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**REGION'S FIRST HAPPINESS CONFERENCE STARTING 12 NOVEMBER 2020 WITH OVER
20 SPEAKERS SHARING INSIGHTS ABOUT HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING**

SINGAPORE -

Happiness Initiative will be holding the **Region's First Happiness Conference** online starting 12 November 2020, organised with the support of the **National Youth Council**.

The number of people with mental health conditions in Singapore have been on the rise. Even with accessible treatment and awareness campaigns, more needs to be done on a preventive level. There is a growing body of science and research around happiness and well-being which shows that happiness can be developed through a set of learnable skills. The conference aims to provide a platform for people to share the latest insights and inspire action.

Simon Leow, Co-Founder of Happiness Initiative, says, "Happiness is an ideal that appears in both our pledge and national anthem. This conference offers insights into what is happiness and what choices we can make to be happier. We hope to bring an Asian perspective to this field, which is often dominated by Western research."

The conference will start with four panel discussions held weekly from 12 November to 3 December 2020. The first three will focus on the domains of Well-being in Community, Well-being of our Youth and Well-being at Work.

Dr William Wan, General Secretary of the Singapore Kindness Movement, will be part of the panel discussion on Well-being in Community. Alongside Dr Wan, other active members of community groups like **Deputy Executive Director Ranganayaki Thangavelu of Beyond Social Services** will exchange perspectives on building up social capital for a greater Singapore.

Joining the panel on Well-being of our Youth is **Parliamentary Secretary Eric Chua from the Ministry of Social and Family Development, and Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth** and **Syed Harun Alhabsyi, Associate Consultant Psychiatrist at the Institute of Mental Health and National Youth Council member**. The panellists will discuss how future generations can optimize their well-being to better serve and lead the country forward.

Among the panellists discussing how to promote a culture of workplace happiness, audiences will hear the thoughts of **Netflix's Consumer Insight Specialist Sofia Mavros**, **Mercer's Health Consulting Leader Samuel Tan** and **Lyn Lee, Chief Diversity & Inclusivity Officer of Royal Dutch Shell**.

The final panel discussion will explore the exceptionalism of Nordic countries, who are consistently ranked among the top ten happiest in the world. Singapore ranked 31st in the latest edition of the World Happiness Report. **Nordic ambassadors from Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden** will engage in a panel discussion on what makes their citizens happier than other countries and whether these practices are applicable in an Asian context.

Ritva Naumanen, Deputy Head of Mission for the Embassy of Finland says, "For Finland, well-being in work and education bears an extremely high importance. This focus on people's well-being, is one great reasons behind Finland excelling time after time in education rankings and work-life balance. Finland was ranked as the happiest country in the world for the second year in a row now, and we want to share our ideas and experiences to spread the happiness and to create even better solutions to support well-being!"

The panel discussions will be followed by a series of eight webinars held over 5-6 December 2020 touching on different aspects of happiness, led by experts and community leaders. The topics range from the science behind empathy and gratitude to finding happiness even in death.

Dr Angela Duckworth, CEO and founder of Character Lab will open with the conference's first webinar, *Character Matters*. Well-known for her research on grit, she will share insights on how character strengths like self-control, gratitude and creativity can enable people to thrive.

Other speakers include **Ng Siew Yen of Royal Dutch Shell**, who will facilitate a module used by Royal Dutch Shell to create a more resilient and happier workplace culture in the webinar *Gratitude Matters*. **Dr Chong Poh Heng, Vice-Chairman of the Singapore Hospice Council**, will be sharing how *Dying Matters*, as he invites participants to reflect on their assumptions and consider different perspectives on the end of life.

The conference webinars and panel discussions will be held online at no charge to attendees.

Gary Khoo, Health Promotion Board, Director, Preventive Health Programmes says, “HPB recognizes that one of the ways to better mental well-being is to be happy and do more of what makes one happy. As mental health is an important area of public health, HPB focuses on equipping individuals with resilience and coping skills, as well as building supportive environments to foster mental wellbeing. More can be done to promote the importance of mental wellness. Events like the Happiness Conference help to raise mental health awareness and drive mental health advocacy in the community.”

Through this conference, Happiness Initiative also hopes to reshape perspectives on how greater happiness can be achieved and illuminate the measures individuals and the community can take for a happier Singapore.

The Happiness Conference is organised by **Happiness Initiative**, a social enterprise that focuses on translating the science of happiness and well-being into actions people can take to live a more fulfilling life. They take a preventive approach towards mental health conditions, focusing on three areas - raising awareness on the science of wellbeing, translating research into practice and programmes, and building a community that promotes the practice of wellbeing.

MORE INFORMATION

- The Happiness Conference is organised by Happiness Initiative, a social enterprise that aims to promote happiness and well-being in Singapore.
- The conference will be held from 12 November to 6 December 2020.
- Four panel discussions will be held weekly from 12 November to 3 December.
- Eight webinars will then take place on 5 and 6 December 2020.
- Happiness Initiative is also the organiser of the Happiness Film Festival, which is returning for its second edition in March 2021.

Visit <http://happinessconference.asia> for more information.

MEDIA CONTACT

Sherman Ho
Co-Founder, Happiness Initiative
sherman@happinessinitiative.sg / +65 9616 6213

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