

THE BEST OF 2016 YOU

The Best of You is a space for you to appreciate the people and experiences that have shaped you into who you are today. In doing so, we hope to shed light onto the diversity of people and stories that make up our community.

—
EXHIBITION :
22-28 AUG at PARKWAY PARADE
7-9, 14-16 OCT at THE STAR VISTA
FINALE EXHIBITION :
1-7 NOV at MARINA SQUARE

I'm a street child, and I come from Buku Jalanan Chow Kit. Siti Malaysia

Appreciation
Regret
Moving forward
Love
Humanity

Dream bigger
Hope
Empowered
...

STORIES FROM
THE HEART

—
Published August 2016



I want my children to say that proudly. I see it in their eyes. I see it in their eagerness to learn more. I know they can be future leaders. I know they can change things in this country.

I co-founded Buku Jalanan Chow Kit for these children. I want them to think about a life beyond Chow Kit. When people think about Chow Kit, they have a negative image of it. Because of this, I was really nervous on my first visit! I really didn't know what to expect.

But the children of Chow Kit are different. They are not afraid of strangers at all. When you teach them simple things like counting, or how to play a game, their faces light up with eagerness. It shows in the way they call me 'Cikgu Ayu'. It shows when mothers bring their children down while it's raining. To me, charity is about being with people, and acknowledging their existence. Memanusiakan manusia.

I always tell my kids, "Let's learn and grow together. Let's change things." I believe in them.

EDITOR'S WORDS



We started The Best of You in 2014, by asking people to share stories of appreciation of their selves, accomplishments, their significant others, and special events in their lives. The many stories we've received are deeply personal stories from the heart.

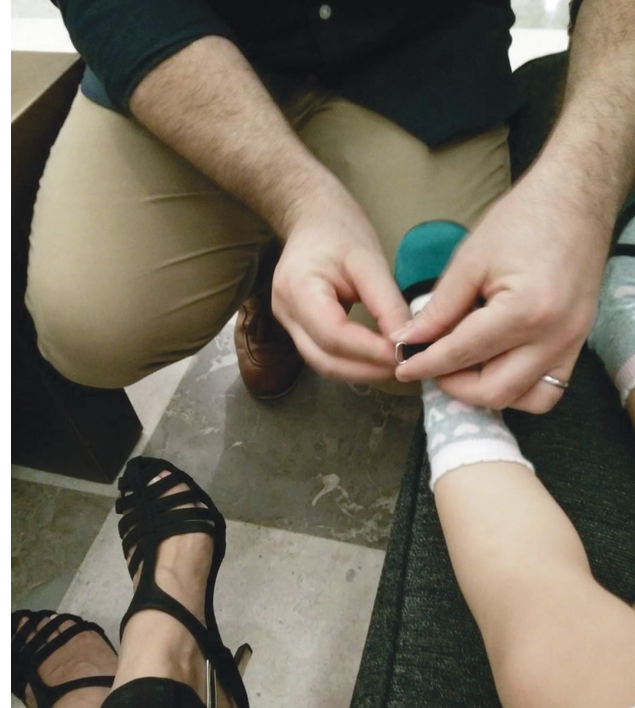
Such stories always come with inspirational and educational values and energy. Sure, the number of stories we received was both encouraging and... overwhelming. But more importantly, we were inspired, empowered, and energised by the stories themselves.

We received stories of gratitude, determination, newfound love, and friendship. Of course, there were also stories of regret, redemption, and loss. Many of the stories also ended with a determined sense of resolution - to be better, braver, and, to move forward.

With each resolution, those of us behind the scenes felt a strong sense of relief from the storytellers. It is as if the simple but profound act of sharing a personal story of appreciation renders some relief to the storyteller, thereby allowing the storyteller to dream bigger, to be more ambitious, and to be a better person. Appreciation, after all, also means to increase in value.

The stories share a powerful theme and that is - putting people first. So let us appreciate people foremost for their, or rather, our shared humanity. In other words, appreciation knows no boundaries. Appreciation includes everyone.

Sai Tzy Horng
Consultant for The Best of You Movement



Nurul Alia Al-hassan Malaysia

Let me begin with a confession.

I never had a good relationship with my father. If someone asks, 'How's your father?' I lie and say 'He's good'. There were so many things wrong with our relationship, my father and I, and it's painful to talk about it.

When I met my husband, he asked me 'Why do you have so much self doubt?' Being a very observant person he noticed that I was always asking for his approval... 'Is the food ok?', 'Did I do this right?', 'Are you happy with me?'. I told him that once upon a time when I was younger and cuter, my father would tell me that I would never amount to anything. He also told me that without his money I was a nobody. I could go on, but again, it's too painful.

Effa Zalifah Malaysia

AYAH. It is just a simple word but brings a thousand meaning to everybody. I lost him when I was 15. It happened in a blink of an eye. A night before he collapsed, we went through a few conversations and he went out to warung with my mother. While waiting for my mother, I asked him where did he want to go and he replied me by saying, "Going to kubur to find a place" and then he laughed. I joked with him, "Okay, do tell me where do you want us to bury you and I will make it." He said "Make sure you place me near the abah's kubur, and I had already reserved the place." We laughed together and he kissed me on my forehead and reminded me about many things. I started to feel weird because he rarely do these things. I kissed his hand & said, "Adik sayang ayah" and watched them go. He waved to me and smiled broadly. Around 9 pm, I got a call from my father's assistant saying that my father fainted while doing his job and they will pick me up. I felt like the time had stopped. My world has reached to the end. I quickly called my siblings and told them what has happened. So when I reached the place, I can see the ambulance and lots of people there. I pushed all of them and sat by my father's side. I can see how hard it was for my father to breathe but he still smiled to me and put his hand on my face and tried to wipe away the tears. At the hospital, the doctors tried their best to save my dad, but Allah loves him the most. The doctors said that is no chance or possibility that my father can live



June Ngooi Singapore

I was fifteen when my parents first broke the news to me that I was adopted. They had not planned to tell me this early but it was laid bare to me all the same. It took a few days for me to process it (for I was naught but a child growing into maturity then) but deep down, I knew that this truth would not change any existing dynamic between my parents. They are still the people who have

raised me and they are still my parents.

(my roots are stemmed deep in my veins;
I am from blood and dust)

As I advanced and matured on with life, acceptance came naturally to me for I was not of a character to dwell on the hesitance of inevitability. The questions that once plagued me of "why did she give me up?" or "where is she now?" have long abated and replaced by contentment. I understood – without resentment – that beating dead horses will get me nowhere.

(the first step into wisdom is acknowledging that
not all questions can be answered)

I get by every passing day grateful to my parents and for everything they have provided me with, but on par with that, I am especially grateful to my biological mother for bringing me into this world. To be a conscious being from what was previously a mere bunch of cells; to be able to touch what grass feels like and to appreciate the things I love; to be merely existing on this blue planet in the vast endlessness of the Universe, that is what I am grateful for.

(it is the littlest things with the greatest magnitude
that hold the most significance)

The best of me flows from the pumping of my heart, coalesced by nature and nurture – a most miraculous combination I can never assume to fathom. Without my biological mother, there would be no me; without a me, my parents would cease to be who they are now. This is the correlation that makes the beauty of existence. It is what makes the best of me and I am thankful for it.

(there is no destruction without chaos
there is no chaos without frenzy
there is no frenzy without passion
there is no passion without beauty.
so tell me again that beauty does not
coexist with destruction,
that flowers cannot bloom after a storm.)

My story is not about pain, is about the amazing power ‘love’ has above all trials and tribulations, so stick with me will ya? When we got married my husband and I, we got pregnant, and miscarried... we cried and hug each other every night. Today we have a 2-year-old daughter (who drives me insane mind you). I watched my husband love her, support her, and tell her ‘You can do it sayang!’ . I watch them laugh and kiss and fight and kiss again. I might have never had that chance with my father, but I am thankful that my daughter does and that is all that matters. I learned that to break the cycle of pain is to invest in more love, no matter what the past has done to you. Your children are a reflection of yourself, love them even when it seems impossible (I’m not saying spoil them rotten), kiss them (after you’ve given them a lecture) when they spill a big bowl of mac and cheese on the floor, tell them you love them at night before bed, hold their hand and tell them mommy and daddy is here for you.

Words do hurt a lifetime, I am a living proof, but please don’t feel sorry for me, smile because I am certain that this too shall pass. Smile, because there’s nothing more beautiful to know that everything heals. LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT TO BE. Spare your children the constant self-doubt I had all my life. Especially if you have a daughter, teach her the sky is the limit, she is free to dance in the rain and she can play professional football if she wants to!

I am on the road of recovery, my therapy is to love my child every day, every night for the rest of my life, and watching my dear husband (who I still don’t understand why he married me) give my daughter the best fatherly love. Thank you, my husband, for loving our daughter.



longer. Around the ICU, the crowd are my dad’s friends. All of them look sad and some of them were crying. I went to the ward and told my dad “Ayah, semua kawan2 ayah ada kat luar, mereka tunggu ayah bangun.” Sadly, only the machine’s sound answered me. We prayed all the night, didn’t sleep just to see our only hero. Being a hero in the family, he is truly a hero because he survived his life for another night. At last, the time had come. When the doctor took off the oxygen mask, I heard a long beep sound. And I know, from that moment I had lost my only hero. I managed to put him near his abah. Dear ayah, I didn’t have any chances to repay all your kindness. I would like to say thank you for everything you had sacrificed for us. Your love, advice, your words would always in my heart. No words can express my love towards you, En Fadir Abd Aziz. Adik sayang ayah dan adik sentiasa rindu ayah. Guys, please appreciate your parents. There is no replacement. They are our paradise ;)

向云 Singapore

我很幸运，生命中有许多不同的“我”。我经历了不同了人生，不同的年代，不同的性格，不同的人物，不同的命运。这些“我”都能预知结局，懂得她是如何走完“这一生”，偶尔我会俏皮的加入一些元素，让她的生命曲折些，或更多姿多彩。

唯独我自己的人生，是无法预知的，只能一步一脚印的去经营。

幼时的快乐非常简单容易满足。少年时才明白父母的生活压力，家境的贫困，记得曾经走在沙滩上，看着闪烁发亮的沙粒，多希望它们能变成钻石，日子可以一霎那转变，灰姑娘的梦想。

小学时代的求知欲很强，但是在学习的道路上并不容易走，爸爸妈妈工作忙，教育水平也不高，我是家中老大，功课不会的，也没人教导，课堂上常常无法交出作业。

中学那四年，是琼瑶时代，沉迷于小说世界，加上那是纯华校教育转入双语教育的年代，英文一向不行的我，在多数科目突然变成英文的情况下，除了原本的华文科目，都全军覆没。中四会考成绩，华文，文学都考的不错，但总分数就在进入高中学府的边缘，级任老师鼓励我去试试报读高中，回家与当时经营油炸香蕉小贩生意的父亲商量，听出爸爸为难的语气，说我下面还有三个妹妹一个弟弟要受教育。我明白，如果我坚持的话，爸爸是不会拒绝，但也清楚我们那小小档口，天天赚的点钱，是不够的。于是，我决定踏出社会，工作赚钱减轻爸爸负担。就从当车衣女工开始，工作是天天在车衣间，车着同一条线，就这样做了一年，觉得日子不能这样下去。开始寻找第二份工作，在一家日本塑料工厂当QC，那里的工作需要用英文写报告，让我知道了英文的重要。之后我到了一家上海古董家具厂当生产部书记，才明白自己需要去进修学习。于是下班后上夜学，学英文，簿记。之后我就进了一家铝业工厂当簿记员。

就在那时候，没想到小学时参加“丽的呼声少年儿童话剧组”所打下的华语基础，让我中四那年参加了电视台演员训练班，在当业余演员时，给予我许多演出机会的戏剧监制～李明芬的引见下，电视台邀我成为全职演员。当时的脑海里，是报章上读到的娱乐圈很黑暗，考虑了半年才决定签约，由于当时还未成年，得妈妈陪同签约，就这样我成了全职艺人。

进入电视台的第一项任务，是代替原本病倒了的梁萍主持现场大型节目《斗歌竞艺 81》。公司是看得起我，可是我知



PAK KOON Malaysia

爸爸去世以后，妈妈一夜之间变成了巨人，一百十六公分身高以下的巨人。



道自己有多少料，我很害怕，但还是得硬着头皮上，天天在家重复死背那个星期节目的稿，到了最后几场比赛，我病了，妈妈还在现场扶着我上台。做完这个比赛，让我更清楚自己一定要更努力学习，紧记恩师李明芬的嘱咐，唯有自我充实才能发挥自如，于是开始积极阅读许多戏剧文学，学习吉他歌唱舞蹈，为工作的需要做好准备。就在那时，新加坡进入本地戏剧的黄金期。我非常幸运，被挑选演出重头剧《雾锁南阳》的女主角阿梅，开始了灿烂的演艺生涯。那时年轻，忙碌，也和许多少女一样，渴望恋爱结婚。

终于遇到之财，1989 年我们结婚了，第三年我们生了儿子。从玉女转型，对公司，对我自己，都不是一件容易的事。心理上，我已成了妈妈，如何在戏中与人谈恋爱？许多滑稽不专业的想法击倒我，我自己认输了，在新人辈出的同时，戏份明显的减少了，后来一年只拍几个单元剧。问自己是退出的时候吗？但是我还喜欢演戏。1998 年儿子念小学那年，终于接到《珍珠街坊》傻阿花的角色，让我翻身，那一年我得到了生平第一个演艺奖项～“最佳女配角”，开始了我的下半段的演艺生涯。

人生没有一帆风顺，最重要的是怀着沉着，乐观的心态面对困难，勇往直前。

（借此文，感谢在我生命中每个阶段，给予我机会与帮助过我的人。）

那时候瘦小的我，每抬头去看巨人，都觉得这巨人满怀心事，脸上总是展着愁颜。她来不及好好面对丧夫之痛，就要努力过日子，为了守护这个家，那么勇敢去面对闲言闲语。妈妈是一个很小心眼和多虑的女人，出街常常会害怕被人说三道四，我紧紧抓着他，告诉这位巨人，不用管其他人的嘴巴，妈，我们过好自己的生活就好。

过了那么多年，我依然不懂妈妈是如何办到的，亦父亦母，包容我的种种，让我成为现在的我。当然，我是有很多缺点，甚至很多时候都不爱自己，逃避自己。但我能成长到今天，一切都要归功我妈妈，我躲在她的臂弯下成长，一切的风风雨雨都有妈妈扛着。

渐渐地，我高她半头。我依然觉得妈妈是巨人，我心中最美的巨人。妈妈为了我，当了那么久的巨人，我是时候要好好成长，过日子，好好照顾她和自己，成为她的巨人，风雨同路，一路相扶。

我不会舍弃让妈妈不当巨人，因为我需要她，她也需要我，我们是彼此的巨人，最好的你，最好的我。

I was so angry. I lost control.



Patrick Singapore

I remember running after this guy with a stick. I couldn't stop whacking him, even when a teacher saw me. I had a bad temper then.

Because of this, I was called to the school office. By then, all my friends had been expelled. I was the only one left. Mrs. Steve, my school's discipline mistress, wanted to speak with me. So I did. And what she said lives with me till today.

"I see a spark in you – don't throw that away. I love you like a son."

I was 14 then and her words really hit me. Here was someone who cared about me, telling me not to throw my life away. She thought I was worth saving – something I had never considered before. I told myself I needed to change. I stayed in school, and started doing well. I battled the darkness in me and soon after, I found my faith in Christianity. Throughout the entire time, it was Mrs. Steve's words that kept me going.

I'm now 45, married, with two kids of my own. Life could have easily gone a different way. But I've had many angels in my life - angels like Mrs. Steve. And now, her legacy lives on with me.



WHO IS THE BEST OF YOU?

Seems like a simple question, but for most of us, we will need a while to think about it. And that is what this social movement is about – finding a quiet moment in our busy lives and appreciating the people or experiences who have moulded us into who we are today.

Since 2014, we have received thousands of stories from people like you and me. It was humbling to realise that amazing stories unfold around us all the time, while we are busy minding our own lives.

Your shared stories can go on to encourage and even empower others. It might even be a life-changing experience for yourself and many others. So, tell us about The Best of You.

Share
your
story
and inspire
others today.



- 1 Think about who or what brings out the best of you
- 2 Select a photo or video to accompany your story
- 3 Send us your story at www.the-best-of-you.com

HAPPENINGS

This year, we will be holding a series of events and exhibitions at various shopping malls. To round off our activities for 2016, we will be holding a Finale Exhibition this November. Come join us at these exhibitions and experience more of these stories.

EXHIBITION

22-28 AUG PARKWAY PARADE 7-9, 14-16 OCT THE STAR VISTA

FINALE EXHIBITION 1-7 NOV MARINA SQUARE

[JuliesTheBestOfYou](https://www.the-best-of-you.com)
www.the-best-of-you.com

Initiated by

