

THE SELF Journal

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SELF launches Whole Person Development course



Advancement Program for Professionals

Over the years, SELF has developed a variety of training programs not only for rehab practitioners but also for students, doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, teachers, jail staff, police, and even priests and nuns. The common thrust of all its programs is Value Formation and the courses are founded on the principle-centered culture of the Therapeutic Community approach. The all new Whole Person Development (WPD) course is no different. SELF designed an intensive 5-day program to enhance personal and professional growth using much of its basic TC methods and practices. Vice Mayor Ann Macias of Panaon town in Misamis Occidental, a SELF 2014 graduate, requested SELF to develop a training program for her staff in the municipal government. Photo shows her encouraging the second batch of her staff who took the course to make the best of the training during the Opening Ceremonies on May 8.

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WHOLE PERSON DEVELOPMENT COURSE

ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM FOR PROFESIONALS

Msgr William O'Brien & Fr. Lambertus Somar Building
SELF Compound, Talisay, Batangas



ACCOMPLISHED! — SELF successfully conducted the 30th Outdoor Survival Workshop as part of its Therapeutic Program. In the photo, the participants pose for a group picture at the Conference Hall after the culminating ceremonies held at the La Luz Beach resort Conference Hall on March 26.

Conquering Nature's Challenges in Sobriety

SELF held its 30th Outdoor Survival Workshop once again at the La Luz Beach Resort, San Juan, Batangas on March 23-26.

At 7:00 AM on March 23, a total of 58 residents and staff boarded six vans and headed to the resort where they were joined by Founder & President Martin Infante and his wife Board Treasurer Joy.

Board Vice President Peter Stevens and his wife FAM Chair Person Margie were also present to support the activity. FAM members Joji and Nannette

Deduque and Helen Go also checked in for a few days to observe the program.

Upon arrival, the residents were allowed to hit the beach and swim until it was time to check-in.

Then everyone gathered for a buffet lunch and proceeded to the conference room for the Opening Ceremonies.

Peter and Martin gave welcome remarks while Joji quoted a few encouraging messages from the FAM Viber thread.

Then Martin introduced Team Ventures President Jojo Santos and his

six trainers. Jojo jumped right in and began eliciting expectations from the Basic participants. After listing down a few, he assured everyone that all their expectations would be met.

Then the Outdoor program began. Under the theme "Conquering Nature's Challenges in Sobriety", the 22 participants of the Basic Course were divided into three teams: *Red Maya*, *Eight Blue Rangers*, and *Yellow Wolves*.

Over the next four days, the Basic adventurers went through Team Dynamics, Ropes Courses, Orienteering,

Carries and Transporting, Emergency Preparedness, Basic Survival Skills, Rappelling, and Water Safety exercises.

The 16 Advancers went through a different set of activities including an overnight stay on top of Mount Casile.

Thankfully, the entire event went without a hitch. As promised by Team Ventures, it was Miserable, Merry, but — most of all — Memorable.

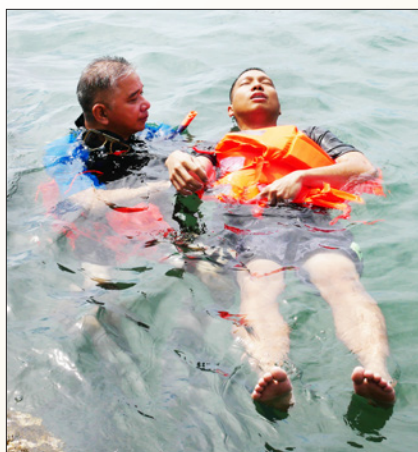
On Sunday, after the Closing Ceremonies, everyone returned to the facility teeming with gratitude for the new learnings they had gained.



OPENING CEREMONIES — At the start of every Outdoor Survival Workshop, Opening Ceremonies are held to introduce the Team Adventures trainers and formally launch their Adventure Workshop on Outdoor Living (AWOL) program. After opening messages by the staff and guests, Team Ventures President Jojo Santos and his team presented the AWOL. In the photos (L-R): Sockie welcomes one

and all to the 30th Outdoor Survival Workshop; Inez offers the Invocation; Peter shares the enjoyment he feels whenever he attends; Martin shares his own experience of climbing a mountain when he was in rehab; Jojo eagerly addresses the new group of Basic Course participants; FAM Member Joji reads out encouraging messages from the families in the FAM Viber thread.

ADVENTURE WORKSHOP ON OUTDOOR LIVING



THE AWOL ACTIVITIES

SPIRALING CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Ian and Adrianne of *Red Maya* transport their injured peer in the SARTEX activity; Adrianne learns how to float; Henry of *Red Maya* prepares to rappel down the cliff; Perry and Claudine of *8 Rangers* balance on the Two-rope Dyad; The morning Physical Therapy exercises; Team *Maya* wins the Wheel-to-Go race; The *8 Rangers* cheer teammates Guillermo and Claudine as they clinch a victory in a modified Tug of War match; Raven and Seira in the Kayak race.





By Claudine
LOWER HOUSE RESIDENT

WHEN Kuya Martin announced the holding of the 30th Outdoor Survival Workshop, I was still on the Reflection Chair. I heard more about the four-day event from the grapevine. There was a lot of speculation about what the Outdoor would be.

Was it going to be a relaxing luxury vacation for the hard-working residents of SELF? It was said we were going to a beach resort and spa. I guess it's not far from the imagination of a rehab resident, right?

In the meantime, I was looking forward to be welcomed back to the family so I could join the event.

After 42 days in Reflection, I was given a chance to share my newfound insights with the family and was finally accepted back as Kitchen Crew. I was

Basic Course

A milestone in my recovery

relieved but mostly eager to be part of the event.

On the day of the departure, I showered then placed essentials in my backpack. Then I went to the Kitchen dressed in swimming attire — rashguard, shorts over leggings, and yellow Crocs. I had to prepare breakfast so that the participants could eat at 5:30 AM.

Come 7:00 AM, I gathered with the others in the Upper House, excited and ready to have my first ride outside the facility after eight months.

It took some three hours to our destination and the first order upon arrival was a swim in the sea! I kicked off my shoes and jumped in the water like an excited puppy. I was overjoyed by the sun, the sand, and the saltwater.

I'm really an outdoors person to begin with but the challenges that awaited me were not to be enjoyed on the beach alone.

I savored every task that was given me to the bone. They were physically grueling — tests of endurance,

alertness, and personal skills.

During the ropes course, I was worried about my ankle which has 10 screws driven into the bone with a plate. But I was able to execute. The moment I was asked to do something, I forgot my limits.

My team, the Eight Rangers, lost our first two challenges, getting the lowest scores in Team Organization. But we didn't stay down. Despite our losses, we also had victories in Creativity, Problem Solving, and Emergency Preparation.

I am so proud that we never gave up and rose to take 2nd place overall. I'm also honored to have been given an individual award for Best in Rappelling.

Whatever expectations I had in the beginning about luxuriating on shore were exceeded a thousand fold and I would not exchange the misery for anything.

What made the Outdoor experience meaningful was that I was completely sober and not struggling alone. It is a major milestone in my recovery because it was like pushing a rock up a mountain.

The triumphant feeling after you survive the workshop can best be seen in the big smile on my face.



Above, the Team Ventures trainers (L-R) PJ Villanueva, Mark Molina, Pol Bagtas, Shelley Santos, Jojo Santos, Riki Molina, and FJ Alacaraz pose after another job well done. At right, Jojo prepares to give each of the Basic Course participants a souvenir carabiner during the closing ceremonies.



What sober fun truly is

By Sophia Liang
AFTERCARE RESIDENT

HAVING attended the Basic Course last year, I knew there was a lot in me I had to prepare to conquer the challenges of the Advanced Course.

I psyched up myself and changed the ways I perceived things that were yet to come. While I packed my bags in preparation for the trip, I latched on to the excitement of my peers and found the motivation I needed.

The Advanced participants were divided into two teams. Most of my teammates were the same ones from last year's Basic Course. I felt comfortable knowing I would not be hiking among people with whom I was not close.

When we arrived at La Luz Resort, we had flashbacks of happy and sad events. We shared good laughs when we recalled our frustrations during our days in Basic.

Personally, I appreciated the growth I had gained, especially after having gone through a lot of learning experiences in the facility over the past year.

The night before the long-awaited hike, we were informed that we could not trek up Mt. Daguldol as planned originally due to safety issues. Instead, we would ascend Mount Casile, which I heard was a shorter climb.

Some of my companions were

disappointed by the news. But I felt relieved that we would not have to undergo the five-hour test.

Our journey began at 3:00 PM on Friday. Our whole Team crammed into a jitney that took us to the jump-off point. Despite the discomfort, we excitedly prepared ourselves for the journey ahead. Thank goodness the ride took only 20 minutes.

As we disembarked from the jitney, the hike was on. From the start, it was amazing to see how both teams became one. We all had one goal — to reach the summit in one piece.

The hike was shorter but, nobody said it would be a walk in the park. I realized that when the sun started beating on our backs and the inclines became steeper.

During the hike, it struck me that no

one was complaining. Rather, everyone was supportive and gave one another the strength to keep going.

When we reached the summit, the view was breathtaking. Suddenly, I felt so peaceful and serene. I glanced at the others and, by the looks on their faces, I could tell everyone felt accomplished and proud.

Soon, I saw how eager everyone was to get settled in and start pitching their tents. The excitement was infectious.

Then, we brought out our canned goods and began cooking with our portable mini gas stoves.

Because we had the luxury of extra time in our hands, each team got creative and presented a mountain-style gourmet dish.

While we enjoyed our dinner, the sun began to set giving us a magnificent



view of God's creation.

As night fell, we held a TC Wrap-up and shared our insights by the light of a portable lamp. Some recounted memories of hiking trips with old friends. I joined those who were creating new sober memories.

While we all huddled together enjoying snacks and each other's company to end the night, Team Ventures shared the Leave No Trace principles of mountaineers with us. For me, it was a reminder of how beautiful nature really is, and how I need to help contribute to its conservation. I was left reflective on how I could be kind to the world we live in.

The fulfillment of reaching the top and gazing at the stars was simply mind-blowing. At that moment, it was as if nothing else mattered.

I remember feeling proud and accomplished as we began our descent the following morning. I was eager to get back home to SELF and share the experience with those who stayed behind.

I will never forget the joy from being in the Advanced Course for as long as I live. This is what sober fun truly is.



ON TOP OF THE WORLD — The Advancers at the summit of Mt. Casile.



At left, staff members (L-R) Greg, Jonna, Martin, Patrick, Marichu, Wea, Sockie, and Earl in their event T-shirts. Above, Food Committee Head Ryan Flores poses by the SELF banners at the dining area.



SELF SALSA SOCIETY — Claudine (leftmost) with her salsa companions (L-R) Jeric, Yanna, Jason, Joy, Martin, Wea, Moses, Jonna, and MJ in the opening number.

CELEBRATING SOBRIETY

By Claudine

LOWER HOUSE RESIDENT

SELF President Martin Infante celebrated his 32nd Sober Year and 69th Birthday with a "Recovery Day" event on June 24.

To add prestige to the grand celebration, he invited Executive Director Garth Popple of We Help Ourselves (WHOS) Australia to be his Guest of Honor. Garth is his colleague in the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities (WFTC) board serving as its Deputy President.

The festivities began with a seminar at 1:00 PM by Garth for FAM members followed by Holy Mass by Fr. Edwin Soliva in the IITC Training Room. At 4:00 PM, a delicious merienda cena, sponsored by a FAM member, was served to the more than 200 guests, staff and residents.

Everyone then proceeded to the Sacred Heart Auditorium (SHA) for the program proper, lovingly directed by Clinical Staff Inez Infante and her production team. Inside, the stage was painted in multiple pastel shades which expressed the fun and flair that would ensue that evening.

Themed, "Martin, Dream On!" the program opened with a Salsa number with Kuya Martin and his wife Ate Joy leading us residents and staff in a

routine we had been perfecting for a month.

I looked sharp dolled up in a baby blue sleeved dress but was worried about messing up. What gave me confidence was the spirit of being sober.

My papa and elder brother were in the crowd and I could see the proud look on their faces while I danced. My dad had his phone camera focused on our performance the whole time.

The great sense of achievement I drew from the Salsa number helped me retain a smile throughout our other dance performances.

During the hip-hop number called "Evolution", I heard "oohs" and "ahhs" and enthusiastic applause from the audience at the end.

In between the performances were video greetings from some of Kuya Martin's colleagues.

First up was one of his closest friends, Director Aloysius "AJ" Joseph from Samaritan-Daytop, New York. He commended Kuya Martin for his generous contributions to the TC and acknowledged his many achievements in recovery.

Then Attorney Leilani Banotan of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) thanked Kuya Martin for teaching her staff the modern TC which they proudly implement

for inmates in their newly founded Reformatory Center.

Last but not least was a message from Colombo Plan Secretary General Dr. Benjie Reyes. He praised Kuya Martin for his generosity of spirit in providing training to the Department of Health that he had arranged while working there.

There were also special messages in person. SELF Board Member Amy Tamayo, a mother of a successful 2016 graduate, was all praises for what Martin and SELF had done for her son Fermin.

This was followed by a greeting from FAM member Joji Deduque who thanked Martin for never giving up on his son Jose.

Then 2014 SELF graduate Ann Macias, and now Vice Mayor of Panaon, Misamis Occidental, greeted Kuya Martin and introduced the special dance number prepared by her staff who were among those who took the SELF Whole Person Development course a few months ago.

The performers traveled 37 hours by RORO to grace the occasion and give Kuya Martin an impressive dance number which truly wowed the audience.

Board Vice President Peter Stevens followed and told everyone how grateful and proud he was to be a part

of the SELF organization.

Not to be remiss, Kuya Martin's eldest son, Facility Admin Director Aldo, delivered an eloquent speech acknowledging the many achievements of his father. In ending, he thanked ChatGPT for the speech and got everyone chuckling.

Next, Kuya Martin's second son Marts played his dad's favorite guitar riff from the Beatles song "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" along with the SELF band.

A heartfelt message from Aftercare resident Kuya Moses came next. Having lost his dad while he was in the program, Moses thanked Kuya Martin for standing in as his father.

Following this a video presentation walked us through the life of Kuya Martin through a lovely display of his old photos growing out of tree branches. It was accompanied by a beautiful poem narrated in the calm voice of Upper House resident Ken Taguchi.

It spoke of Kuya Martin's journey which began like a seed trapped in darkness that grew into a tree of life. As Kuya Martin began touching the lives of others, so did the branches reach for the light.

At this juncture, the celebrant was called on stage to blow the candles of his birthday and sobriety cakes and

deliver his response.

Kuya Martin began by thanking everyone for joining him in celebrating “Recovery Day” in SELF.

He then recounted how he cherished each year of his sobriety. He said, “Making 10 was grand and making 20 was a milestone achievement because it matched the number of years that I had spent on drugs.”

Celebrating 32 years made him realize that the more years he puts into his recovery, the older he gets. At 69 years, all he prays for is that God continues to grant him the passion to continue doing what he loves most — teaching others how to love life in recovery.

As Kuya Martin ended his message, he introduced the Guest of Honor, Garth Popple, and gave him the floor.

Garth was fascinated by the performances and said he had never seen anything like it in all his 43 years of recovery. He claimed that from the moment he arrived and met the staff and residents, he immediately felt the true spirit of the TC.

The night had been going great and it was only fitting to end it with a bang. For the finale, residents and staff danced to the song “Everybody Say

Yeah!” from the musical Kinky Boots, getting the spectators to shout “Yeah” along with the performers.

One of the great things about SELF is that sobriety is a celebration. You don’t need to call for another “round” for it to be a party. All you have to do is look at the people in this beautiful community who make life in recovery so meaningful.

“Dream On!”, Kuya Martin.



CLOCKWISE FROM L: Marts Infante and the SELF Band; Martin blows out the candles of his birthday and sobriety cakes held by Facility Manager Erick Reyes (middle) and Kitchen Head Ryan Flores. TOP RIGHT: Panaon Vice Mayor Ann Macias, a SELF 2014 graduate, thanks Martin for the sobriety she is relishing today. ABOVE: WHOS Executive Director Garth Popple, the guest of honor, hangs his photo with those of other international dignitaries on the ‘Wall of Honor’ in the Boardroom of the International Institute of Therapeutic Communities during a simple ceremony on June 23 that was witnessed by the SELF Family.



SELF Dance Troupe



GROUP ONE — Seated are (L-R) Lower House Program Head Angeli Reyes, Clinical Head Jonna Gonzales, Senior Program Director Lyn Simbulan, President Martin Infante, Vice Mayor Ann Macias, COO Sockie Averilla, Upper House Director Mai Fariñas, Assistant Director Marichu Villegas, and Caseload Staff Lester Yangco. The Group One finishers are: (MIDDLE ROW, L-R) Lucille Marapao,

Ivy Mindajao, Maricris Ty, Harold Mangao, Lynvie Grace Bucayong, Cindylou Marapao, Kristine Bihag, Krystal Gonzaga, Juvelyn De La Cruz, Elisa Galario, Marivic Natividad, and Leonora Malmis; (BACK ROW, L-R) Kim June Revelo, Ron Pingkian, Randy Siaboc, Nino Tugonon, John Caliso, Delfin Ollamina, Joy Berhay, Elvie Balaba, Raymond Ong, Al Camunay, Edwin Aclo, and Gem Pabatang.

SELF trains Panaon LGU staff

AT the request of Vice Mayor Ann Macias of Panaon, Misamis Occidental, SELF designed a value formation program for her staff in the Local Government Unit (LGU) that focused on personality and character development.

As Ann is a SELF graduate of 2014, President Martin Infante was enthusiastic in supporting her request. After several drafts, he came up with the Whole Person Development Course (WPD) — an advancement program for professionals.

A first group of 24 staff took the course on March 13-17 while the second group of 28 took it on May 8-12.

Due to the large number of participants, the WPD program was conducted entirely in the Msgr. William O'Brien and Fr. Lambertus Somar Building, the Training Center of the International Institute of Therapeutic Communities (IITC).

Day 1: Introducing the TC culture

On the first day, participants were taken on a facility tour by a group of residents and staff. They wound up in the Sacred Heart Auditorium where

the SELF Family was waiting. After introducing the guests to the residents, Vice Mayor Ann shared her life journey before and after SELF and urged the residents to persevere in their program.

She said that when she needed staff training, she chose SELF without hesitation because of how it had helped her become the person she is.

Martin, in reply, expressed pride in Ann's achievements and committed to provide a fulfilling training for her staff.

The participants then proceeded to the IITC Training Room for a session on the Leveling of Expectations.

This was followed by formal Opening Ceremonies hosted by COO Sockie Averilla.

In his message, Martin assured that the WPD course is founded upon the principle-centered culture of the Therapeutic Community (TC) approach.

Training Director Lyn Simbulan then asked each trainee to surrender their professional IDs and hang it on the "Tree of Service."

Training Assistants Marichu Villegas, Jonna Gonzales and Angeli Reyes facilitated the recitation of the Training Oath and handing out of seminar kits and Training IDs.

In the closing remarks, SELF Board Member Letty Sarenas assured the trainees that they were in the best of hands. This was something she discovered when she entrusted her son to SELF for treatment.

Day 2: Intra-personal issues

Recognizing the importance of self-exploration, each participant underwent an Emotional Interview (EI) by a panel of staff and residents. This allowed participants to open up and release suppressed emotions accumulated over the years.

Over the course of the two training events, a total of 52 EIs were conducted.

Day 3: Interpersonal Issues

Martin gave seminars on group therapy techniques, including the "Four Stages of the Encounter Group." Afterward, the residents demonstrated an actual Encounter Group for the trainees to observe in a fishbowl format.

In the afternoon, the LGU staff members engaged in their own Encounter Group, bravely addressing conflicts and uncovering misconceptions about one another.

The activity concluded with

forgiveness and heartfelt embraces.

Day 4: Leadership Skills

The day began with seminars on the development of personal and professional competence, covering topics such as non-verbal communication and personality traits.

The afternoon was dedicated to various psychotherapy exercises that enhanced their skills in empathy.

The day culminated in a joyful Fellowship Night with the SELF family, featuring entertaining performances by both residents and LGU staff.

Day 5: Empowering the LGU Team

On the final day, the trainees created action plans for their LGU, which they presented to Vice Mayor Ann.

At the Closing Ceremonies, each participant received a Certificate of Completion. A video covering the training activities was shown, leaving the participants pleasantly surprised.

Vice Mayor Ann expressed deep gratitude to SELF — her second home.

The trainers felt a great sense of fulfillment and cherished the honor of making an impact on the lives of people who themselves serve the public.



GROUP TWO — Seated are (L-R) Lower House Program Head Angeli Reyes, Clinical Head Jonna Gonzales, Assistant Director Marichu Villegas, Senior Program Director Lyn Simbulan, COO Sockie Averilla, President Martin Infante, Vice Mayor Ann Macias, Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator Designate Harold Mangao, LDRRM Assistant Ivy Mindajao, Job Order-Library-in-Charge Joy Berhay, LDRRM Assistant Juvelyn Dela Cruz. The Group Two finishers are (MIDDLE ROW, L-R) Richard

Logro, Reyel Galario, Bea Eltagon, Darrel Dumaboc, El Marie Concon, Melva Codilla, Prima Cahanap, Jeany Banguis, Janna Mae Araneta, Georlie Tilao, Nelord Tare, and Euridecy Revillas; (BACK ROW, L-R) Emelyn Putis, Leonil Tabil, Rubie Ordeniza, Mary Ann Ondona, Ridhwan Ombawa, Wilson Natividad, Meco Mercado, Jay Mamacang, Janeth Malmis, Ginalyn Ramo, Charmae Maghuyop, Lordjim Luza, Chilu Lusica, Gil Virtudez, Primo Tare, and John Palangan.



WHOLE PERSON DEVELOPMENT

Over the course of the training, the participants experienced a wide range of therapeutic and wholesome TC activities. COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Panaon 1 Trainee Ivy Mindajao hangs her government ID on the Tree of Service symbolizing her full commitment to undergo the training; Panaon 2 participants recite their Training Oath during the Opening Ceremonies; Clinical staff Wea Rena guides Panaon 2 Trainee Jeany Banguis on a Blind Trust Walk to her Emotional Interview; Panaon trainee (bottom right) breaks into the Circle of Trust during the acceptance ritual after the Emotional Interview.



Beatles Night with the Love Me Dudes

Nothing like good, clean, fun

By Claudine
LOWER HOUSE RESIDENT

THROUGHOUT the past six months that I've in SELF, I have experienced a lot of exciting activities I never thought would happen in a rehab — a swim out in September, playing a lead role in our musical last December, and now, watching a live band in our very own auditorium.

On the evening of January 2, the entire SELF community was treated to a night of Beatles music by the **Love Me Dudes** composed of Kuya Martin's son Marts on guitar and vocals, nephew Javi on piano and vocals, Gino Vergel on

bass, and Nico Dinglasan on drums.

The auditorium was decked up like a bistro. People crammed in tables propped right in front of the band. Each table had a giant bag of Tater's, the best popcorn in town, and all the soda you could drink.

At 6:00 PM, Kuya Martin took the stage and shared a few words. He said that the event was SELF's gift to all the residents and staff for having worked so hard over the holidays. Then he called in the band and they opened, so fittingly, with the classic "A Hard Day's Night" which ignited appreciative cheers from the crowd.

I haven't seen a live band in eight months and I was stoked! They were so good and I was highly entertained throughout the entire two hours that

they played. But I was particularly mesmerized when Marts did the guitar solo in "While My Guitar Gently Weeps."

It made me stop and reflect. I used to think that live music and alcohol always go together. But this time, I realized I was wrong. I truly enjoyed every second of it sober.

The **Love Me Dudes** played a long list of well-loved Beatles classics such as "I Want to Hold Your Hand", "Come Together" and more. In between songs, Javi shared interesting trivia and anecdotes about the songs they were going to play next which was neat.

When they played "She Loves You" some staff started to dance in front. But when Kuya Martin started prancing around in "I Saw Her Standing There", we all got up and danced our heart away.

I was having a blast dancing with Seira, a new Lower House resident, and Facilitator Ate Connie. Right across us, Upper House residents Brent, Marlon, and MJ were strutting their stuff. For their final song, the band played "Hey Jude" and everyone sang along.

It was the end, but everyone clamored for more. The band obliged on condition that someone come up on stage for their encore. SELF's favorite rocker Head Coordinator Raphael was pushed on stage to sing "Daytripper" which, I must say, he did with gusto.

What a fantastic night! I discovered that I can have the time of my life while hanging out with positive friends. It's never too late to have good, clean fun.

Here's to our lives shining bright in 2023!



LEFT TO RIGHT: Marts kills the riffs in "While My Guitar Gently Weeps"; Claudine (L) and Seira groove; Raphael belting out "Daytripper" with the band.

SELF holds 9th Operations Convention | February 7 and 8



HOUSE IN SESSION — SELF conducted its 9th Operations Convention (OPCON) on February 7 and 8. Under the theme “Community as Method”, all the residents and staff gathered in the Sacred Heart Auditorium (SHA) for the opening.

The OPCON employs a modified Parliamentary System and it is an opportunity for members of the community to bring up rules, policies, and practices that could be improved.

Different color tags were given to the delegates to differentiate their rights. Residents in good standing were allowed to join plenary sessions and workshops, make motions, and vote. Those under process were only allowed to observe the plenary sessions.

At the start of the opening plenary session, President Martin Infante gave an overview of the OPCON and explained the Rules of Engagement. Then, as Chairperson of the event, he pounded his gavel to formally open the floor for motions. Residents and staff proceeded to bring up policies and practices that they felt could be improved. Within the next 90 minutes, debates ensued on the propositions. In the end, 10 topics were tabled for discussion.

Workshop 1 dealt with Schedules and Procedures; Workshop 2 was on Extracurricular Topics; and Workshop 3 covered Miscellaneous Concerns. Residents could choose which workshop to attend. After the lunch break, they proceeded to the designated

venues and began discussing the assigned topics.

The workshop resolutions were then consolidated by the Secretariat and brought to the MANCOM for review. The next morning, the General Assembly reconvened in the SHA and Martin presented the Summary of Resolutions to the community for ratification.

Everyone was satisfied with the process and fulfilled by what was accomplished. At 11:30 AM, Martin pounded his gavel one last time to close the 9th OPCON. Above (L), Martin presides over the convention. At right, Lower House resident Carl signs up for his chosen workshop.

18th Surgical & Medical Outreach Mission is biggest ever | June 17



18TH SURGICAL AND MEDICAL MISSION — After a hiatus of three years due to the pandemic, SELF resumed its annual medical outreach activity for the townsfolk of Talisay, Batangas on June 17, 2023. The procedures were conducted in the Msgr. William O’Brien and Fr. Lambertus Somar Building in the SELF compound.

The mission was once again done in coordination with Dr. Victor Gisbert and his team of nurses and doctors from Makati Medical Center, who provided free surgical, dental, medical, and optometry

services from 8:00 AM to 12:00 NN.

SELF’s Facility Physician Dr. Victoria Luna also joined the mission and provided medical checkups. Many residents and staff were also able to avail of the free services provided.

The 18th Surgical and Medical Mission was the biggest ever held. In all, a total of 393 procedures were done: 111 Tooth Extractions, 100 Optical Assessments, 56 Diabetes Screenings, 49 Medical Check-ups, 48 Cyst Removals, and 29 Circumcisions.

The mission came to a close at noon and everyone was treated to a sumptuous lunch by the SELF Kitchen.

SELF looks forward to another edition of the community outreach next year.

In the group shot, Martin (center) joins his friend Dr. Victor and the rest of his team for a souvenir photo. At top right, Vic and a nurse conduct a surgical procedure. At bottom right, one of the dentists perform a tooth extraction.

DDB Chairman Cuy visits SELF



SELF welcomed Secretary Catalino Cuy, Chairman of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), and his delegation to the Taal View House facility on February 22. Early in January, Martin requested for an audience with the Chairman to solicit his support for the international conference of the Federation of Therapeutic Communities (FTCA) scheduled for early next year in the Philippines. In response, Chairman Cuy opted to meet with Martin at the facility as his staff had been informing him that he should visit "one of the best non-government treatment and rehabilitation centers in the country." During a tour of the facility, the Chairman took the time to share an encouraging message with the residents. Afterward, they had lunch and a quick look at the Training Center of the International Institute of Therapeutic Communities. Before leaving, the Chairman assured Martin of DDB's support for the upcoming FTCA international conference. In the photo, Martin hands a copy of his book to Secretary Cuy at the MANCOM office. With them are (L-R) Facility Admin Director Aldo Infante, Board Member Letty Sarenas, DDB Executive Assistant Doris Dorigo, and COO Sockie Averilla.

TC tools for better government

COMING from marking its third decade as a Therapeutic Community (TC) and with the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to wane, SELF entered the new year with optimism and excitement.

For its international commitments, with Founder & President Martin Infante as the head of the Federation of Therapeutic Communities in Asia (FTCA), SELF pursued the possibility of holding an in-person international conference in the Philippines.

A program was put together and scheduled for late this year but bookings at the preferred venue were already full, so plans to hold it early next year are being firmed up.

Meanwhile, in pursuit of its Third 10-year Mission to become a TC training hub in Asia, SELF was happy to take on the challenge of adding a new program to its training portfolio.

Early in the semester, Vice Mayor Ann Macias of the Municipality of Panaon, Misamis Occidental in Mindanao, requested SELF to conduct a value formation training course for her staff in the local government unit (LGU). She had decided the best way to improve her LGU's service to constituents was to help the staff grow personally and professionally.

A SELF Graduate of 2014, Vice Mayor Ann had been so transformed by her stay in the Therapeutic Community that her first and only choice for this venture was to let them experience what she herself had gone through in SELF.

Challenged by the request, Martin immediately hammered out a new training program and refined it with the help of his training team. They came out with the Whole Person Development (WPD) course — a five-day journey of self-discovery toward achieving excellence in

organizational dynamics and service delivery.

On March 12, Ann arrived in SELF with 24 of her senior staff to take the WPD course. It was a huge success as the training made up for its brevity by its intensity, and each participant manifested a change of heart and a beginning growth in personal and professional skills. On the fifth day, they put out detailed plans, complete with funding requirements, to bring their public service to a new level.

Vice Mayor Ann was so pleased with the outcome that she brought 28 more staff to undergo the same course on May 8-12. Four officers who took the course in March chose to pay forward and accompanied the second group to help guide and support them. This session was also an unqualified success.

The Panaon LGU staff showed their appreciation of the training they had received in a remarkable way as 11 of them led by Vice Mayor Ann braved a day and a half of travel overland and by RORO ferries to present a dance performance in the program to celebrate Martin's 32nd sober anniversary and 69th birthday on June 24.

Arrangements are being made for a third group of Panaon LGU undertake the WPD course in the second semester.

As the first semester of 2023 draws to a close, SELF is glad to note that with a return to normalcy in the volume of its intake of residents it has successfully weathered the organizational and financial challenges it faced over the past three years.

Once again, our deepest gratitude to our friends and sponsors — most especially the SELF Family Association — for standing with us in our time of need.



Training for Rehab Operators & Workers

SELF conducts training on the organization and management of rehabs for the International Institute of Therapeutic Communities.



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SELF launches Whole Person Development course



Advancement Program for Professionals

Over the years, SELF has developed a variety of training programs not only for rehab practitioners but also for students, doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, teachers, jail staff, police, and even priests and nuns. The common thrust of all its programs is Value Formation and the courses are founded on the principle-centered culture of the Therapeutic Community approach. The all new Whole Person Development (WPD) course is no different. SELF designed an intensive 5-day program to enhance personal and professional growth using much of its basic TC methods and practices. Vice Mayor Ann Macias of Panaon town in Misamis Occidental, a SELF 2014 graduate, requested SELF to develop a training program for her staff in the municipal government. Photo shows her encouraging the second batch of her staff who took the course to make the best of the training during the Opening Ceremonies on May 8.

SEE STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGES 7-8.



WHOLE PERSON DEVELOPMENT COURSE

ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM FOR PROFESIONALS

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