of existence.

This presentation will explore the themes of the inevitability of suffering and loss and how this critical existential attitude is essential to overcoming the inexorable aspect of Existential Shattering. Though existential shattering is inevitable, meaning reconstruction and post-traumatic growth is not only possible but achievable when courageous companionship can be provided. An illustrative supervision case will be offered as part of this presentation.

Who Will I Be Then? Phenomenological Reflections on Coping with Trauma, Loss, and Grief - *Scott D. Churchill*

Existentially, we invest ourselves in our bodies, in our relations with others, and in our constituting a world that becomes a part of who we are. But our bodies eventually start to break down, whether through aging or trauma; our relationships with significant others become ruptured in the break-up of commitments, as well as in the deaths of our loved ones. And when catastrophic events strike, such as a major hurricane, earthquake, or political upheaval, we may find ourselves facing the loss of our happiness, of our sense of security, and sometimes the loss of those whom we love. When bad things happen to us, how are we affected by it? And how are we prepared to cope? Traditional research methods can show by means of "regression analyses" that physical injury, loss of one's job, or diagnosis of a terminal illness can "predict" for anxiety, depression, suicidality, etc. The question is, putting aside all the possible "effects" that life events can have on us, how do we begin to cope with such challenging circumstances? What do we call upon in ourselves to get us through hard times?

Our responses are not determined by the situations that give rise to them; rather, they are best understood in terms of Victor Frankl's greatest of human freedoms: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances. In this presentation, we will reflect upon the meanings that loss, trauma, catastrophe, and death can have in our lives. Using an existential framework of understanding (derived originally from Heidegger and later elaborated by Sartre and Merleau-Ponty), we shall examine how a reframing of life's challenges from the perspective of "existential temporality" can liberate us from despair and help us to find our bearings, and hopefully a way of moving forward. Phenomenological understanding looks not to one's past or to one's immediate circumstances to 'explain' how one responds, but to the 'future' -- that is, to the self that awaits me in the future-- to grasp the choices that we make in the face of adversity.

ABSTRACTS OF WORKSHOPS

“Grasping at Meaning” in Human Science Research: Basic Principles of Phenomenology - *Scott D. Churchill*

Dr. Churchill will be drawing upon his understanding of the phenomenological method as originally developed in the 1970s by Amedeo Giorgi and Paul Colaizzi, and elaborated by a small number of others over the years. He will also draw upon Dilthey and Heidegger, whose hermeneutic principles come into play when one is attempting to describe, not one's own intuitions, but those of naïve research participants whose experience is communicated to us in descriptions.

This workshop will attempt to “sort out” where the researcher stands when reflecting upon his or her own experience, versus when reflecting upon someone else's as communicated to us in words. We will discuss the first person, second person, and third person perspectives insofar as they come to play in the experience of conducting research. All of these considerations will be directed towards the challenge of engaging the audience in reflection and dialogue with respect to their own styles of conducting human science research, in the hopes of more rigorously grounding our personal styles of research in the seminal principles of phenomenology and hermeneutics.

The process will include lecture and dialogue, as well as group analysis of a protocol on an “emotional experience.”

What Can the Brain Tell Us about Near Death Experiences? - *Choy Tsee Leng*

Near death experiences are often viewed from theological perspectives, but could there be more to the picture? This workshop explores what insights neuroscience can offer on near-death experiences, death, and consciousness.

Battle Against Cancer: A Survivor's Story - *Choo Mei Sze*

“Battle Against Cancer” is a real-life account of a person's experience with cancer at the peak of her career and age. Dr. Choo, a PhD graduate in Developmental Psychology from the US returned her home country, Malaysia to mire her passion for youth development with media. She has been active in the entertainment industry as a host, emcee, and has also done voice-overs for major brands. At the age of 27, she was diagnosed with colorectal cancer but her fighting spirit led her to battle cancer and she came out triumphant.

The talk will also include a forum with other young cancer survivors and their account with the Big-C which will put a whole new perspective to the term that cancer can happen to anyone at any age.

ABSTRACTS OF WORKSHOPS

The Last Breath Begins With the First Breath: Buddhist and Existential-Humanistic Perspectives on Living and Dying - *Belinda Khong*

Being born, knowing that we will die is the reality of being human. Yet most of us live rationalising that death will happen, but not yet, or not to me. Why is our relationship with death so ambivalent? How does accepting our mortality help us to appreciate life? From an Existential-Humanistic perspective, dying and grief can motivate people to look at their lives holistically and take responsibility for living. The Buddhist perspective demonstrates that existential anxiety with death is part of an ongoing concern with impermanence.

In this workshop, Dr. Belinda Khong examines ways of coping with living and dying, and incorporate a meditation and mindfulness practice on experiencing impermanence. Clinical vignettes and her mother's experiences with cancer illustrate how adopting a meditative attitude and letting go can help individuals to cope with these experiences and engender personal growth.

Post-traumatic Growth: Overcoming Grief and Loss with Mindfulness - *Eugene Tee & Sandy Clarke*

At some point in life, we all encounter grief, trauma and loss. Some experiences can be particularly devastating as we ponder the reasons, purpose, and meaning to life's often cruel suffering. How can we find meaning in loss? How can we process traumatic events in a way that helps us to go beyond resilience to psychological flourishing? And what role does mindfulness have to play in all of this?

This presentation seeks to answer these questions through an exploration of post-traumatic growth and mindfulness practice. The session will also include a 10-minute guided meditation session as a taster of how we can become more aware of our thoughts, feelings, and emotions to develop a calm, stable and responsive (rather than reactive) mind.

ABSTRACTS OF WORKSHOPS

Finding Meaning: Supplementing Psychology with Logotherapy

- Paul McQuillan

The spiritual nature of the human being is a reality perhaps more recognized in the east than the west, yet both eastern and western approaches to psychology and medicine can ignore the foundation of what it means to be human. Logotherapy is a secular approach that addresses that need.

Clients can struggle to find meaning in response to life's inevitable reefs and shoals: suffering, guilt and personal mortality.

Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy provides a way forward.

Millions have read 'Man's Search for Meaning' but few understand the depth of psychology and understanding of the human person that sits beneath its message. Using case studies and offering some practical experiences for participants, this workshop will provide some tools that can be used to touch the depth of what it means to be human.

Teaching By Story: The Fundamental Tenets of Humanistic Psychology Embodied in Story and Psychodrama - Mark Yang

The tenets of humanistic psychology are simple and foundational to most schools of psychotherapy. Their simplicity beguiles the fact that the most basic truths must be embodied and not simply grasped through one's intellect. Therefore this interactive workshop will introduce participants to the basic tenets of humanistic psychology through the enactment of a teaching parable. In the tradition of psychodrama, the participants will be invited to engage their creativity and enact the characters in the story that they create in order to better embody and experience the basic tenets of humanistic psychology.

ANCILLARY EVENTS

Music Room

Conversations I Wish I Had

In a world with too few spaces for people to express their deepest pains, longings, and things left unsaid, this is a safe space to speak them out loud. If you were given the chance to pick up the phone and talk to someone who is no longer around, what would you say?

Dance Room

Eye Want To See You

Did you know that maintaining eye contact can foster intimacy? Ever wonder what is it like to just sit with someone, and gaze into each other's soul? Experience 4 minutes of silent presence, and stick through a series of Q&As with them to find out.

Roof Garden, Level 1

Let's Make Meaning

What is the meaning of life? What gives meaning to your life? Perhaps, more than once, we have asked ourselves this question. Share your answers with others in this activity... and perhaps, we might discover new meanings together...

ANCILLARY EVENTS

Corporate Meeting Room 2

The Balls of Fury

Is work or school stressing you out? This little thing can help you in many ways that you may not be aware of! Come and indulge in the process of creating your own stress ball. Bring home your personalised little companion that will help lower your cortisol!

In Those Days...

How was it like growing up for you? Do you still remember the fun of those childhood games and activities? It's never too old to play! Come, bond with others over some fun and re-live a time long gone – and maybe, reconnect with your past, and your self....

My Bucket List

Thinking about dying is a scary thing. But, perhaps, what's scarier is not drawing any ticks on your bucket list. In the face of inevitable mortality, take a moment to recognise the things that truly matter to you in life - what are some of the things you wish to do or experience, before you... kick the bucket?

My Tombstone

It's something all of us have imagined at one time or another: What would it be like to die and attend your own funeral? Who will be there? What memories will be shared? More importantly, perhaps, how do you want to be remembered? It's not too early to think about what you want etched on your tombstone...

ORGANISERS



SPONSORS

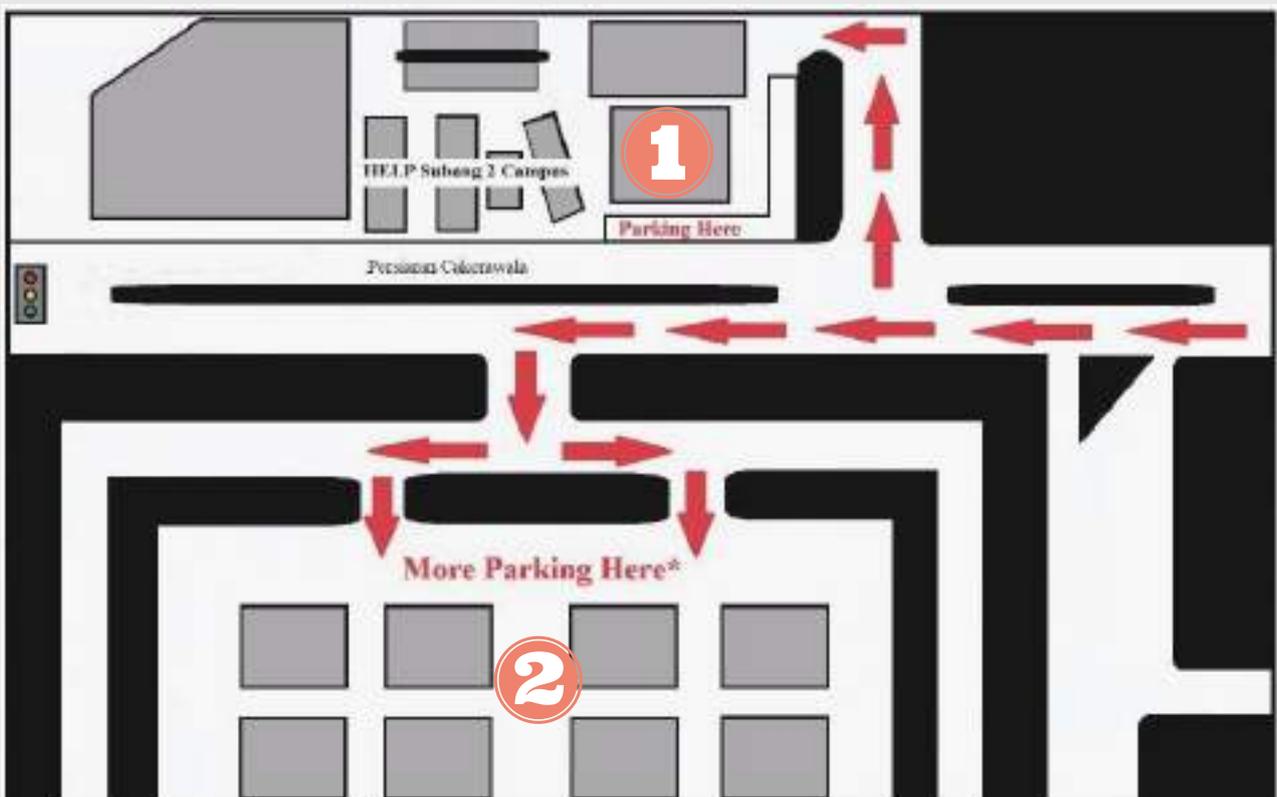


TRANSPORTATION

CAR

Parking

1. On-campus parking
2. Open parking opposite the University (Parking is free on Weekends)



TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

MRT

Stop at **Kwasa Sentral MRT Station** > Take MRT feeder bus **T802** (15-30 minutes interval) > Get off the bus at the bus stop opposite the University

University van pick-up time (limited seats available)

From Kwasa Sentral to HELP University:

7:30 am and 8:15 am

From HELP University to Kwasa Sentral:

5:00 pm and 5:45 pm

For more info, visit <https://www.mymrt.com.my/>

LRT & KTM

Stop at **KL Sentral** > Walk to **Muzium Negara MRT station** > Take the MRT to **Kwasa Sentral** > Follow the instructions above

For more info, visit <https://www.myrapid.com.my/> (**LRT**) or https://intranet.ktmb.com.my/ktmb_ui/portal/left/141 (**KTM**)

FLOOR PLAN

