



「重拾動力—動物治療青年計劃」

經驗分享集及成效研究報告



作者簡介

計劃顧問:

范德穎精神科專科醫生

香港動物治療基金會會長; 家庭治療學院會員;

亞洲專業輔導協會(香港)註冊臨床督導

研究團隊:

黃蔚澄博士

香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系助理教授; 臨床心理學家

喻慧敏小姐

香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系高級研究助理

李文浩先生

香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系博士研究生

社工團隊:

伍恩豪先生

「重拾動力—動物治療學師計劃」督導;中華錫安傳道會總幹事

黎立顯先生

「重拾動力一動物治療學師計劃」負責人/社工;服務協調主任

梁鳳兒女士

「重拾動力―動物治療學師計劃」社工:服務協調主任

吳仲偉先生

「重拾動力―動物治療學師計劃」社工;社會工作員

周煐傑先生

「重拾動力―動物治療學師計劃」社工:社會工作員

楊佩珠女士

「重拾動力一動物治療學師計劃」社工:社會工作員

鄺嘉欣小姐

「重拾動力―動物治療學師計劃」社工:社會工作員

葉飛雲小姐

「重拾動力一動物治療學師計劃」社工;社會工作員



資助:



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合辦:



研究推行:



香港動物治療基金會

香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系

今作夥伴·



Animals Asia Foundation



唐狗會



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序言

本會慈雲山錫安青少年綜合服務中心由 1999 年起提供青少年就業培訓服務,2005 年 更成立慈雲山錫安青少年綜合服務中心分處青少年就業培訓及創藝發展中心,成為全 港首間一站式青少年就業培訓及輔導中心。

2008 年,我們試辦了寵物美容課程,協助有特別就業困難的青少年。我們發現了平日不開口説話、不喜歡接觸人的隱蔽青年,對著小狗時會展現少見的笑容。他們慢慢地變得健談和投入起來。平日自己都不照顧的青年人,竟然願意為小狗梳洗。我們總結了我們的發現:「有些隱蔽青年、社交退縮的青少年,怕人但不怕狗!」

以此為基礎,我們設計了一個多元介入的計劃——「重拾動力—動物治療學師計劃」 (「重拾動力」計劃),為年齡介乎 15-24 歲「隱蔽」、「半隱蔽」及有精神健康問題的年青人提供一站式,包括動物治療、個人輔導、基本工作態度及能力訓練及其他 支援服務。計劃第一期由 2010 年 9 月至 2012 年 11 月展開,為期兩年。

鑑於計劃成效理想,我們很感謝「傅德蔭基金有限公司」,資助由 2013 年 1 月起至 2014 年 12 月的延續計劃—「重拾動力—動物治療青年計劃」,計劃為期兩年。香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系研究團隊替「重拾動力」計劃進行量化及質性研究,研究結果證明動物治療應用於隱蔽青年有明顯效用。2013 至 2014 年兩年間服務超過 100 位隱蔽青少年,超過半數的隱蔽青少年在參與計劃後成功就業,失業百分比由 88.6% 降至 34.1%。並且,隱蔽青少年在自尊感、社交焦慮、就業效能感也有明顯的進步。

2013 年 11 月,「重拾動力」計劃獲香港社會服務聯會頒發 2013 年卓越實踐在社福,十大卓越服務獎予本計劃,充分肯定計劃手法創新,成效顯著。過往幾年,傳媒廣泛報導本計劃,讓社會大眾更關心隱蔽青年的需要。並且,我們多次於業界研討會,分享此計劃,讓業界同工在動物治療及隱青服務上作專業交流,充實業界實踐經驗。

「重拾動力」計劃得以成功推行,我們特別感謝計劃顧問范德穎醫生香港動物治療基金會會長),香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系的研究團隊黃蔚澄博士、喻慧敏女士、李文浩先生。我亦要感謝我們的社工團隊,我們一起學習,一起服務隱蔽青年。我們幫助隱閉青年從不孤單。我們十分感謝各合辦單位的鼎力協助,包括香港動物治療基金會、亞洲動物基金、唐狗會及利民會。

期望社會上更多人士關注及幫助隱蔽青年,引領他們走出精彩人生。

伍恩豪先生

中華錫安傳道會社會服務部總幹事



經驗分享集



重拾動力—動物治療學師計劃

計劃簡介:

本機構自 2000 年起已為為協助解決失業問題而開辦不同種類之就業服務。本機構自 2010 年 9 月至 2012 年 11 月,推行「重拾動力——動物治療學師」計劃,鑑於計劃成效理想,機構延續計劃。由 2013 年起,傅德蔭基金有限公司贊助推行「重拾動力—動物治療青年計劃」。

計劃目的:

- 1. 為欠缺人際溝通技巧或心理有困擾的青少年提供跨專業的心理健康支援、輔 導和動物治療,讓他們重拾自信與人交往,建立自我人生意義。
- 2. 向有特別就業困難的青少年提供一站式復康性質的職業訓練讓他們掌握基本工作態度和能力。

服務對象:

- 1. 長期逗留在家,而又缺課或待業的青少年
- 2. 人際關係溝通困難或 / 及心理困擾青少年
- 3. 就業困難青少年

主要服務地區:

東九龍

服務日期:

1/1/2013-31/12/2014

服務內容:

1. 報名查詢熱線

為市民提供基本「半隱蔽」青年問題及相關精神健康詢問,轉介恰當服務(心理治療、輔導、動物治療、職業訓練)予有需要者,避免問題惡化。

2. 個案輔導

由社工與青少年訂定目標,採用靈活形式處理個人心理健康和人際相處問題,以便建立自我及與人的關係,積極投入社會。

3. 臨床心理評估與治療

為疑似有心理健康問題青少年提供評估,預防情緒或精神問題,並協助有需要者處理情緒或精神困擾。

4. 動物治療

「貓醫生及狗醫生」定期與青少年接觸,雙方互相交流 (與動物接觸、玩樂和傾談),令青少年在自然氣氛下 培養溝通和共情交流能力。

動物治療透過三個模式進行,為青少年提供不同場合與動物互動的機會,讓他們選擇參與動物治療的形式:







- 計劃中的重要夥伴亞洲動物基金、唐狗會定期招募狗主、唐狗大使到訪中心作親善探訪,與青少年交流互動
- ◎ 中心飼養了治療貓犬,讓社工可以隨時借助動物作媒介,與青少年進行 輔導,協助他們理解並處理個人的問題
- ◎ 社工帶同治療犬發發家訪個案

5. 動物護理及寵物美容訓練

將青少年的興趣轉化成為職業訓練內容,透過動物護理及美容和其配套的工作態度訓練,令青少年「未學做工,先學做人」。

6. 人際溝通支援小組

小組透過互相支持和激勵,參考而不盲從社會價值標準衡量自己,提點參加者發掘自己的人生優缺點,為自己定下有意義的人生目標。

7. 動物護理及寵物美容實習

向青少年提供動物護理、寵物美容及一般工作實習機會,讓他們經驗服務別 人的喜悦和工作的責任,建立自我人生意義。



I M IN THE REAL PROPERTY.









治療犬發發、治療貓心心、英英

治療犬發發是一隻八哥犬,今年八歲,自 2011 年 2 月開始長駐中心(中心休息發發返回基金會渡假)。治療貓心心、英英則在 2011 年 11 月加入中心。他們也是經香港動物治療基金會借給中心作為計劃的治療貓犬。發發、心心、英英的主要工作是與計劃的青少年接觸。若情況適合,社工也會帶同發發一同家訪未能外出的隱蔽青年。發發之前也是一隻被主人遺棄的家犬,心心、英英則天生患有眼疾,他們的故事、經歷也激勵著不少的青少年。





隱蔽青少年的心理治療模式及 動物(輔助)治療之應用

香港動物治療基金會會長范德穎醫生

President, Hong Kong Animal Therapy Foundation
President, Hong Kong Autism Awareness Alliance
Fellow and Council member, Asian Academy of Family Therapy
Registered Clinical Supervisor and Honorary Advisor, Asian Professional Counselling Association (HK)
Honorary Consultant, Hong Kong Association of Art Therapists

導論

隱蔽青年問題不是香港獨有,許多發達國家和地區,例如日本、英國也有相同問題,這些隱蔽青年問題起源大致與香港一樣。據統計,日本的隱蔽青年數目佔全日本青少年的一成,約 100 萬人。至於香港的情況,根據香港基督教服務處「有網能量」青年導航及發展中心於 2006 年進行的調查顯示,發現 10-24 歲青少年當中,估計約有 18500 青少年處於「隱蔽」狀態,佔全港青年人口 2.1%,相比 2005 年只得 6000 名增加兩倍多。男性同樣佔八成,年紀最少只有 12 歲,平均隱蔽兩年,最長 6 年。

隱蔽定義

過往對隱蔽問題的研究大都從一個**社會學的角度**作解構。譬如香港基督教服務處總協調主任應鳳秀及香港浸會大學黃昌榮教授就把「隱蔽」視為一個社會現象。亦根據任何年齡的人士只要持續超過三個月有以下情況均可視之為受到「隱蔽」問題困擾:

- 與社會上的各項系統缺乏連系及沒有從事參與,包括工作、教育、培訓、朋輩及社區,更嚴重者甚至是與家庭系統也缺乏連系。
- 2. 人際網路薄弱、害怕或拒絕與人接觸或交談。
- 3. 沒有社會身份地位,如學生、受雇者、受訓者、社區活動參與者等。
- 4. 面對不同的社會排斥,如新來港身份、貧窮、學校、勞動市場、社區、朋輩等。

這種以社會角色、地位、參與和接納程度去定義隱蔽行為雖然較客觀和清晰,但在協助同工掌握隱蔽者的心理特徵和評估如何進行治療並無幫助。往往忽視了表面類同的現象背後,個人身心社靈上的不同因素及需要,而著眼於社會政治經濟教育制度的改善和變革而非尋求適當的治療。

隱蔽的成因

從社會學的角度出發去理解青少年的隱蔽行為,把隱青問題視為**社會問題**而非心理疾病(例如教育與就職脱節、校園暴力現象嚴重、全球化造成中低階工作外移)。這種見解自然而然會聚焦於不同來源的社會壓力和問題,認定是這些壓力令青少年覺得自己是失敗、無用,造成他們隱蔽的行為。

最常被詬病的是東亞先進地區的**教育制度**。他們覺得東亞教育以填鴨式教育為主,加上傳統觀念認為學歷高才有出息,形成升學主義,令家長和青少年感受到不少壓力。有一些極端例子指出這種壓力自幼稚園時期便開始產生,因為他們得要通過考試才能進入最好的幼稚園,繼而進入最好的小學、中學、高中以至大學。當高中或大學畢業,他們要面對就業困難的問題。他們多數只能找一些兼職工作,這些工作入息不多,根本不能夠負擔個人及家庭開支,更遑論成家立室。

其他被詬病的社會因素包括以下幾個:

年輕一代大多是**獨生子女**,從小到大習慣獨處,欠缺與他人相處的經驗,由此養 成孤僻自我的個性,令他們難以建立自己的人際網路。此外,香港年輕一代從小 到大備受照顧,抗壓和應付逆境的能力較低。即所謂「**港孩現象**」如果因為某些 原因 (例如過肥、學業或體能表現、財富以及種族) 受到同學的欺負又或者排擠,便會選擇獨處來逃避壓力。 總而言之,就是把所有的社會問題看成為隱蔽的成因。

香港職場奉行高學歷主義,社會普遍認為年輕人最少擁有大學學位,才可以前程錦繡。這種思維讓未能考上大學的年輕人感到自卑。而且,香港職位招聘,大多要求申請者有 大專或以上學歷,沒有上大學的年輕人只能找到既辛苦、薪金又低的工作。縱使擁有高學歷,如1997、1998年時畢業找工作的年輕人剛好碰上亞洲金融風暴就業情況困難,也可能成為隱蔽青年。來自社會觀念和現實環境的雙重壓力令他們寧願躲在家中上網、看漫畫,也不願到社會上尋找工作機會。

以上這些觀點未能解釋為甚麼並非所有面對這些壓力的青少年都會變成隱蔽,而 是引發了其他不同形式的身心病症及徵象:如焦慮、濫藥或抑鬱症等。況且現 代社會沒有人能避免面對這些社會壓力,而且這些社會問題也不可能簡單的解決 吧!

另一種觀點是認定隱蔽行為是一種心理障礙或是由其他精神病引發的徵狀。因此為隱青提供有關的心理治療或住院治療。事實上這兩種原因的隱蔽行為無論在心理困擾的特徵及具體行為以致主觀感受各方面都大相逕庭,不宜混為一談。就以把隱蔽行為視為一種心理障礙的觀點,目前臨床對這個問題認識不深,沒有一些特定的治療模式。

隱青的治療方式

不同國家及文化對於治療隱青的方式也有不同。日本學者一般建議靜候他們重回 社會:西方醫生會建議主動要求他們加入社區,在必要時強逼他們。另除了正規 醫療外,在韓國有關隱青會被送到跟其他治療中的隱青共住,以便從日常生活中 學習離開熟悉的家庭環境及恢復與人共處的技巧。而香港的社工及學者則認為要 以充權及興趣為本的手法主動介入,但不會強迫。

在香港,首先發現這現象的為香港基督教服務處,該機構於 2004 年 10 月始,成立"有網能量"青年導航及發展中心(Life Engagement Training Service),創立了專責為活於"隱蔽"狀態的 14-24 歲青年提供"上門輔導"及"上門訓練"之 Home-based counseling team。"上門追擊隊"社工主動登門造訪,評估這群青少年的需要,著重發揮他們被埋沒的潛能及與其共同面對"隱蔽"困難,協助其重投社會,建立有意義的社會連結及發展。雖然近年已越來越多社工、醫生及社福機構專門幫助治療隱青,但目前社會上對隱青及其家人仍然缺乏一個完整的制度去支援和解決這個問題。

青少年隱蔽行為的形成因素和過程

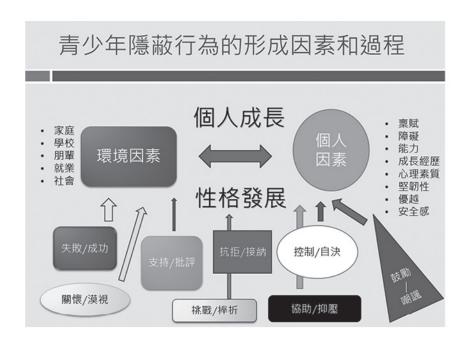
我翻閱及檢視了過去為「重拾動力」計劃作出的個案討論和督導的臨床資料,認為可以應用一個認知行為治療的模式去理解不同環境及個人身心社靈因素如何導致年青人選擇從現實生活長時期的退縮隱蔽,對自己的將來懷抱放棄消極的態度,並且抗拒他人的幫助。而這模式亦能充份解釋為何動物(輔助)治療能發揮明確和特出的療效。

我的觀點是:青少年的隱蔽行為屬性一種**心理障礙**,由不同的**環境因素及個人因素在個人成長及性格發展**的期間,在互動之下而逐漸形成。再經某些事故**誘發**其隱蔽之行為。

環境因素包括:家庭、學校、朋輩、就業及社會各方面對青少年的普遍要求和期望、為他們提供的挑戰和機會、支援和協助、以及是否能為他們帶來不同正負面的經驗。這些不同的經驗,無論正負面都能為青少年的個人成長及性格發展提供學習的機遇,需要平衡及調節,偏頗或缺乏都可能造成問題。

個人因素包括:先天的稟賦、身心智各方面的特徵、能力和障礙、成長經歷、心理素質(堅韌性、優越感、安全感)等因素。這些因素與環境因素相結合,會產生對生活上的不同際遇和經驗事件的個人感受和理解(失敗/成功、挑戰/挫折、被控制/自決感),產生各有不同的世界觀和自我形象,影響個人身心社靈的成長以致逐漸左右性格的發展。

其中對隱蔽青少年最關鍵當然是身邊其他人(家人、學校師友、朋輩、工作的上司同儕及社會主流意向和風尚)對他們的態度和反應(關懷/漠視、支持/批評、抗拒/接納、協助/抑壓、鼓勵/嘲諷),很多是偏向負面,而個人感受和理解亦多是失敗感、挫折感和被控制感。這嚴重影響他們早期人際關係和社交能力的發展,造成埋伏了他們後來演變成隱蔽行為的遠因。



青少年隱蔽行為的認知行為模式

我認為可以應用一個**認知行為治療**的模式去理解隱蔽青少年在認知、情緒及行為上的特徵,他們如何導致年青人選擇從現實生活長時期的退縮隱蔽,對自己的將來懷抱放棄消極的態度,並且抗拒他人的幫助。再透過深入掌握不同的環境及個人因素,設定介入的方案。

隱蔽青少年認知方面的特徵包括:自我形象低落、挫敗感強烈、無助絕望、無人關心重 視、無優點長處、受人厭棄、無望改善放棄、自怨自責、缺乏奮鬥目標。

隱蔽青少年情緒方面的特徵包括: 憤怒、焦慮、抑鬱、頹喪、失落、沉悶、徬徨。

隱蔽青少年行為方面的特徵包括:**逃避現實、自暴自棄、漠視冷淡、退縮隱蔽、** 拒絕協助、沉迷虛擬世界、無慾無求。

隱蔽青少年在認知、情緒和行為這幾方面的特徵,不斷互相強化,演變成一個牢不可破的惡性循環。最重要的是他們選擇的隱蔽行為、亦同時有著自我保護的作用,為他們提供了安全感和成就感,逃避了再面對挫敗的危險、亦令他們避免了壓力和情緒困擾。但這些好處也令他們更難改變和接受外界協助,甚致否認問題之存在,長期退縮在委曲的空間,窒礙了個人身心社靈的正常發展,成為了隱蔽行為的持續因素。這些正是介入和治療隱蔽青少年最頭痛的地方。

青少年隱蔽行為的認知行為模式 • 自我形象低落 憤怒 • 挫敗感強烈 焦慮 • 無助絕望 抑鬱 無人關心重視 頹喪 無優點長處 認知 失落 受人厭棄 惡性循環 沈悶 無望改善放棄 徬徨 自怨自青 (自我保護) • 缺乏奮鬥目標 無慾無求 行為 漠視 冷淡 次 原 類 類 類 退縮隱蔽 拒絕協助

動物治療對隱蔽青少年之療效

香港動物治療基金會自 2010 年參與「重拾動力」計劃持續應用動物治療成功地 去改善及矯正青少年的隱蔽行為,而且更能通過科學研究的客觀標準的驗證,實 在值得深入了解其治療方案。

我們歸納認為動物(輔助)治療中的治療犬及動物元素對隱蔽青少年有以下明顯 的治療效果:

- 作為個案與治療師/陌生人/同儕/家庭等產生社交互動的催化劑
- 作為人際交往溝通和建立依附關係的教材 學習同理心/溝通互信互助
- 激發人們內心愛護培育幼兒的天性 個案成為治療動物的照顧者
- 視為生活陪伴 彼此互相支持和共同面對/傾訴心聲/減少孤獨無助感
- 能給予個案無條件正向的關懷 產生正能量/積極感和生趣/減少抑鬱
- 能給予個案恆常非批判性的接納 ─ 提高自尊心/減低社交焦慮和隱蔽心理
- 產生安全感及鎮定效果 ─ 動物可轉移壓力/舒緩緊張及平復情緒
- 能給予個案身體接觸 產生親密和溫馨的感覺
- 能給予個案掌控感和自我價值感 減少無力感/ 肯定自我及能面對挑戰
- 能與個案產生互動與連繫 產生被需要和被關心的感覺/培養責任感
- 能予個案重新建構家庭的概念 將動物視為家人/ 反思家庭價值
- 能給予個案重新參與生活、工作、學習和社交的動力 重拾希望及面對現實

如果我們把這些治療元素參照以上青少年隱蔽行為的認知行為模式,就不難理解 為甚麼動物(輔助)治療對隱蔽青少年有那麼清晰的成效。因為這些治療元素都 能針對相關的認知情緒和行為特徵,同時從各方面紓解構成隱蔽行為的因素,以 一個容易接受的方式(以人與動物的互動為焦點)去接觸個案。

結論

本文中我總結了過去幾年對隱蔽青少年進行動物(輔助)治療的經驗,提出一個 青少年隱蔽行為的認知行為模式去理解他們各方面的特徵和關係,以便治療師能 更清晰的掌握環境及個人因素各方面的形成因素、誘發因素和持續因素,再利用 動物(輔助)治療的特殊治療元素去介入治療。

雖然這個模式目前尚屬理論性,但應可以作為日後深入研究青少年隱蔽行為的形成因素和過程、個案評估和設計介入治療方案的基礎。





動物(輔助)治療個案分享

動物(輔助)治療輔導技巧初探

黎立顯先生

背景

求助來源:母親上網找資料來電為其子阿榮(化名)求助,因個案有一年在家。個案中學畢業後曾修讀電工,但入讀後被批評沒有能力,令他自覺無用,開始退縮在家,父母多次勸告亦無效,反增加大家的負面情緒。

在未有問題前,其實個案本性純良,家庭關係原亦良好,他父親任全職工作,母親主理家務,弟弟已出身工作,在此小康之家,大家常有接觸,亦很互相遷就。在中學期間,個案雖沒有結識很多朋友,成績上亦十分普通,但亦是一個典型的「有返學和放學」的普通學生,為人斯文和害羞。

自他退縮在家,父最為不滿個案,有出口話他,但是個案也是避他或是流淚。他們只能說片語隻言,根本不可討論任何問題範圍的事項,母親還能夠與個案溝通。

個案個人的狀態:個案平常在家多在房內,主要是打機及上網看別人打機,晚睡 晚起。他甚少出外,很怕人的眼光和表示怕出外沒有目的。

然而他待人善良,與母親接觸保持頻密,房間是可供家人自由出入。他表示仍希望改變,如找工作,但學電工一事令他十分懷疑自己能力,對於工作興趣失去焦點。他多有回應母親,母親有能力要求個案與社工見面。他雖無飼養動物經驗,但對貓狗有興趣。

問題

原來阿榮及其母親一直沒有尋求外間協助,初期希望可自行處理,結果情況持續變差。家人間只是希望會有改變,只是沒有任何有效的行動。個案由最初肯回應自身的問題變成沉默回應,由最初有見親友到後來避而不見,父母及弟弟亦只可以處於一個「陪伴」的角色,未能指引或疏理個案如何走出困境。

在阿榮中學的青少年成長階段,不能夠發展到一個足夠的社交網絡,沒有結識或保持到甚麼朋友。失去了友伴的支持和參照,只好憑著已所知所識去處理人生的挑戰,其中五成績不好未能令他升班,從而不能獲得更多學習和改善的機會。更不幸是他在電工課程中,因學習的困難令他自我懷疑,更甚是其人際手腕差而不能找到幫忙,在前進無路下,他開始卻步,退縮起來,開始輟學。

以他本性純良而內斂的性格,不會客觀公道地分析事件的得失,反將學習不成歸咎於自己的不濟,頓使自己見不到希望,找不到任何目的。父母的不明白和無處可往下,坐在家便成了他的首選。



介入焦點及進展

阿榮的問題夾雜著困難和出路兩種元素,只要好好把握,都可找到出路。母親是他的一個資源,當他隱蔽在家,母親是他一個改變的支持。社工是先邀請母親了解個案的背景,包括生活行徑和與陌生人接觸的動力,邀請母親設法讓個案有心理準備見社工,而全家人亦認同社工將會進入他們的生活環境中,協助家庭負起個案問題的責任。

個案為人純良,令他肯接受社工的家訪及了解其狀況,亦因社工是一個外來者,可以以聆聽、了解、詢問、反映、分析等等的技巧在其家進行輔導,有別於家長式的問話,理解個案在電工學習失敗的內疚,其中一個輔導的成果是令他再次理解學習失敗是有眾多的可能性,包括是課程的設計、師資和教學方法、甚至是同學的學習氣氛都可以是因素,只歸咎於本身未必是一個公允的判斷。此事件之後,個案都肯在可考慮的小範圍內作新嘗試,其中一個是社工知他對小動物有興趣。

社工經家訪後知道其家居對動物安全,而家人亦無反對,遂在不同的家訪中帶同治療犬或治療貓見個案,從真實的接觸中,個案雖以往無飼養動物,但真有興趣 無摸牠們。而家訪除輔導外,亦開了一個環節是讓他與動物互動,此部份的時間 在之後的家訪中亦佔了不少時間,但雙方都樂意如此做。個案亦知道治療犬和治 療貓在中心內居住,以及本計劃有試工及寵物美容班。社工亦有表示可邀請個案 參加。

及後個案肯與社工同往中心探動物,不是動物探他,這開展個案來中心的第一步。隨後他主要參加了每月舉行的寵物美容班,因本班是旨在培養個案的參與和技能學習,所以是容許個案持續每月參加。經過這過程,個案開始更廣地接觸本中心內的其他社工及個案。他亦有或多或少的參加其他活動如狗狗集會、試工實習、互助小組等。本中心亦希望轉介他參加勞工處展翅青見計劃。

在試工實習中,社工刻意安排多一點照顧動物的工作予他。社工多安排他每朝早/晚帶治療犬外出大小便,此項恆常和必要的工作看似沒有特別,但社工賜予一個意義給個案,就是要他先發現此治療犬出街有甚麼留意事項,個案發現牠會撿食街上食物和紙巾,所以他要聚精會神拖著狗狗,一發現有食物便要遠離。社工以他帶此狗狗出街的成效作自我評分,個案能説出如何令自己加強控制狗狗的方法,從不同時段的實行,他評分由初時的7分增至8分,這進步顯示其感到自己的能力感增加。

另外,他亦獲得在寵物美容班導師認可,認為他有做事能力。此種情況與他在學電工所得的經驗不太相同。個案在出席中心的狗集會和寵物美容班都很穩定,很有責任感。

結果,他在展翅青見計劃中找一年的工作合約,至今穩定工作半年。

個案的改善

從其母親的來信中亦見個案的改善:

「阿榮最大的變化就是現在比較融入環境和狀況,不會除了打機和吃飯之外就不 再理會其他事物。

- 1)他雖不會主動説他現在的狀況,但相比以前,他現在有問有答(尤其與爸爸 溝通方面,總答上一兩句,不會不答話。
- 2)可能這點你都不知道,就是他會自己去買飯吃或自己到餐廳吃飯,以前若只他一個人吃飯他只會在家煮粉或要我買快餐加熱後吃(就算我給了錢他也只會在家找食物,現在去完中心後,他會在外吃了飯才回家)。
- 3) 阿榮對工作這一件事都抱正面的態度,會安排好自己的作息時間,依照需要返工的時間而決定玩電腦遊戲(返早就會早些睡,返晏就會遲些睡),沒有出現不想工作的情況。性格亦逐見開朗,現在放工回家都會和我聊一兩句,當然要他自動暢談自己每天的工作情況還是沒可能,但若閒談一兩句還是有的。|

並非每一個個案都能順利介入及完結,但阿榮能夠走出隱蔽,重投社會,真是為 他感到鼓舞!



工作員反省 一 結合動物 (輔助) 治療的輔導技巧初探

工作員嘗試應用動物元素,結合傳統輔導技巧協助本個案。(註:本文章只發表一些有效結合動物原素的輔導技巧,並不表示動物(輔助)治療技巧只有這些,另外,因本機構社工運用動物(輔助)治療藉個案管理模式協助隱青作社會功能的改善,所以所用的技巧傾向社會心理範疇(Psychosocial aspect),而這些技術亦有很強的影子是參考社工常用的介入技巧修改而成。)

本個案輔導中,共用了四個動物(輔助)治療的輔導技巧:自由遊戲、心錨、同步與引導(Pacing and leading)及量度問題(Scaling question)。

技巧名稱:自由遊戲

運用方法:將治療動物(犬或貓)帶到個案前,在社工介紹治療動物的基本相處方式後,讓個案和動物共處一室,作自由和安全的互動,當中可包括與動物玩耍或靜靜共處,社工在旁作隨時支援。

功效:此技術能創造一個場合讓個案在自主下享受親近動物的樂趣,個案可從觸 摸、説話(向動物)、觀賞中得到滿足。

應用例子:在個案到中心試工實習或個案輔導後,社工會經個案同意下刻意留下治療犬與個案共處。個案在實習時便可一面工作,一面偶爾與狗耍樂,作為散心。

技巧名稱:心錨

運用方法: N.L.P. 描述個人可因重遇某種視覺、聽覺或感覺,而勾起往日的某種情緒及思想,觸發起個人的心理狀態,這就是心錨。心錨可以分為視覺、聽覺和感覺的心錨。視覺心錨是眼睛觀看時所觸發的某種狀態(例如:舊照片、物品)。聽覺心錨是耳朵聽見聲音時所觸發的某種狀態(例如:音樂、聲音)。感覺心錨是身體接觸時所觸發的某種狀態(例如:衣服、氣味、動作)。

功效:設定「正面」的心錨,可幫助個人在需要的時候,隨時可有良好的心理狀態作為使用資源,面對困難。

應用例子:對於喜歡犬或貓的個案,大都很容易從視覺、聽覺和感覺接觸犬或貓而得到正面的支持。他們如果曾有這方面良好的經驗,當社工帶出治療動物與他們接觸時,他們多會展露舒暢開心的心情,社工只是藉此引起他們「似曾相識」的心理狀態。

技巧名稱:同步與引導 (Pacing and leading)

運用方法: N.L.P 提及同步(Pacing)能讓社工在輔導時更易與個案建立關係(Rapport)和溝通,引導(Leading)能讓社工在輔導時較易導引個案認同社工的提議。'Pacing' 和 'Leading' 混合使用可讓社工較易爭取與個案達至共同認同的見解。社工在運用 'Pacing' 時,先代入個案當時的狀態,以言語和非語言方式與個案同步,創造共同的感覺,再進入 'Leading' 能讓社工在輔導中了解個案。

功效:當社工能運用治療犬結合 'Pacing' 和 'leading' 此技術,社工較易在初期與個案建立良好關係,因狗狗的出現能做人類不能做出的動作,個案會遷就狗狗接觸人的方法,間接地亦肯聽從社工的邀請和指示,形成一個合作的關係。

應用例子:社工帶領治療犬與個案見面,隨著個案對狗狗的每個行動和心情作演繹,甚至向個案作出邀請。例如:「你正很好奇咁觀察狗狗」、「你好鍾意撫摸狗狗」、「你摸下摸下感到好輕鬆」、社工可提議「咁不如我哋一齊同狗狗坐低地下傾計」(個案多數會配合)。我們社工曾試過另一例子:「不如我講下發發(治療犬)的事比妳知呀(個案點頭)佢係被人遺棄架...好啦,咁妳又講吓妳嘅情況比我知...(個案配合回應)」

技巧名稱: 量度問題 (Scaling question)

運用方法:雖然有其他治療手法都有用排分數的方式做介入,但本機構運用的排分數式是依精要治療的意念,1-10分,1是代表最少,10是代表最多。個案可依其對社工詢問作個人主觀評分的演繹。

功效:排分數式可以看出個案對事情的自我評估,只要將此技術與動物(輔助) 治療的內容配合,便可引領個案留意自己給予的分數轉變所包含的意思。

應用例子:社工安排個案實習的其中一項內容是每朝早上帶治療犬外出大小便,此項恆常和必要的工作看似沒有特別,但社工賦予一個意義於其中,就是要個案先發現此治療犬出街有甚麼留意事項,個案發現牠會檢食街上食物和紙巾,所以他要聚精會神拖著狗狗,一發現有食物便要遠離。社工以他帶此狗狗出街的成效作自我評分,個案能説出如何令自己加強控制狗狗的方法,從不同時段的實行,他評分進步中感到自己的能力增加。

「向合適對象進行動物(輔助)治療可加快他/ 她進入合作關係,推行改善。」

黎立顯社工

動物(輔助)治療的能與不能

梁鳳兒女士



背景

佩珊(化名)被精神科醫生診斷患上思覺失調,2007年中五畢業後曾任幾份工作,但都只能工作短期,未能長久維持,之後即半隱蔽在家。佩珊 2011年於本中心任職工作實習,她獨特的外表、沉默寡言、常低下頭不與人對望的表現,在與社工傾談後,被發現成為「重拾動力」計劃個案。

佩珊成長中一直與家人關係不佳,與朋輩關係也不好,佩珊形容自己不懂與人相處。佩珊患上思覺失調後,更常覺得被針對、被不公平對待,其他人都是欺負她的。佩珊很看重及堅持個人的感受及看法,看事情非黑即白,但她的思想、對事情的看法也被限制於她的主觀感受,有時甚至脱離現實世界。

佩珊最初對動物不是太有興趣,也是接受「重拾動力」計劃服務後才喜愛上動物。 佩珊由最初接受服務至個案完結,有兩年半的時間。

問題、解決問題/介入焦點

佩珊主要的問題是人際相處的問題,這與她的精神健康互為影響。當佩珊與人 (包括家人、朋友、同事)相處不佳時,會影響她的情緒/精神健康;而當她不 願意接受精神科治療/服藥時,她感覺被針對、不公平的感覺也會較强,這時也 容易跌入自己的主觀世界或感受內,因而成為她與人相處、溝通的障礙。

佩珊與人相處的問題背後,其實是極需要與人建立關係裡的安全感。這見於當佩 珊看到朋友與其他人建立關係時,她極度害怕被遺棄,縱使沒有什麼客觀事實, 她也會很快跌入自己的主觀感受和想法,覺得友人會離她而去,並認定這是真實 的,繼而首先主動離開關係,於關係裡表現退縮,因而進一步讓佩珊感到其被遺 棄的想法得以實現,但其實只是「自圓其説」罷了。

佩珊與人的關係、情緒也直接影響她在工作上的表現,也是她未能維持工作的原因。在畢業後最初的幾份工作,也是因為與同事相處不來而主動辭職。漸漸地, 佩珊對工作,或説工作上的人際關係感害怕,亦慢慢失去工作的動機。故此,失 業後有約兩至三年的時間也時半隱蔽在家,沒有工作、甚少外出。

進展及終結時轉變

佩珊在中心完成一個月實習後,仍未能成功尋找工作,一年間也只是完成了兩份 實習。當時佩珊的情緒也不大穩定,但就不大願意接受精神科治療,與家庭也常 有爭吵。佩珊在參與「重拾動力」計劃後,開始參加中心的不同活動,除了動物 治療的活動外,還有參加人際支援小組及成長嚮導計劃,與人有更多的接觸,漸 漸走出半隱蔽的生活。2012年,佩珊被安排到動物診所任職十天的實習,之後 獲推薦於中心當一年的實習生。這些工作、實習的安排對佩珊來説相當重要,讓 她能理解工作的要求,並接受需跟現實配合。在一年的實習裡,佩珊面對工作、 朋友、家庭、情緒也有很大的起伏、但在社工及心理學家的動物(輔助)治療輔 導/輔導下,也完成了整年的實習,情緒及與人的關係也開始穩定,工作的動機 及對工作的認知也大大地提升。輔導除處理佩珊的情緒、感受外,另一焦點就是 與她進行理性討論,抗衡其偏執、主觀的想法,及讓她明白現實與她自己世界的 差別,並如何自我調整。經過一年的努力,佩珊獲成長嚮導的公司聘請,又成功 地工作了八個多月,現已獲聘於另一銷售公司工作。除了中間有兩三個月的空窗 期外,佩珊一直工作差不多兩年了,與其最初對工作的恐懼、感到自己無法與人 相處/工作,實在有很大進步。人際關係方面,佩珊也漸漸理解到與友人非要建 立綑綁的關係,在她與友人的關係裡,也可容納別人的存在,與其友人的關係開 始穩定下來。

動物角色

讓人感到被接納及安全

佩珊對人際關係、親密感的渴求成為動物(輔助)治療最好的介入點,治療動物給予人無條件的接納是基礎的治療元素。即使佩珊最初對動物不是感太大興趣、對動物也有輕微的鼻敏感,但與治療犬發發接觸後,就愛上了牠。佩珊表示有好幾次情緒很低落的時候,對著發發哭,她感受到牠是知道的,這情感的共通讓佩珊感到被安慰及接納,並補足了她從朋輩所缺乏的安全感。

促進治療關係

在介入的期間,因同事的離職,佩珊先後有三位社工跟進。在於案主對人際關係極敏感而言,可以推算接任社工與案主的工作關係會受到一定的挑戰。但由於在動物(輔助)治療個案的工作關係裡,除案主和治療師(即社工)外,還有治療動物(即治療犬發發)的存在。即治療犬發發一直在關係裡沒有離開案主,以致佩珊與接任的社工的關係能得以順利建立,可見動物(輔助)治療/治療動物能有效促進著社工與個案之間的治療關係。

建立正確的工作態度

除讓案主感到被接納,能讓她建立穩定的關係外,動物(輔助)治療還訓練案主對工作的看法。如前所述,佩珊對事情(包括工作上所面對的)很多的看法也較偏執,容易跟隨自己的喜好而選擇工作,面對被分派不喜歡的工作,就感到被不公平對待。但當佩珊被安排要負責較厭惡性的動物清潔工作(處理動物的大小便)時,雖然她有鼻敏感,但因著喜愛治療動物的原故,也接受了工作的安排,讓佩珊間接學習到自己也要配合工作的要求,不是單隨自己的喜好。動物(輔助)治療也可發生在案主的工作環境,佩珊在動物醫院及本中心工作時能與動物接觸,動物使她能較願意及容易適應、配合工作的要求,讓有時思想脫離現實的她能與現實接軌。

訓練自信

在佩珊完成成長嚮導公司的工作而又未找到工作的時候,社工邀請她參與動物(輔助)治療義工服務,帶同她所認識的治療犬發發,上門探訪心理社交呈現一定需要的獨居長者。佩現對長者及義工服務也不大感興趣,但基於訓練自己不要閒懶下來,故她當義工是工作,積極參與服務。雖説人際關係有所進步,但佩珊也不懂與陌生的長者溝通,治療犬發發成為她一大幫助。經過一整年的實習訓練,佩珊已成為一個熟練的領犬員(Handler),故佩珊能滿有自信地介紹發發,及指示長者如何跟發發接觸,自信心再進一步增强。

工作員反省

佩珊確是一個非常成功的動物(輔助)治療個案。在此個案中,動物的治療元素相當重要,但是否單純有動物就能處理案主在工作及人際的問題?答案當然不是!單純在輔導裡加入動物元素,不能自然解決案主的核心問題。社工及心理學家的輔導,不斷與案主的非理性想法對質,對患有思覺失調/對人缺乏安全感的案主,協助他們理解別人或世界的想法而言,尤其重要。另外,雖説「就業輔導」非隱蔽青年工作的焦點或終點,但一份符合案主需要的實習或工作,並在過程裡的支援及就業輔導,也成為個案成功非常重要的一個因素。故此,可以說,以動物(輔助)治療手法處理(對動物有興趣的)隱蔽青年的個案是關鍵但非唯一的成功因素,套用一句諺語:「動物不是萬能,但沒有動物就萬萬不能!」。

動物使人不再隱蔽

吳仲偉先生



背景

富城(化名)與父、母、姐姐同住。富城內地出生,小學來港定居之後,入讀本地學校,但中三後因成績跟不上而決定離校。富城很少主動與人溝通,就算跟他說話也是很細聲回應。除了是自信心不足外,也與他不流利的廣東話有關。離校之後,富城曾經經親戚介紹做冷氣學徒,但後來因覺得辛苦和常被上司責罵而決定放棄,並開始隱蔽在家,開始沒有目標的隱蔽生活。

問題(如何接觸)

富城沉迷打機,常因此而不返學,更將生活秩序打亂。無論上學、做兼職或暑假工作也不長久。離校之後,更多時間在家中打機,使他隱蔽在家及沒有和外界接觸。隨著富城的離校,學校社工亦逐漸淡出,於是將富城個案轉介至本中心專門提供隱蔽青年服務的「重拾動力」計劃。

經評估之後,發現富城在家隱蔽一年多,隱蔽期間,主要在家中上網打機,而且 沒有想過關於找工作的問題,由於富城學歷低、缺乏工作經驗,且缺乏自信心, 因此找工作的動機亦很低。

解決問題

富城學歷低、缺乏工作經驗,缺乏自信心,且找工作的動機低,使他缺乏人生目標及方向,逐漸步向隱蔽之路。社工希望透過動物(輔助)治療的介入,鼓勵富城與社會的接觸,培養個人的自信心、效能感,提升富城重投社會的動機,協助他找出個人目標及人生方向。找到個人目標及人生方向後,協助培養富城對個人的責任感及基本的工作態度,並擴闊社交人際網絡及改善人際溝通技巧,以達致個人成長的目標。

介入焦點 (接觸『重拾動力計劃』後)

富城經轉介加入「重拾動力」計劃。首先,社工希望透過動物(輔助)治療的介入,鼓勵富城與社會的接觸,以增加其外出的吸引性。轉介初期,富城比較被動,而且不願意到中心見面。後來從家訪得知富城平時雖然少與人溝通和接觸,但富城喜歡動物,而且有餵養倉鼠,於是社工建議富城嘗試到中心,與治療犬接觸,讓富城感受治療犬和社工給予的無條件關懷和接納。

經社工介紹下,富城認識治療犬發發。起初只是簡單的見面、傾計,後來安排他協助帶治療犬外出大小便。起初富城間中也有爽約、遲到的情況出現,需要社工去他家裡接他到中心。但經過多次見面之後,案主已可以自己乘車到中心探望治療犬,可見治療犬的介入有助富城與社會的連繫接觸增多,動物(輔助)治療有助催化社交互動、關係建立。

富城與社會連繫接觸增多之後,就開始培養富城的自信心、效能感,他於學校因學業成績未能跟得上,令他自信心低落,缺乏效能感。由於富城喜歡動物,故安排他照顧治療犬工作以提升其自信心及效能感。

由於中心逢星期六下午需要帶治療犬發發到觀塘動物醫院,社工便邀請富城參與 其中,起初他只是旁觀協助者,觀察職員帶治療犬發發的流程,並加以協助。參 與及觀察幾次之後,社工安排他負責帶治療犬發發去觀塘動物醫院,社工在旁協 助。由旁觀者到參與者到負責執行,角色的轉變讓富城提升效能感,原來自己可 以勝任該工作,從而重拾失去的自信心。 到富城能夠持續恆常地每星期到中心接治療犬發發到觀塘動物醫院,他已經由隱蔽在家的青年人變成與社會有連繫及接觸,富城亦見到自己過程的轉變。這時候,可以協助富城找出個人目標及人生方向,以提升他重投社會的動機。富城除了喜歡動物,也喜歡烹飪,當中最有興趣的是製作包餅。經過與社工傾談及鼓勵下,富城決心報讀由職業訓練局舉辦的現代學徒計劃基礎包餅製作課程。

雖然富城成功報讀了現代學徒計劃的基礎包餅製作課程,找到個人目標及人生方向,但由於需要到馬鞍山上課,對家住九龍灣的富城,實在是一個挑戰,協助培養富城對個人承擔的責任及基本的工作態度,成為另一任務。起初富城間中都有遲到或曾經想過放棄,但社工引用他過去半年持續到中心接治療犬發發到觀塘動物醫院的堅持、毅力嘗試給予富城啟發,鼓勵他完成課程。

終結時轉變

最終,富城於課程出席率達九成的情況下,完成由職業訓練局舉辦的現代學徒計劃基礎包餅製作課程。雖然課程主任表示其技術未達工作轉介的最低要求,但課程讓富城找到自己的目標和人生方向。富城於現代學徒計劃後再報讀僱員再培訓局舉辦的包餅製作員證書課程,於課程完結後經導師轉介至一間餅房製作工場工作。

工作員期望

社工期望富城能汲取於動物 (輔助)治療帶給他的正面經驗,能持續與社會聯繫,並找回他失去的動力,重新投入社會。以及汲取他帶治療犬發發到觀塘動物醫院時,於重投社會工作後,仍維持其自信心、責任心及良好的工作態度。另外,透過動物 (輔助)治療計劃內容,協助提升富城的自信心、擴闊社交人際網絡及改善人際溝通技巧,以達致個人成長的目標。

丁作昌反省

富城由一個隱蔽青年到願意走出家門,由欠缺人生目標及方向到找到合適、有興趣的課程就讀,由在家無所事事到現在有穩定工作重投社會。可見富城在這些方面的個人成長實在有顯著的進步,更見「重拾動力」計劃對青少年的幫助及成功。

阿甘的自由起飛故事

周煐傑先生

背景

案主阿甘(化名)自2011年重讀了一次中三後,之後便因身體情況而沒再上學, 學校社工於2013年5月轉介案主到本中心,由工作員嘗試開始跟進與了解。案 主一直有接受公立醫院的臨床心理治療服務,另外,也有不定期接受私人的心理 治療(自然療法),但案主媽媽表示效果不太顯注。

接觸阿甘時,已有大半年沒上學,副校長期一直有跟進此事。但案主常常承諾會回校見副校長去傾談此事,但之後卻一直沒有出現。媽媽十分擔心此事,希望可以一步一步協助案主重返校園。案主曾表示自己星期六也會返教會及逢星期四找治療師,但他一直沒有出席與副校長的會面。最終,他都沒有返回原校。

阿甘給工作員的感覺是軟弱無力,説話很微弱,完全不像一位青少年應有的朝氣。案主曾提過自己不知何故,常常軟弱無力及常感到疲倦,工作員開始時用了兩個介入方向:1)動物(輔助)治療介入 2)了解案主的心理困擾。工作員都用了不少時間與案主交流、了解他軟弱無力的原因,鼓勵他要抱著積極態度去面對自己及要重拾青少年應有的陽光氣息。

動物引領案主到中心

在計劃期間,工作員成功與案主建立關係後,工作員曾帶同中心治療犬發發到他家,與案主一起玩樂。案主重現笑容及很主動地與發發玩樂,也學習一些指示給發發做,從短短卅分鐘與狗狗的相聚,我們都發現阿甘似乎放下了面具,重拾真我,做回青少年的模樣。工作員得知阿甘喜歡動物,成為動物(輔助)治療的介入點。由於家裡環境不大而一直擱置養狗的想法,故工作員不時在電話及書信中提及發發,指出發發也向案主表達關心,及想邀請他多到中心見面及照顧他。自此,工作員便利用動物,不定期去邀請案主到中心參加與動物有關的活動,指出動物世界可為他提供自由及愉快的環境,慢慢增加他離家的動力及培養他對動物的好奇心及責任感;並藉說發發及其他動物需要他去餵及陪他們玩,他們已成為朋友了,朋友也需要常常見面的。

之後,案主成功參加了幾次寵物美容班、工作實習及動物探訪活動,在最後一次的動物探訪活動裡,他表現主動與狗狗玩耍及做了一些給狗狗訓練的示範。在動物(輔助)治療中,我們見到在動物促進了工作員與案主建立關係,成功引領案主離開家裡,到中心進行活動,及引領他進入新的階段。

在傳統輔導過程中,工作員也與案主進入深入了解,關心他現在想法,與家人的關係及自己如何計劃將來等等,案主一邊摸著治療貓,一邊表示因媽媽過去管得自己太嚴,令到自己無所適從,但自己根本不覺得自己有病,只是媽媽一直覺得自己有病而已。他不返學,某程度上在回應媽媽過份操控的行為,而他接受心理醫生治療及食藥也在滿足大家覺得自己的病人角色,其實他不太接受當時的治療。



他坦言自己在中心見到動物時的確放鬆了很多,他可以重新拿回自由的權力,在動物中得到愉快及力量感。動物(輔助)治療介入成功令工作員與案主建立到正面互信的工作關係,更讓案主可以由媽媽一直認為的病人角色,轉化到一個可以重奪自主權的青少年,案主曾表示自己:「與貓狗相處,我忘掉了自己有病與否,我可以照顧他們及令他們開心,我對自己多了自信。」

計劃期間,工作員上門家訪、與案主一起放狗、寄鼓勵信、不定期的電話及個案輔導及生日時送禮物等等,也能成功加強工作員與案主的正面關係,令他更有動力離家,自行到中心參與活動,增加他對中心歸屬感及令他重拾力量感。 這些也令案主一步一步重拾信心,讓案主媽媽慢慢放心案主是有能力的,減少對案主的擔心而引發出的操控感,換來是給與阿甘更多的信任及支持。

轉變契機

工作員與案主家長多次溝通後,發覺阿甘可回到舊校重讀中三的機會已很微。因當時案主已於中心參加了半年的「重拾動力」計劃,不定期的動物集會、工作實習及與動物的相處已令案主多了與社區及人接觸,他的自信心也恢復了不少,故工作員大膽建議安排案主出國留學的可能性。

再者,新的環境可給與案主重新開始的機會,根據案主過往的表現及逐步改變的情況,可見案主其實欠缺一個獨立照顧自己生活的機會,給與他信任及支持是十分重要的。案主父母聽後表示同意及覺得他離開家庭,到外國展開一段獨立的新生活,也可能是一條新出路。

最後,案主父母成功安排案主到美國一間中學,重新展開讀書生涯,案主就讀與香港相若的中三課程。案主於 2014 年 1 月中便到了美國生活時,他表現十分興奮及很渴望自己到美國的獨立生活。

最後一節與案主面談時,工作員也與案主交談有關他到美國時所遇到的困難與挑戰,也鼓勵他不要放棄及要向前進步,不要走回頭路。在當地,可以找社工或心理學家交流,但最後都要依賴自己的自覺性,案主表示——明白。

最後,連案主的媽媽也很開心,見到案主的轉變及比之前更有動力去參加不同活動,對於他在美國的獨立生活,都抱積極的心態去看待,也明白即使案主暫時不適應生活,如真的不返學,也會給他盡量留在那兒一年,更會找尋那邊專家社工去協助他過渡,務必令他真正獨立成長。案主現在到美國生活已接近大半年了,天天返學,也曾於2014年9月回港到中心探工作員,及義務協助進行寵物美容班。案主表示自己在那邊生活很愉快又適應,因為那邊課程很輕鬆,沒有太多功課,加上自己的英文水平一直不差,與同學溝通也沒有太大問題,他也表示自己也會跟親人返教會,對他的支援也很強,根本不需要尋求社工、專家的協助。所以,他到美國的讀書生活於他而言,是一個生命傳奇的故事。動物令他一步一步踏出,跳出自己封閉的生活,找到與平凡故事不一樣的例外。

工作員反省/個案成功的關鍵

- 1) 動物在案主身上,擔當了一個引領的角色,協助他找到自己一直最想要但被 壓抑很久的自由、愉快及力量感;
- 2) 動物(輔助)治療成功令工作員與案主建立正面又良好的關係是十分重要的, 讓他可坦承説出自己的想法及到中心進行一連串活動;
- 3) 案主總有萬千的藉口不能即時改變,工作員要給與雙倍的理解及耐性,相信他未來一定做到,當然有時工作員可在案主面前表示失望但不會絕望,繼續與案主溝通如何打敗一切的心魔;
- 4) 當案主明顯轉變時,便要稱讚他及帶出他轉變的核心位置,推動他可於下一次繼續突破,如做到某些要求,便可得到他最喜歡的東西,也與他共同檢討要做到一件事要具備什麼及鼓勵他好好記著;
- 5) 在整個個案跟進裡,作為工作員要好好利用案主身邊的網絡,了解他在家隱蔽的原因及情緒變化。最初,與案主的媽媽緊密的溝通與聯繫是十分重要的,令媽媽減輕自己對案主的緊張與焦慮,令工作員可以進行下一步的步署與策略。往後,必須啟動他的人際支援網絡,與工作員配合,一起幫他,今次個案的最好人際網絡是媽媽、爸爸、社工、遠方親戚及教會。

轉變 — 從動物開始

楊侗珠サナ



背景

阿言(化名)生於小康之家,與媽媽及爸爸同住,是家中獨子。父母一直對案主 學業有很高的要求,他也順利入讀第一組別中學。案主就讀中四時,在學校生活 不如意,除讀書追不上外,也交不到知心朋友,加上案主有完美主義傾向,情緒 感到十分困擾。

經學校轉介,精神科醫生評估診斷案主患上躁鬱症,需定期接受藥物治療。阿言自從患上躁鬱症後,晚上難以入睡,情緒高低起伏不定,更常與家人發生爭執。 及後,阿言認為自己因病而追不上學業要求,主動向學校提出重讀。但重讀後, 阿言在與陌生同學交往上感到壓力,於整個上學期沒有上學,留在家中多打機上網,拒絕外出,開始在家隱蔽,故學校社工轉介阿言參加「重拾動力」計劃。

問題、介入焦點與進展

初接觸阿言,他表現得防衛性強、對人很有戒心、不習慣向人透露內心所想、性格凡事要求完美,這跟阿言的背景有關。基於阿言父母對他的要求很高,而且從小開始,阿言認為父母不聆聽他內心需要,只會要求他有好成績,因此令阿言失去對大人的信任,拒絕真心對話。此外,他認為同輩朋友的思想很幼稚,與他「不同層次」。他曾説:「如朋友不能做到深入了解,不如不結交好了。」。所以在學校,他選擇孤立自己。當工作員帶他到動物房與治療犬及治療貓見面時,工作員觀察到他會放下防衛,流露出真摯的內心世界,表現對小動物的愛心,並且會跟牠們談天,同時,阿言也會很主動問工作員有關治療犬及治療貓的背景及情況。於是,阿言開始願意與工作員談天,甚至談心。阿言開始透露自己寂寞的內心,以及希望交朋友的渴望。

工作員從動物入手,先後介紹阿言參加中心寵物美容的實習及狗集會活動。起初,他只專注與動物的互動。工作員導引他觀察動物之間的友誼如何發生,他發現動物的交往是很自然的,牠們放在同一個地方時,就會走在一起。工作員進而由此推動他開始藉動物的話題與身邊其他的青少年自然地交流。此外,工作員員經常幫助他在與朋輩相處上調節期望,檢討朋友是否一定建立到深交才交往,以兩人交往,到漸漸地多了採取主動,在群體中再沒有孤立自己。改變的出現,在對應的一個大學,有些明友可以深入可以不可以做「普通朋友」,因而在交友的態度有明顯改變,在人群中不可對閉學不可以做「普通朋友」,因而在交友的態度有明顯改變,在人群中不再對閉學不可以做「普通朋友」,因而在交友的態度有明顯改變,在人群中不可以是可以不可以做「普通朋友」,「普通朋友」是可以一同食飯及做功課(以有動物的場景中,開放自己去嘗試,並放下完美的要求,在課堂的時間與其他的學清通,自此有些「普通朋友」,「普通朋友」是可以一同食飯及做功課(以前學清通,自此有些「普通朋友」,「普通朋友」是可以一同食飯及做功課(以前學清通,自此有些「普通朋友」,「普通朋友」是可以一同食飯及做功課(以前學清通,自此有些「普通朋友」,「普通朋友」是可以一同食飯及做功課(以前學清通,自此有些「普通朋友」,「一個大學校,但對他來說已是一大突破,因為完成短期課程,有助建立他重回正規學校之信心。

另一方面,阿言的父母對他的要求很高,影響他內在對自己的要求也很高,很怕失敗,很多時因為怕失敗而不敢嘗試,同時也影響情緒。工作員從照顧動物開始幫助他自己調節對自己的要求。阿言家裡養了一隻貓,工作員發現他對貓的照顧十分緊張,所有都要在自己控制之內,也要求自己照顧貓兒達到完美標準,當發現有少許瑕疵的時候,他會索性將照顧貓兒的責任推卸給家人。例如,他認為貓兒不能在嘈雜的環境生活,所以他接受不到家裡出現任何噪音,家人將電視稍為開大聲一點,他會反應過敏,繼而發脾氣。他這特性也反映在學業上,他覺得自己在那一科不達要求時,就不敢去嘗試,甚至因此而拒絕返學。工作員就從照顧貓兒開始讓他學習調節。工作員在輔導中幫助他接納自己的不完美,也接納有些

事情未必是他絕對可以控制。同時,工作員邀請他來中心照顧中心的治療貓,阿言從中體會到中心的治療貓雖然眼睛盲了(既是不完美,也不能控制),但卻有很強的生命力,牠的不完美反而讓牠的生命更令人敬佩,這讓阿言得到了很大的啟發,情緒也因此而改善。工作員鼓勵他將此經驗應用在對自己的要求上,特別在他正面對的學業中。

累積的轉變

阿言經過半年與動物接觸,工作員輔導及上短期課程的實踐,他的行動力提升了。由過往常因為凡事要求完美,導致情緒困擾及影響睡眠,到現在懂得調節對自己及他人的期望,開始開展了一些朋友的關係。加上精神科藥物的幫助,他可以正常入睡,情緒也較正面。此外,阿言的父母積極的配合,在親子關係上由很多要求,轉變為很多的支持,這對阿言來說都是很大的助力。

阿言開始有信心返回正規學校讀書,主動聯絡母校,母校也願意給他機會重返校園。個案完結時,阿言已開學,並且逐漸適應學校的生活,他表示:「以前學校測驗,如果那一科是自己沒有把握的,前幾日會開始唔想返學,到測驗當天一定缺席。但現在,我接受到凡事無完美,自己有些科目興趣不大,當然成績會差一點,所以我會應考。」可見阿言在自我要求上已放下過高的要求。同時,阿言開始認識了一些新朋友,課餘時會與這些朋友出街,不再只是在家中打機。工作員問他為何有此突破,阿言笑説:「我不想孤獨終老嘛!如果對別人要求低一些可以為我帶來友誼,我願意!」開展了這些朋友關係,讓阿言進一步走出封閉的生活。家人及工作員都喜見他能展開人生新一頁。

工作員反省

在個案中,動物擔當了很重要的角色,不單幫助工作員與阿言關係的建立,更在整個個案中成為阿言改變的動力,幫助他得到啟發,從而「轉念」。對於阿言來說,追求完美為他人生帶來很多的痛苦及折磨。因此,在個案中,工作員重點運用動物幫助他突破要求完美這思想框框,學懂放下完美的執著,繼而從隱蔽中走出來,重返校園。

案主阿言屬於善於思考,也重視意念啟發的年青人,對於這類的服務對象,工作員不適合用指導及說教的方式作介入的手法。反之,工作員提供一個特定與動物接觸的場景,例如安排阿言照顧盲了的治療貓,讓他體會不完美中的生命力。同時,也借動物界自然發生的現象,幫助案主應用在人類上。例如指出「動物需要朋友」,「動物的友誼發生得很自然」等概念,帶動阿言作自身的反省,讓阿言突破自我,得到針對性的幫助。

此外,阿言喜愛動物,也願意為牠們的福祉而出力及改變。因此,個案介入中動物的出現,幫助阿言願意與他人連繫。例如:在中心的寵物美容中,阿言除了聽從導師的指導外,也需要與其他學員合力幫助狗狗沖洗及美容,當中溝通及協調是必須要的,才能讓狗狗有好的服務,這就能造就了愛護動物的阿言與人溝通的機會與動力。工作員在這些實習場景後作介入,跟阿言進行檢討,這是不能忽略且很最重要環節,不單緊貼他的步伐,也能更有效地幫助他逐步的改變。

總括而言,在動物治療的介入中,工作員運用動物與案主建立關係,再從分析案主的需要及訂立介入策略後,選擇適合動物介入的環節去幫助案主從中學習,加上每次的檢討,個案就能有事半功倍的進展。

告別灰暗途,重回大學路

翻嘉欣小姐

背景

阿月(化名)今年廿五歲,性格較內向、被動,經心理學家評估為患有亞氏保加症、社交焦慮症及抑鬱焦慮症。阿月自出生以來父母對他都不太理會,於缺乏 父母關愛的環境下,阿月只希望能於學業上取得好成績及結交能夠與他分享的朋 友。

於學業上,阿月很努力且成績優異,最後入讀了香港知名的大學。可是,學系對於溝通技巧的要求很高,由於阿月性格內向,他於學業上屢遇挫折。社交方面,患有亞氏保加症的他不擅社交,令他覺得認識朋友是一件很困難的事,繼而放棄,對人漸漸產生不安及反感。

由於學業上的挫折及社交困難,加上缺乏家人的支援,阿月更於大學二年級輟學,及後隱閉於家中兩年多,期間於家中打機,日夜顛倒。後來阿月由精神健康 綜合社區中心轉介到本中心參加「重拾動力」計劃,至今約半年。



表徵問題

患有亞氏保加症的阿月不善與人溝通,面對著學業及社交上的負面經驗及缺乏支援的情況下,阿月漸漸產生抑鬱焦慮的情緒,對於社交生活失去信心,面對人時會感到不安及厭惡,所以不願接觸人群,常躲於家中。

介入目標

- 1. 增加案主外出次數,讓案主適應與人相處的環境,減低案主於面對人時的焦 慮不安及增加案主與人溝通的信心
- 2. 透過寵物美容班及日常生活小目標,讓案主認同自己的能力,增加案主自信心

以動物作為關係建立的橋樑

工作員在介入初期,重點都放在與阿月建立良好的關係上,以鼓勵當事人自由地談及過往的經驗及感受。經過幾次電話對話後,工作員成功邀請阿月前來中心面談。於見面當天,他需要由精神健康綜合社區中心的一位學員陪同下才有多點安全感外出。首次見阿月,工作員發現他面部表情繃緊,與工作員的眼神接觸很少,而且較沉默寡言。於是工作員以治療犬發發作媒介,以減低他面談的抗拒。工作員與阿月進入動物房時,發發走上前。阿月對於發發的舉動感到驚喜,並主動輕撫牠的頭,表情亦較自然放鬆。見到阿月對治療犬頗感興趣,工作員再鼓勵他嘗試以食物作獎賞,帶發發作簡單指令,結果發發亦聽從指令完成動作,阿月表示想不到初次見面發發已會聆聽他。面對有社交焦慮及隱蔽在家兩年的阿月,工作員是次面談目的主要是希望營造輕鬆的面談氣氛及作初步了解案主,以動物作為關係建立的橋樑,而阿月於整個面談後表示願意再來中心。

以動物增加外出吸引性

工作員除了面談輔導,亦有邀請阿月參加與動物有關的班組,如:寵物美容班。初時阿月雖然願意學習,但因阿月不適應有其他學員一同上堂而有放棄念頭。工作員後來告訴阿月工作員及導師對他的觀察:願意學習及細心等,以肯定他的工作,鼓勵阿月衝破心中的恐懼再去嘗試。而更重要的是工作員與阿月一同回顧他照顧動物及為動物做寵物美容的情景,以鼓勵阿月繼續參加及外出。阿月沉默了一會後表示自己為動物完成美容其實感到有意義及喜悦,亦希望可繼續協助動物,所以最後答應工作員願意再去嘗試、克服困難,可見動物有一定的吸引性去鼓勵案主外出。

以動物增加社交互動

阿月由最初面對人群的恐懼,到及後狗主、青年、社工以動物作為話題與他談話,他坦然自己也難以相信會與其他人有話題,而且這增加了他與人談話的信心,面對人時不再像從前般拘謹。踏出與人溝通的第一步後,阿月更願意參加其他人際溝通小組,如:有動物元素的團隊合作遊戲小組,體驗與人相處的互動,所以動物可讓阿月獲取與人相處溝通的正面經驗,使他可慢慢與社會重新接軌。

個案轉變

阿月現時外出次數的增加令他適應了外出,他表示對人的反感及恐懼少了。阿月亦會主動聯絡以前較熟悉而有養動物的朋友,為中心狗活動設計活動主題,因此多了與朋友聯絡及聚會的時間,增加與人溝通的信心。而社交焦慮的減輕,使阿月可再進一步重回社會。他重拾人生目標及動力,如:報讀遙距大學課程並已獲取錄:嘗試堅持自己的興趣,設計桌上遊戲。而工作員將來亦鼓勵阿月與朋友外出及參加活動/兼職,以建立一個長久的支援網。

工作員反思

於處理個案時,建立良好的關係是很重要,因阿月後來表示他其實見了好幾個社工,但若他感到沒興趣及很不安便不會再見他們,所以工作員於起初會營造輕鬆的面談氣氛,以減輕他的不安感,鼓勵他繼續前來中心。及後於建立了良好關係後,工作員可作更順利的介入。而於運用動物(輔助)治療上,工作員需要清楚了解治療貓犬的特徵及性格,才可準確地加以運用,如:若治療犬比較愛吃,工作員便可利用這點讓案主與治療犬作簡易指令訓練,讓案主能從訓練獲得正面經驗,讓工作員的介入更為順利。

蛻變的蝴蝶

葉飛雲小姐

如果沒有動物的元素,小玲(化名)根本不會到中心參加活動,更不會有機會與 人面對面接觸及相處,亦沒有機會發掘到自己的潛能。在家隱閉的小玲就像一條 毛毛蟲在繭綢時,靜待社工及動物的介入,就像陽光及雨水,終令小玲能破繭而 出,成為一隻色彩繽紛的花蝴蝶。



個案背景

小玲是一位 18 歲年青人,中二起開始沒有上學,最初因不想上體育課而請假,及後養成習慣,漸漸不願再回學校。工作員剛認識小玲時她只有 16 歲,表示沒有想過重返校園,雖然曾報讀一些咖啡沖調的職業培訓課程,但都因年紀小及學歷低而沒有獲聘,於是沒有希望及動力再找工作。她過了兩年多「宅女」生活,終日留在家中無所事事,每天只懂吃、睡及打機。因自小父母離異,小玲一家只靠爸爸的贍養費過活,深知家庭環境差的她一方面其實希望能盡快投入社會工作,賺取金錢幫補家人及養活自己;但另一方面,因為小玲年紀小及學歷低,對找工作沒有信心,亦沒有多餘的金錢離家外出,故中二起就留在家中成為一位沒有讀書、沒有目標及沒有工作的「隱青」。

社工的介入

由於小玲家中有養狗,故在轉介下參加了「重拾動力」計劃,計劃目的是透過與動物的接觸,讓參加者在個人、社交或就業方面能有所改善。工作員首先利用動物與小玲建立關係,知道她對動物有興趣後鼓勵她到中心參加狗活動及寵物美容訓練課程,在過程中工作員觀察到小玲對動物非常有耐性及責任感,每次的寵物美容班都很留心導師的指示及能完成基本的寵物美容程序。工作員得知小玲希望找工作,而她在寵物美容班的學習表現不錯,故推薦她參加展翅青見為期一年的ACTION S5計劃,安排她在中心擔任助理活動工作員一職,負責在中心照顧治療犬發發及兩隻治療貓。

動物的角色

在整個介入過程中,動物都扮演著重要的角色。小玲表示若不是有動物的活動, 她根本沒有興趣參加。習慣在網上世界以打字方式溝通的她,認為若參加小組與 一班不熟悉的人面對面坐在一起,沒有話題會顯得非常尷尬及不自在。相反,參 加有動物參與的小組,很多時就能避開這些尷尬時刻,只要摸摸狗、圍著牠、大 家將視線及焦點放在狗狗身上,不但能自然地衍生話題,看到牠們可愛的動作及 表情時,更能輕易地引起大家的笑聲,氣氛輕鬆愉快。雖然家有養狗,但未到中 心參加寵物美容班前,小玲未嘗試過幫她的小狗洗澡。在參加了寵物美容班後, 小玲能接觸更多不同種類的狗,認為每隻狗都很可愛的她,每次都會盡心盡力為 來到的狗狗沖涼扮靚,亦會為自己完成的狗狗拍照留念。小玲亦漸漸與導師及其 他參加者打成一片,有講有笑。

如果沒有動物的元素,小玲根本不會到中心參加活動,更不會有機會與人面對面接觸及相處,亦沒有機會發掘到自己的潛能。在家隱閉的小玲就像一條毛毛蟲在 繭綢時,社工及動物的介入,就像陽光及雨水,終令小玲能破繭而出,成為一隻 色彩繽紛的花蝴蝶。

破繭而出- 飛出精彩人生

過去一年,小玲在中心擔任助理活動工作員一職令她在個人、社交及就業效能感 方面都得到很大的收獲。 初時,小玲表示只懂照顧動物相關的工作,對於在中心接聽電話、會員的查詢、送文件等需面對人的工作顯得抗拒,認為自己表達能力不佳,害怕別人聽不明白,自己亦未必做到。在社工及其他同事的鼓勵及幫助下,小玲漸漸不再抗拒,願意接受新工作,遇到不明白地方會主動提問,她也非常細心,時時能指出工作時錯漏的地方,亦很盡責地完成工作,故中心的同事都很放心交帶她做事。漸漸地,小玲的工作表現獲得中心肯定,中心亦會派她接受傳媒的訪問,曾表示不擅詞令的她,現時即使面對不同的媒體訪問亦能處變不驚及對答自如。

另外,往日在家中時,小玲多透過網上聊天工具與網友打字聊天,她表示在網上世界打字能快速回應別人,但在真實世界中要與人面對面溝通其實是很沒有信心。由於多以打字方式表達自己,對於要用語言、表情、態度面對面等方式表達自己其實是很不同的。小玲表示在中心工作,多了機會與社會接觸及與人相處,從中感受到同事的幫助及人的關心,是在網上世界找不到的。小玲現時不再害怕與陌生人接觸,認為自己日後也能有能力與同事上司相處融洽。

於中心成功就業的經驗令小玲對自己更有自信,她希望將來能找一份與寵物相關的工作。ActionS5 計劃接近完滿結束,小玲面對將來不再迷惘,因她不再是待在繭內的毛毛蟲,她已完成蜕變,成為了一隻色彩繽紛的花蝴蝶。雖然面對花花世界仍然有很多未知數,但在此祝願小玲能愈飛愈高,飛出屬於自己的精彩人生。

「重抬動力—動物治療學師計劃」 發佈宣傳及傳媒報導

動物(輔助)治療基礎證書

本會在 2014 年 1 月舉辦了第一屆「動物(輔助)治療基礎證書」課程,獲「香港學術及職業資歷評審局」評審為「資歷架構第一級別課程」,為全港首個政府認可的動物(輔助)治療課程。課程教導學員有關動物(輔助)治療知識、怎樣組織動物(輔助)治療的活動,並附有實習課,旨在讓學員認識動物(輔助)治療的基本概念和方法,及教導學員辨識何為符合動物(輔助)治療的要求。受惠於動物(輔助)治療的隱蔽青年更在課程分享他們受助的經歷,以其成功經驗教導參與課程的學員。當日的分享更獲數個媒體報導。



獲邀於各團體舉行分享會

「重拾動力」計劃得到業界認同,累獲邀請到大專院校及機構分享以動物(輔助)治療服務隱蔽青年的前線經驗,其中包括錫安社會服務處、廣州市恒福社會服務社家庭綜合服務中心、中山市橫欄鎮志願者協會、香港中文大學社會工作學系、香港社會服務聯會「優質社會服務實踐與研究會議暨卓越實踐在社福分享會2013」、救世軍教育及就業服務「如何協助失業、低動機人士邁向就業」分享會、社會福利署屯門區青少年服務實踐交流會2014。











中山社工探訪







社會福利署分享



新聞發布會

計劃已於 2015 年 1 月 2 日舉行「隱青新趨勢—動物治療助隱青成效新聞發布會」。香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系助理教授黃蔚澄博士分享計劃研究成果,香港動物治療基金會主席范德穎精神科專科醫生分享動物如何協助隱蔽青年。







傳媒報導

計劃自推出以來,一直受傳媒廣泛報導。可見傳媒對動物(輔助)治療介入方法甚感興趣,以及社會對隱蔽青年問題深表關注。

報章報導

日期	標題	媒體
7/1/2015	食屋企兼臭脾氣 家人難頂隱青	晴報
3/1/2015	「動物治療」助隱青啟心扉見效	文匯報
3/1/2015	動物治療 助 200 隱青投社會	東方日報
3/1/2015	Therapy Dogs Lead Young To Overcome Social Fears	South China Morning Post
3/1/2015	動物醫生助隱青重投社會	星島日報
3/1/2015	動物送愛助隱青重生	新報
3/1/2015	寵物打開心扉 隱青就業升	香港經濟日報
3/1/2015	隱青學寵物美容重拾自信	蘋果日報

















日期	標題	媒體
9/2014	隱青拾自信 走出陰霾	寵物閒情
8/2014	動物助隱青重投社會	香港社會服務聯會《社情》
6/2014	隱青危機爆發 家長支援助脱困	星島親子王
1/5/2014	心靈治療犬: 助隱青走出黑暗	蘋果日報
13/1/2014	狗狗助隱青衝出愁城	蘋果日報
1/2014	貓狗助人 建立自我	貓犬通信
10/11/2013	學照顧狗仔 隱青重投社會	明報
10/11/2013	提升自信心 重投入社會 「動物治療」助隱青就業	成報
10/11/2013	「動物治療」助隱青重拾動力	文匯報
30/3/2013	Inside the caged world of Hong Kong's 'hidden youths'	South China Morning Post
27/1/2013	Dogs help bedroom hermits regain confidence	South China Morning Post
1/2013	協助隱青新法 動物治療成效發布會	寵藝 PetArte

















傳媒訪問

日期	媒體節目
2/1/2015	香港電台第1台「晨早新聞天地」
2/1/2015	亞洲電視新聞
2/1/2015	蘋果動新聞
7/10/2014	香港電台「生活存關愛」
24/7/2014	有線電視新聞台「小事大意義」
21/6/2014	無線電視「激優一族」
16/4/2014	DBC 數碼電台數碼四台校園電台「非常班房 」
30/4/2014	蘋果動新聞
26/12/2013	商業電台雷霆 881 新聞專輯「醫療解密」



















「重拾動力—動物治療青年計劃」

成效研究



「**重拾動力**— **動物治療青年計劃**」 成效研究(報告摘要)

香港大學社會工作及社會行政學系 研究團隊

目的:評估「重拾動力─ 動物治療青年計劃」計劃在增進 15-25 歲隱蔽青年的 自尊感、社交焦慮及對自己就業能力的成效。

方法:研究採用量化及質性方法搜集數據。量化方面,透過前後測問卷設計,使用了三個量表,評估接受服務人士在社會心理健康方面的改變。量表分別為:Rosenberg 自尊感量表(RSES)、社交焦慮量表(IAS)及就業效能感量表(PESS)。此外,對曾經參與動物治療項目的服務使用者,研究採用了一個辨識服務使用者對治療犬/探訪犬隻觀感的量度工具(PBS)。質性方面,研究對三十名服務使用者進行深入訪談,識辨他/她們在輔導及介入過程中的改變。

結果:研究發現,服務使用者在自尊感、社交焦慮和就業效能感方面都有改善。 完成計劃後,就業比率由 6.8% 上升至 54.1%,9.1% 的服務使用者回學校就讀。 研究亦發現動物治療項目為一個有效的誘因,令部份原本未必會接受服務的人士 參與計劃。和沒有參與動物治療項目的服務使用者相比,有參與動物治療項目的 年青人在自尊感及就業效能感方面有較大改善。此外,計劃亦能有效令服務使用 者主動改變自己的人際關係及增加他/她們對將來的盼望。

結論:計劃能有效地改善樣本隱蔽青年的自專感、社交焦慮及就業效能感。完成計劃之後,投入就業市場的服務使用者上升了八倍,重返校園的亦有 9.1%。此外,研究結果亦顯示早期介入對改善就業效能感及社交焦慮有幫助。對於有精神健康問題的服務使用者,則可能需要加強專業的臨床介入。

'Regain Momentum' Animal-Assisted Therapy for Youth Programme

Programme Evaluation Report

Research Team of The Department of Social Work and Social Administration The University of Hong Kong

Abstract

Aim: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the efficacy of the 'Regain Momentum' programme, and, specifically, its AAT component, on improving the self-esteem, social anxiety and perceived employability of withdrawn youth aged 15-25 years old.

Method: Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used. For quantitative data collection, a pre-post evaluation study design was used to assess the changes in the psychosocial well-being of the participated service recipients. Three measurement tools were used to assess the psychological well-being changes: the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES), the Interaction Anxiousness Scale (IAS), and the Perceived Employability Self-efficacy Scale (PESS). In addition, for those who have received the AAT component of the prorgamme, a Pet Bonding Scale (PBS) was used to identify how they perceived the role of the therapy animal after completion of the programme. For qualitative data collection, in-depth interviews were conducted with 30 participants to investigate the engagement, intervention processes and the outcomes of the programme.

Findings: In general, positive changes were found in all the three assessed aspects. After the completion of the intervention, the percentage of employment had increased from 6.8% to 54.5%; and 9.1% have went back to school. It was also found that the AAT component was successful in engaging a group of individuals who might otherwise be non-engaged if there were no AAT. When compared with the changes of those who had and had not received the AAT component, more positive changes were found among the self-esteem and perceived employability of those who received the AAT component. It was also found that the programme was able to initiate changes in the interpersonal relationship and to induce a sense of hope for the participants.

Conclusion: The study showed that the programme was effective in improving the self-esteem, social anxiety and perceived employability of this group of socially withdrawn youth. The number of cases having gainful employment after the intervention was eight times higher and 9.1% of the cases have gone back to study. Findings also suggested the need for early intervention in terms of improving their self-efficacy in employability and in reducing their social anxiety. For those with mental health problems on top of their social withdrawal, a higher level of clinical input might be needed.

Evaluation Report

Background

- 1. The "Regain Momentum" Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) for Youth Programme was a 2-year programme launched by the Chinese Evangelical Zion Church in January 2013 through December 2014 funded by the Fu Tak lam Foundation. Learning from the experiences of the pilot project which conducted in 2010-2012¹, this programme was a refined attempt by the agency to employ a AAT approach to help young people who are socially withdrawn.
- 2. The phenomenon of profound social withdrawal among young people in Hong Kong was first noted in 2002. In a recent study on the prevalence of social withdrawal behaviours among young people in Hong Kong, it was estimated that about 16,900 41,000 young people aged 12-29 may exhibit problematic social withdrawal behaviour for more than 6 months².
- 3. The programme aimed at helping young people aged 15-25 who have manifested social withdrawal behaviours to re-engage with their social ties by strengthening their self-esteem, building up their social confidence and encouraging their positive work attitude. A multi-disciplinary team comprising of psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, social workers and volunteered dog-assisted activity providers collaborated in providing clinical assessment, individual and group counselling, and AAT for the young people who were appeared to be withdrawn.
- 4. In this programme, social withdrawn youths were defined as young people aged 15-25 years old who have been continuously or intermittently disengaged from their internal/external social ties (e.g. society, family). Their interpersonal relationships were weak, appeared to be detached and tended to fear or avoid making contact / communicate with others. For example, some would stay in bed for long periods of time, hide themselves in a corner, reversing days and nights, watching TV / using the computer / listening to music on his own³.
- 5. The objectives of the programmes were:
 - i) to enhance the self-esteem of the socially withdrawn young people;
 - ii) to reduce their anxieties in social interaction; and
 - iii) to build up their job-searching abilities and employability perception.

¹ 中華錫安傳道會 (2012). 「重拾動力 - 動物治療學師計劃」動物治療經驗分享集及成效研究報告.

² Ibid.

Ng, H. (June, 2011). An Introduction to the "Regain Momentum" Animal-Assisted Therapy Mentorship Program. Briefing session on 'Animal-assisted Therapy' and "Regain Momentum" Animal-Assisted Therapy Mentorship Program. Chinese Evangelical Zion Church Social Service Division.

 A case management model was used to formulate and follow up on an individually tailored intervention plan according to the needs, readiness and the preferences of the service recipients. The individual tailored intervention plan might include one or more of the following service components.

	Component	Key objective(s)
1	Inquiry through hotline and referral	Identify and recruit prospective participants
2	Referral to clinical psychologist for further clinical assessment and treatment when required	
3	Individual counseling	Build up self-confidence and personal growth and development
4	AAT (individual counseling and small group activities)	Using therapy dog as an adjunct in individual counselling and group activities
5	Employment training and practice (pet grooming)	Nurture basic work attitudes, work skills training; and to help identifying their strengths and weaknesses at work
6	Support group	Build up social confidence and help to establish social support network
7	Voluntary work with pet grooming skills	Increase self-efficacy and employability perception and job-searching abilities

7. It is noteworthy that the current programme was revised based on the preliminary findings from the 2010-2012 pilot project in order to optimize the benefits for the service recipients under limited resources. More specifically, this revised programme included a clearer differentiation of social withdrawal; and included an exclusion mechanism of youths whose social withdrawal problems were very likely a manifestation of severe mental health problems. In addition, to maximize the attractiveness of the therapy animal(s) in the programme and to optimize their ability to engage the non-engaged youths, the center had adopted one dog and two cats to station on-site and to provide immediate AAT when require.

Literature Review

- 8. The phenomenon of profound social withdrawal among young people, also known as hikikomori, was first described in Japan and have subsequently been identified in many developed countries such as Spain, Italy and Korea⁴. In Hong Kong, this phenomenon was first noted by social service providers in mid-2002. Young people who were assessed as withdrawn and needing intervention are characterized by disengagement in social ties, e.g. not attending school/training nor holding a job, lack of meaningful social relations; and have low self-image^{5,6}.
- 9. In a recent study on the prevalence of social withdrawal behaviours among young people in Hong Kong conducted by members of the evaluation team, it was estimated that about 16,900 - 41,000 young people in Hong Kong aged 12-29 may exhibit problematic social withdrawal behaviour for more than 6 months⁷.
- 10. Due to the nature of social withdrawal, many of this potentially at-risk group of young people were reluctant to receive traditional type of social services. Hence, the inclusion of an AAT component served as an alternative engagement and intervention approach for those who might be difficult to be engaged.
- 11. Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) can be loosely defined as 'the use of trained animals in facilitating patients' progress towards therapeutic goals' (Parshall, 2003)⁸. Companion animals, in particular, dogs, was found to have the capacity to act as social lubricant, a stimulant for conversation and was often perceived as source of social support and can fulfill the innate human need for acceptance⁹.
- 12. Animals are thought to be uniquely helpful in providing feedback on social behaivour, due to their unambiguous, 'honest', and immediate responses. As a living interactive tool, animals can help to create opportunities for the enhancement of self-efficacy (e.g. by incorporating animal training and care-taking into the AAT protocol), and through the structure of the intervention programme, facilitate the mastery of new skills and see both themselves and the world in a new way¹⁰.

⁴ Teo, A.R. (2013). Social isolation associated with depression: A case report of hikikimori. International journal of social psychiatry, 59(4) 339-341.

Teo, A.R. (2010). A new form of social withdrawal in Japan: a review of Hikikomori. *International journal of social psychiatry*, 56(178), pp.178-185.

Wong, V. & Ying, W. (2006). Social withdrawal of young people in Hong Kong: s social exclusion perspective. *The Hong Kong journal of social work*, 40(1/2), pp.61-92.

⁸ Parshall, D.P. (2003). Research and Reflection: Animal-Assisted Therapy in Mental Health Settings. Counselling and Values; Oct 2003; 48, 1; ProQuest Education Journals.

Urichuk, L. & Anderson (2003). Improving Mental Health Through Animal-Assisted Therapy. Alberta: The Chimo Project.

Fine, A.H. (Ed.), Handbook on animal-assisted therapy: theoretical foundations and guidelines for practice (3rd ed.) San Diego: Elsevier

13. Melson (2004) summarized the beneficial roles animals play in the lives of adolescents as: serving as attachment figure (functioning as a secure base), providers of social support, and outlets of nurturance (potentially instrumental in boosting the self-confidence and self-esteem)¹¹. It was suggested that AAT was effective in helping to alleviate the problems of social isolation, anxiety, and self-esteem by the direct and indirect effects of the companion animal in reacting positively to positive stimuli, and for their ability to act as social lubricant and to provide unconditional positive regard and acceptance¹². Hence, AAT was trialed to be used as an engagement and intervention model to help social withdrawn young people in Hong Kong.

Melson, G.F. (2004). Animals in the lives of adolescents: a biocentric perspective on development. http://research.vet.upenn.edu/Portals/36/media/Melson.ppt

Adams, N.. (2009). Animal assisted interventions for adolescents with emotional and behavioural problems.

Objectives and Methodology

- 14. The objectives of the study were:
 - to evaluate the impacts of the programme on the psychosocial wellbeing of the service recipients;
 - ii. to examine the role played by the therapy animals in the intervention process; and
 - iii. to investigate the engagement and intervention process of the programme.

Quantitative data collection

- 15. A quantitative approach using pre-post evaluation study design was used in this study. A structured questionnaire including three major components was used at the beginning and immediately after the programme.
- 16. Pretest and posttest questionnaires were constructed to assess the psychosocial well-being, as well as the experiences and attitude towards companion animals of the clients before and after the intervention. The areas measured and instruments used were:
 - i) Self-esteem Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg, 1965)¹³;
 - ii) Social interaction anxiety The Interaction Anxiousness Scale (IAS) (Leary, 1983)¹⁴;
 - iii) Self-efficacy on employment The Perceived Employability Self-efficacy Scale (PESS) (Houser & Oda, 1990)¹⁵;
 - iv) History of companion animal ownership (self-constructed); and
 - v) Attitude towards dogs (Lakestani et al, 2011)¹⁶.
- 17. For cases who have participated in the AAT component, a Pet Bonding Scale (Meadows, 2003)¹⁷ was used to explore their attitude towards the therapy animal and their perceived roles.

Qualitative data collection

18. The qualitative data collection aimed at investigating the engagement, intervention processes and the outcomes of the programme. Thirty participants, reflecting a maximum variation sample with a potential range in age (aged 14 to 29), gender (22 males) and social withdrawal stages (9 at engagement stage (A), 8 at intervention stage (B) and 13 at post-intervention stage (C)), were interviewed to share their experience in the programme between January and April in 2014. The lengths of the interviews ranged from 30 to 60 minutes. The maximum variation sampling was used to maximize the diversity to the research question.

¹³ Rosenberg, M.(1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

¹⁴ Leary, M. R.. (2013). Interaction Anxiousness Scale. Measurement Instrument Database for the Social Science. Retrieved from www.midss.ie

Daniels, J., D'Andrea, M. & Gaughen, K.J.S. (1998). Testing the validity and reliability of the Perceived Employability Scale (PES) among a culturally diverse population. Journal of employment counseling: Sept. 1998: 35, 3.

Lakestani, N, Donaldson, M.L., Verga, M. & Waran, N. (2011). Attitudes of children and adults to dogs in Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. Journal of Veterinary Behaviour (2011) 6, 121-129.

Meadows, J. (2003). Center for the study of animal wellness: Pet Bonding Scale, CSAWPBS. In Anderson, D.C. (Eds.), Assessing the human—animal bond: a compendium of actual measures. Indiana, United States: Purdue University Press.

Findings of the Quantitative Study

19. A total of 94 young people consented to participate in the evaluation study and completed the pre-test questionnaire, and 68 service recipients completed the post-test. The profiles of the 94 individuals were presented in Appendix I. For purpose of programme evaluation, only findings of the 68 individuals who completed both the pre and post questionnaires were included in the data analysis.

Profiles of the 68 cases at the intake

20. The ratio of male to female was approximately 5.6:4.4 (Table 1). Although the percentage of male cases in this sample was lower as compared with a 2006 and 2012 study on NGO service recipients in Hong Kong ^{18,19}, it was similar to a 2014 prevalence study in Hong Kong (male: female = 5.8:4.2)²⁰. This may reflect that in this sample, the gender ratio was a more accurate representation of the population at large. A higher proportion of female cases may implied a higher level of awareness of this problem among female clients and thus, their likelihood to be identified and referred to service providers was higher.

Table 1: Respondents by gender

Gender	f	%
Male	38	55.9
Female	30	44.1
Total	68	100

21. The age range of the respondents was a bit wider than the original target of 15-25 although they still occupied a large majority of the total number of cases (73.5%). Around 16% were under or equal to 14 years old and 10.3% were older than 25 years old (Table 2). If we compare this set of data with the age distribution in the pilot project, the percentage of those under 19 years old was much higher in the current sample (66.2% vs 46.9%). In addition, the percentage of those under 15 years old was also higher in this sample (16.2% vs 10.4%). It was reported that for cases beyond the target age ranged, they were admitted because of a genuine need and there was no alternative services for them.

Wong, V & Ying, W. (2006). 'Social withdrawal of young people in Hong Kong: A social exclusion perspective', *The Hong Kong Journal of Social Work*, 40(1/2):61-92.

¹⁹ 中華錫安傳道會 (2012). 「重拾動力 - 動物治療學師計劃」動物治療經驗分享集及成效研究報告.

Wong, P.W.C. et al. (2014). The prevalence and correlates of severe social withdrawal (hikikomori) in Hong Kong: A cross-sectional telephone-based survey study. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*. Online version July 24, 2014.

Table 2: Respondents by age

Age range	f	%
≤14	11	16.2
15-19	34	50.0
20-24	16	23.5
25-29	6	8.8
≥30	1	1.5
Total	68	100

22. In terms of educational level, most of them were either at secondary school or have attained secondary school education (Table 3). Among the respondents, 39.7% were still at school and 60.3% have completed their schooling or have withdrawn from their study (Table 4).

Table 3: Respondents by educational level

Highest educational level attained	f	%
Junior secondary	45	66.2
Senior secondary	16	23.5
Post-secondary	1	1.5
College	6	8.8
Total	68	100.0

Table 4: Respondents by current educational status

Current educational status	f	%
Full-time studying	21	30.9
Part-time studying / distance learning	6	8.8
Completed school / withdrawn	41	60.3
Total	68	100.0

23. Among those who were not studying and were eligible to participate in the labour force, a majority were unemployed (88.6%) (Table 5). For the respondents reported to be unable to work due to health problem, the reason stated included physical injury and lack of volition.

Table 5: Respondents by employment status

Employment status	f	%
Part-time employment ²¹	3	6.8
Unemployed	39	88.6
Not able to work due to health problem	2	4.5
Total	44	100.0

²¹ Works less than 35 hours per week.

24. In terms of their family situation, 98.4% of the respondents were living with their family. Half of them were living with both their parents, 43.6% were from single parent family and 4.8% were living with their relative(s) other than their parents (Table 6).

Table 6: Respondents by family situation

Family situation	f	%
Both parents	31	50.0
Single parent (father)	5	8.1
Single parent (mother)	22	35.5
Only with relatives	3	4.8
Other	1	1.6
Total	62	100.0

^{*}missing data = 6 cases

Presenting problems

- 25. Respondents were asked about their social withdrawal behaviours. The most common manifestation of social withdrawal behaviour was 'staying at home all day almost every day' (57.4%). In addition, 36.7% of the respondents reported that they would feel embarrassed in social situations; 32.4% would not leave home / room even to go to school or to work and 30.8% would avoid contacting with others (Table 7).
- 26. Although 57.4% of the cases strongly agreed / agreed that they would stay at home all day almost everything, only around 1/3 did not actually leave their home/ room for school or work. And around half stated that they would not avoid contacting with others and would leave their home to go to school or work. It seemed that this group of service recipients were still able to maintain a certain level of social ties.

Table 7: Respondents by social withdrawal behaviours

Social withdrawal behaviours		Neutral	Strongly disagree/ disagree
		%	%
Staying at home all day almost everyday	57.4	20.6	22.1
Avoid contacting with others	30.8	17.6	51.5
Would not leave home/room to go to school or to work	32.4	16.2	51.5
Would feel embarrass in social situations	36.7	35.3	27.9

27. In terms of duration of problem, a majority of the respondents have manifested one or more of these social withdrawal behaviour for over one year (57.3%). Nearly a quarter of them (23.5%) had experienced this problem for over 3 years (Table 8).

Table 8: Respondents by duration of social withdrawal behaviours

Duration of social withdrawal behaviours	f	%
Less than 3 months	13	19.1
≥ 3 months to < 6 months	8	11.8
≥ 6 months to < 1 year	8	11.8
≥ 1 year to < 2 years	16	23.5
≥ 2 year to < 3 years	7	10.3
≥ 3 year	16	23.5
Total	68	100.0

28. Although youth with mental health problems were not the primary target for this programme, due to limited alternative services, some of the cases with mild mental health problems who were very eager to join the programme were not excluded. A total of 14 cases (20.6%) were identified as having mental health problems and depression / depressive symptoms were the majority (42.9%) (Table 9).

Table 9: Respondents by mental health problem

Mental health problem	f	%
Depression / depressive symptoms	6	42.9
Early psychosis	2	14.3
General anxiety disorder	2	14.3
Social anxiety disorder	1	7.1
Asperger syndrome	1	7.1
Hyperactivity	1	7.1
Mild mental disability	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Experience with companion animal(s)

29. Table 10 illustrated the experience of the respondents with companion animals. Most of them were currently or previously living with (an) companion animal(s) (73.5%). The most common types of companion animals they had experienced with were fish and tortoise. Less than a quarter had experience with dog(s) (Table 11).

Table 10: Respondents by experience with companion animal(s)

Experience with companion animal(s)	f	%
Current experience	26	38.2
Previous experience	24	35.3
No experience	16	23.5
Missing	2	2.9
Total	68	100.0

Table 11: Respondents by type of companion animal(s)

Type of companion animal(s)	f	%
Fish	36	52.9
Tortoise	28	41.2
Hamster	24	35.3
Dog	18	26.5
Cat	10	14.7
Bird	10	14.7
Rabbit	8	11.8
Other	4	5.9
Missing	6	8.8

Primary outcome measures

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

- 30. The RSES is a widely used instrument to measure the sense of self-worth. It consists of 10 items regarding both positive and negative feelings about the self. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with the corresponding statement. Score ranges from 0-30, a higher score indicates higher self-esteem and the cutoff point is 15, i.e. individuals scoring less than 15 is considered low in self-esteem²².
- 31. Table 12 illustrated the impact of the programme using paired-samples t-test. The RSES scores increased from 14.0 to 17.6 (p < 0.001). If we take the mean score of 15 as the norm, this group of respondents had changed from a score below the norm to the normal range after participated in the programme.

²² Self report measures for love and compassion research: self-esteem. Fetzer Institute. http://fetzer.org/sites/default/files/images/stories/pdf/selfmeasures/Self_Measures_for_Self-Esteem_ROSENBERG_SELF-ESTEEM.pdf

Table 12: Respondents by type of companion animal(s)

	Ме	ean	Std. De	eviation	95% conf	fidence level
	pre	post	pre	post	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
RSES	14.0	17.6	4.5	3.8	-6.236	0.000*

^{*}p < 0.001

Interaction Anxiousness Scale (IAS)

- 32. The IAS is a 15-item self-report measure to assess the dispositional social anxiety of an individual. The items relate to subjective feeling of anxiety and are answered on a five-point Likert scale. Scare scores ranged from 15 to 75, a higher score indicates a higher level of social anxiety. On a sample of over 1000 students in three universities in the United States, the mean on the scale was 38.9. ²³
- 33. As shown in Table 13, the mean score of the respondents (46.6) was substantially higher than that of the sample of university students (38.9) mentioned above. At the end of the intervention, the mean score was lowered from 46.6 to 45.0, indicating a lower level of subjective social anxiety but no statistical significance was found.

Table 13: Respondents by change in IAS scores

	Mean		Std. Deviation		95% confidence level	
	pre	post	pre	post	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
IAS	46.6	45.0	10.2	7.8	1.613	0.111

Perceived Employability Self-efficacy Scale (PESS)

- 34. The PESS is a 14-item self-report test designed to measure an individual's beliefs about their ability to successfully deal with situations and act in ways that facilitate their career development. A five-point Likert scale was used to indicate the extent of their beliefs in the accomplishing job-related tasks. Score ranges from 15-75, a higher score indicates a stronger belief in their ability to accomplish those tasks.
- 35. Table 14 reported the results of the change in score before and after the intervention. The mean score had increased from 46.8 to 52.0 (p < 0.001).

Robinson, J.R., Shaver, P.R., Wrightsman, L.S. (Eds) (1991). Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes. Academic Press Limited. UK: London. https://books.google.com.hk/books?id=uOtFBQAAQBAJ&pg=PA168&lpg=PA168&dq=Interaction+Anxiousness+Scale&source=bl&ots=rh9hW15t43&sig=OnK5w3x362BQ8ZNpjREWWuccwjE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=g5ufVLKWOKHCmwXG5YKADw&ved=OCFMQ6AEwBw#v=onepage&q=Interaction%20Anxiousness%20Scale&f=false

Table 14: Respondents by change in PESS scores

	Mean		Std. Deviation		95% confidence level	
	pre	post	pre	post	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
PESS	46.8	52.0	10.5	9.4	-4.129	0.000*

^{*}p < 0.001

Comparisons between those with and without mental health problems

36. Among the respondents, 14 respondents reported to have suffering from mental health problems at intake (Table 9). When the outcome measures were analyzed and compared between those with and without mental health problems, it was found that positive changes were found in both subgroups in all the three scales. However, statistical significant changes were only found in both the RSES and PESS scale for those with no mental health problems; while for those with mental health problem, it was only significant for the change in RSES (Table 15) but not PESS. That is to say, it seems that the programme was efficacious in increasing the self-esteem of social withdrawn young people with and without mental health problems; however, it was only efficacious in enhancing the perceived employability of those without metal health problems.

Table 15: Respondents by manifestation of mental health problem by change in scores of different scales

		Mean		SD		95% confidence level	
	pre	post	diff.	pre	post	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
RSES							
No mental health prob.	14.3	17.4	3.1	4.5	3.9	-5.335	0.000*
With mental health prob.	12.9	18.2	5.3	4.3	3.9	-3.322	0.006**
IAS							
No mental health prob.	45.6	44.4	-1.2	9.7	7.0	1.019	0.313
With mental health prob.	50.6	47.4	-3.2	11.4	10.5	1.822	0.092
PESS							
No mental health prob.	47.5	52.2	4.7	10.2	9.4	-3.737	0.000*
With mental health prob.	43.9	51.6	7.7	11.5	9.6	-1.921	0.077

p < 0.001, p < 0.01

Comparisons between groups with different durations of social withdrawal

- 37. Outcomes of the three scales were further analyzed by the duration of social withdrawal. Table 16 illustrated that there were statistical significant positive changes in all the subgroups across the RSES and PESS. Higher positive changes in self-esteem and perceived employability were found among those who manifested social withdrawal problems for 3 months to less than 1 year. In terms of their interaction anxiety, the greatest positive changes were found among those who had the problem less than 3 months, albeit the changes were not statistically significant.
- 38. It was interesting to note that, on further analysis, in terms of their self-esteem, the longer the duration of their problem, the more significant was the changes. Similar pattern was also found in perceived employability, the changes were significant when the duration of the problem was between 3 months to less than 3 years. However, for perceived employability, if the problem had lasted for more than 3 years, the impact of the intervention was not statistically significant.

Table 16: Respondents by duration problems by change in scores of different scales

	Mean		S	D	95% confi	dence level	
	pre	post	diff.	pre	post	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
RSES							
Less than 3 months	15.1	18.0	2.9	3.8	3.1	-2.629	0.022**
≥ 3 months to < 1 yr	13.1	17.3	4.2	4.8	4.2	-3.218	0.006**
≥ 1 year to < 3 years	13.1	17.0	3.9	4.9	4.1	-3.105	0.005**
≥ 3 year	15.2	18.4	3.2	3.8	3.8	-4.468	0.000*
IAS							
Less than 3 months	45.2	42.8	-2.4	8.6	7.1	0.834	0.421
≥ 3 months to < 1 yr	46.4	44.6	-1.8	9.2	7.5	1.315	0.208
≥ 1 year to < 3 years	47.9	45.9	-2	11.8	7.7	1.002	0.327
≥ 3 year	46.1	45.6	-0.5	10.4	9.2	0.126	0.901
PESS							
Less than 3 months	47.9	52.3	4.4	12.2	6.2	-1.428	0.179
≥ 3 months to < 1 yr	44.8	52.4	7.6	8.5	7.1	-2.761	0.015**
≥ 1 year to < 3 years	45.2	50.9	5.7	9.4	9.3	-2.640	0.015**
≥ 3 year	50.1	53.2	3.1	12.4	13.5	-1.191	0.252

Less than 3 months, n=13; \geq 3 months to < 1 yr, n=16; \geq 1 year to < 3 years, n=23; \geq 3 year, n=16

p < 0.001, p < 0.01

Education and Employment status

39. Table 17 and 18 illustrated the education and employment status of the respondents before and after the intervention. At the end of the intervention, 51.4% of the respondents were at school either full-time or part-time. As compared with their education status before the intervention, there was an increase of 11.8% of the respondents going back to school (Table 17).

Table 17: Respondents by educational status

Current advantional status	P	re	Post		
Current educational status	f	%	f	%	
Full-time studying	21	30.9	26	38.2	
Part-time studying / distance learning	6	8.8	9	13.2	
Completed school / withdrawn	41	60.3	33	48.5	
Total	68	100.0	68	100.0	

40. In terms of their employment status, at the beginning of the programme, only 6.8% of those who were not at school and eligible to be in the labour force were in part-time employment. After the intervention, 38.6% were in full-time employment and 15.9% were working part-time; 9.1% went back to school (Table 18).

Table 18: Respondents by employment status

Employment status	P	re	Post		
Employment status	f	%	f	%	
Full-time Employment	0	0	17	38.6	
Part-time employment ²⁴	3	6.8	7	15.9	
Unemployed	39	88.6	15	34.1	
Unable to work due to health problem	2	4.5	1	2.3	
Back to school			4	9.1	
Total	44	100.0	44	100.0	

²⁴ Works less than 35 hours per week.

Comparisons between those received and did not receive the AAT component

- 41. To explore if there were any difference in impact on respondents who have participated in AAT components, respondents were divided into AAT and non-AAT groups. Amount the 68 respondents, 51 (75%) have reported to have participated in one or more of the AAT components. Among them, 6 cases have only participated once in AAT-related activities. Agency staff reported that for these cases, the session was used to explore their response to the therapy animal; and eventually, they decided not to participate in the AAT components but wished to remain in the programme. These 6 cases were counted as non-AAT participants.
- 42. Table 19 reported results on changes in scores by receiving AAT component in the programme. It was found that for those who have participated in the AAT components, the impact appeared to be more significant. Both the self-esteem and the perceived employability had significant impact while for the non-AAT group, significant result was only found in the RSES.

Table 19: Respondents by scores of different scales by AAT participation

			Mean		S	D	95% confid	dence level
		pre	post	diff.	pre	post	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
RSES	yes=45	14.4	17.7	3.3	4.5	4.4	-4.519	0.000*
KSES	no=23	13.0	17.4	4.4	4.4	2.5	-4.404	0.000*
14.0	yes=45	46.0	44.2	-1.8	10.9	8.5	1.307	0.198
IAS	no=23	47.8	46.5	-1.3	8.6	6.2	0.949	0.353
DESS	yes=45	47.3	53.3	6	11.7	10.4	-3.700	0.001**
PESS	no=23	45.8	49.7	3.9	7.8	6.5	-1.866	0.075

p < 0.001, p < 0.01

Attitude towards dogs

43. In terms of participants' attitude towards dogs, the Attitude towards dogs scale (Lakestani et al, 2011) was used. The mean score ranges from 1 to 3, a higher score indicates a more positive attitudes towards dogs. The mean score before the intervention was 2.5. As compared with the mean scores of university students in Barcelona (2.2), Milan (2.3)²⁵ and Edinburgh (2.3), this group of programme participants had relatively more positive attitude. This might be due to the fact that the group participants were self-selected and they would only join the problem if they have positive inclination toward dog(s). Mean score at the end of the intervention remained the same, i.e. 2.5. This might implied that the respondents were already having a relatively positive attitude towards dogs and the intervention did not have much impact on their views about dogs.

Lakestani, N, Donaldson, M.L., Verga, M. & Waran, N. (2011). Attitudes of children and adults to dogs in Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. Journal of Veterinary Behaviour (2011) 6, 121-129.

44. Respondents were also asked if they would join the programme if there were no AAT component. Before the intervention, 14 cases stated that they would definitely / maybe not join the programme and at the post-test, there were still 10 cases who claimed that they would definitely/maybe not join the programme without the AAT. This has reinforced findings from the pilot project that for some difficult to engage clients, AAT is a viable alternative intervention model to traditional social service models.

Role of the therapy dog / visiting dogs

- 45. Among respondents who have participated in AAT component, a Pet Bonding Scale (PBS) was used to assess their perceived role of the therapy / visiting dogs which was conceptualized into: unconditional acceptance from the animal, feelings of reciprocity in the visit and positive feelings / attachment to the animal. A Likert Scale of 1 to 5 were used with 1=more often true to 5=more often false. A lower mean score indicates a more positive attitude.
- 46. The four statements ranked highest in respondents' perception of the role of the therapy dog were: 'The visiting dogs/therapy dog makes me feel happy'; 'The visiting dogs/therapy dog accepts me just the way I am.'; 'The visiting dogs/therapy dog make me feel better'; and 'The visiting dogs/therapy dog are (not) boring.' The subscale of unconditional acceptance has the lowest mean score (2.6) and was perceived by the respondents as the most prominent role of the therapy dog(s). This was followed by the subscale of inducement of positive feelings / attaching (2.7) and reciprocity (2.9)(Table 20).

Table 20: Mean score of Pet Bonding Scale

Pet Bonding Scale	Mean
Unconditional acceptance	
The visiting dogs/therapy dog likes me 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬喜歡我。	2.5
The visiting dogs/therapy dog is always glad to see me. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬見到我,總是很高興的樣子。	2.5
The visiting dogs/therapy dog prefers me to others. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬對我特別好。	2.7
The visiting dogs/therapy dog has become my friend. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬和我已成為朋友。	2.7
The visiting dogs/therapy dog doesn't judge me. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬不會批判我。	2.6
The visiting dogs/therapy dog accepts me just the way I am. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬無條件地接納我。	2.4
Subscale score	2.6
Reciprocity	
l talk to the visiting dogs/therapy dog. 我有對來探訪的犬隻或治療犬説話。	2.6
l confide in the visiting dogs/therapy dog. 我有對來探訪的犬隻或治療犬傾吐心事。	3.1
The visiting dogs/therapy dog understands what I say. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬明白我的説話。	3.0
The visiting dogs/therapy dog knows when I feel bad 若我不開心,來探訪的犬隻或治療犬是知道的。	3.0
The visiting dogs/therapy dog knows when I feel happy. 若我開心,來探訪的犬隻或治療犬是知道的。	2.7
The visiting dogs/therapy dog tries to comfort me. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬會安慰我。	2.8
Subscale score	2.9
Positive feelings / attachment	
I look forward to getting up in the morning on days when I will see the visiting dogs/therapy dog. 有犬隻或治療犬來探訪的日子,我都會充滿盼望,早上很快便會起床。	3.0
l tell others about the visiting dogs/therapy dog. 我會告訴別人關於來探訪的犬隻或治療犬的事。	3.1
I would like to have the visiting dogs/therapy dog come to my home. 我希望來探訪的犬隻或治療犬也可以到我家中。	3.0
I will remember the visiting dogs/therapy dog after the programme. 活動完結之後,我仍會記著來探訪的犬隻或治療犬。	2.6

Pet Bonding Scale	Mean
Positive feelings / attachment	
The visiting dogs/therapy dog make me feel better 大隻探訪或治療犬活動令我心情較好。	2.4
The visiting dogs/therapy dog are (not) boring. 犬隻探訪或治療犬活動 (不會) 令人感到沉悶。(recoded)	2.4
I feel attached to the visiting dogs/therapy dog. 我覺得對來探訪的犬隻或治療犬有強烈的感情。	2.8
The visiting dogs/therapy dog give me energy. 大隻探訪或治療犬活動令我更有活力。	2.8
I miss the visiting dogs/therapy dog between visits 我會記掛著來探訪的犬隻或治療犬。	2.5
I look forward to the visiting dogs/therapy dog sessions. 我期待犬隻探訪或治療犬活動。	2.5
The visiting dogs/therapy dog makes me feel happy. 大隻探訪或治療犬活動令我感到愉快。	2.3
I make the visiting dogs/therapy dog feel happy. 我令來探訪的犬隻或治療犬快樂。	2.6
The visiting dogs/therapy dog takes my mind off my troubles. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬令我忘掉煩惱。	2.6
The visiting dogs/therapy dog helps me feel secure. 來探訪的犬隻或治療犬令我有安全感。	2.5
Subscale score	2.7

Highest four statements most strongly agreed by the participants

Findings of the Qualitative Study

47. The following themes were identified from the in-depth interviews:

The strengths of social workers in the programme

48. Apart from being "difficult-to-approach", youths with social withdrawal problems were also reluctant to trust others and had reservations in receiving help. In this regard, the challenges faced by social workers in this programme in engagement and provision of service were higher as compared with programmes for other youth populations. It was found that social workers' attitude, persistence and insight in working with socially withdrawn youths were crucial; especially in the engagement process, in building up rapport with this group of socially withdrawn youths who tend not to open themselves to the outside world.

Attitude

49. The attitude of social workers could affect the therapeutic alliance with socially withdrawn youths. Previous studies have highlighted that socially withdrawn youths were sensitive to others' emotions and intentions. Also, some participants stated that they could feel whether the social workers were genuine in the helping process. Showing genuine care for socially withdrawn youths was an important first step for social workers to gain trust from this group of target. According to youth A1, social worker 1 was able to show his / her dedication in helping this "invisible" group of youth²⁶.

Persistence

50. The social workers' persistence was important to trigger socially withdrawn youths' reflections and subsequent acceptance of service. Since a characteristic of social withdrawal is avoidant behavior which inhibits help-seeking, it is not easy to successfully engage socially withdrawn youths at the first attempt. With the spirit of "never give up", social worker 1 kept calling and talking to youth C5 although he always refused to listen at the beginning. And the advice from social worker 1 remained in youth C5's mind, and he eventually decided to take a first step to change²⁷.

Youth A1:"起碼 [social worker 1] 黎嗰時…因為可能我本身對人講嘢啲真假有時會聽得清楚啲,所以就更加敏感呢啲方面…起碼 [social worker 1] 佢黎個時 feel 到佢係真心諗住幫我咁樣,所以無乜特別問題咯"

Youth C5:"佢第一次講我就話「唔好講廢話啦。」第二次再講就話「你好煩呀!」第三次再講,[social worker 1] 就話「我唔會再煩你架啦!如果你有時夜晚無野做可以攝高個枕頭諗下,我今日同你講過啲野呀。」跟住有時我係屋企無野做,咁會慢慢諗下,[social worker 1] 講過啲咩,跟住自己思考下,[social worker 1] 講得啱唔啱呀。咁咪試下跟 [social worker 1] 所講既,試試得唔得先,如果唔得咪算數咯。跟住都 OK 嘅,跟住咪慢慢跟住 [social worker 1] 講乜,我咪做乜咯"

Insight

51. Many socially withdrawn youths were experiencing different life problems at the time of intervention. In the interviews, participants often recalled questions raised by the social workers, and they described these as very beneficial for self-reflection. Although it would be difficult to verify the accuracy of their memory as social workers were not involved in the interviews, their perceptions of the interaction showed that the questions raised were important to the participants. Youth C2 worried about his future and family. Social worker 2 brought up the participant's concerns and encouraged him to confront the problems instead of escape from them²⁸.

From social withdrawal to joining the program

- 52. Socially withdrawn youth may suffer from different psychological difficulties which make the youth confused and felt inhibited to move forward. Some participants told us that the confusion affected their normal functioning so they would just stay at home. For instance, the confusion made youth C10 secluded himself and avoid social interaction although he wanted to interact with others²⁹.
- 53. Another interviewee, youth A1, was confused during the social withdrawal period and he stated that he thought a lot about different philosophical issues, for example, the meaning of work, which could not be addressed easily. He thought he could only decide his future direction after understanding the meaning of work³⁰. The social worker's understanding was described by the interviewee as able to facilitate the engagement process and encouraged self-reflection³¹.
- 54. Social workers in the program were able to initiate this self-reflection process of socially withdrawn youth (e.g., youth C5 and C2) by persistently encouraging them and providing insight. When socially withdrawn youths were willing to open up themselves, social workers could provide them with help and opportunities to reconnect to the outside world. Youth A1 showed that he embraced the new opportunities in the program after prolonged social withdrawal³².

- ²⁸ Youth C2: "[social worker 2] 話「你而家先得十幾歲,你咁樣甘心架啦?」 [social worker 2] 話「你將來仲有幾十年要過,同埋你屋企人已經算係上左年紀啦,咁佢地始終都係陪唔到你終老,你係唔係真係想佢地帶住啲遺憾去離開呢個世界呢?」「你逃避都逃避左咁耐啦,點解你仲係要逃避呢?就算你逃避都只係逃避到一時,避唔到一世咯。」跟住我就開始覺得「咦,有啲道理喎。」"
- Youth C10: "個情況令我感到迷茫,呢個係迷茫階段,嗰時可能有需要同人接觸,但自己可能迷茫,迷失緊或者自己唔想出黎"
- 30 Youth A1: "無讀個課程之後有啲迷茫,諗左好多野,係屋企諗…就停係度,唔知向邊一方面發展…訓覺個時就會自然反反覆覆去諗起呢啲問題"
- 31 Youth B6: "會突然間問自己,點解你會有咁既心態,覺得呢個咁既形式落去,會否開心同埋有咩意義,當問完自己呢個問題,跟住之後就會開始醒,真係醒,唔明自己點解會覺得咁樣"
- Youth A1: "可能就係時間過得耐,而且我自己都會想去變好啲,所以就更加會把握呢次機會,如果早啲嘅話就可能未必…有少少抗拒,唔係咁敢。停左半年其實已經想…可能就係耐左,起碼都想接受樣新嘅嘢,有機會就會想試吓"

Advantages of using animal-assisted interventions

55. Since socially withdrawn youth is a special group among the existing social service users in Hong Kong, special interventions may be required for this group of youth. Companion animals in the programme were identified as playing a listener's role to the participants as well as a bridge between participants and social workers.

Companion animals as listener

56. In the interviews, the youth stated that the animals were kind, cute and innocent. They felt happy about interacting with the animals and taking care of them. Since some participants suffered from social anxiety, it took some time for them to establish trust with others. Animals at this stage could act as good listeners to the youth³³. After the program, they treated the animals as friends and even family members, and valued the relationships with the animals³⁴.

Animals as bridge

- 57. Apart from being good listeners, animals also acted as a bridge between participants and social workers. Many participants in the interview showed good therapeutic alliance with social workers and stated that the animals were instrumental in helping them to establish interpersonal relationships in the programme. In addition, animals were able to facilitate their coping with social difficulties. For examples, some participants found it very difficult to initiate conversations with friends. When their friends shared about what happened at school or at work, they found it difficult to continue with the conversations because they have no experience in such circumstances³⁵.
- 58. The lack of conversational topics could weaken the relationships between socially withdrawn youths and their friends. For those who have poor social skills, they may not even make any attempt to create conversational topics when interacting with others. However, the animals provided shared experience between participants and social workers so they had more common topics to talk about. Once they were able to start a conversation, participants seemed to be more willing to disclose their problems to social workers in the counseling sessions³⁶.
- 59. Since there were few conversational topics with friends, some youth found social relationships boring; instead, they spent much time on computer games. The internet was regarded as an alternative to meet people. Relationships between the youths and Internet users (usually strangers to them) were established in some interesting ways. Many participants with social withdrawal problems were prone to communicate with online friends by text messages as they felt it was more flexible and comfortable³⁷.

³³ Youth B11: "起碼無人聽我訴苦,可以同啲貓狗訴苦" Youth C9: "如果動物嘅話,你想分享啲咩,就可以講俾佢聽,佢就唔會講俾人知。但如果人嘅話,你毫無避忌講晒俾人知,你唔會知佢會唔會講你啲嘢出黎"

³⁴ Youth C5:"啲狗呀…好似朋友。"Youth C9:"嗯…當佢地朋友或者親人。"

³⁵ Youth A1: "因為佢地返工放工咁樣,如果我講,唔知點樣開口,會覺得奇怪會點,所以無講。"

Youth C5:"(話題)都多啲架,即係有時話發發 (one of the animals in the program)今日做過啲咩呀,平時佢點樣曳呀,跟住講下講下返番正題。會容易 d 傾自己嘅問題嘅"

³⁷ Youth C9:"嗰陣時會係屋企打機嘅,咁就多數係同啲網友傾計。" Youth C5:"咁我覺得打字係方便喎,同埋方便唔洗講野咯"

60. Even though participants might not have face-to-face interaction with their online friends, they kept them for many years. Similar to text communications, focusing on the animals could help to relieve stress of the participants in the counseling sessions. With the presence of animals, participants felt less embarrass because they could focus on the animals to cope with silence during the counselling sessions³⁸.

Outcomes of the program

61. There are two major outcomes observed in the interviews: namely participants' hope and their improved interpersonal relationship.

Interpersonal relationship

62. After engagement by social workers, participants were willing to make improvement and tried to take the initiative to improve their relationships with others. Youth A3 became more confident in talking with people and making friends. She was willing to open up herself and allow others to understand her. She thought this was a start to have a better social life³⁹.

Hope

63. After the programme, the improvement of participants was even more significant. When they were in the social withdrawal condition, they did not have any plan and goal for the future. After the programme, youth C1 thought about what he really wanted to do. Youth C3 already worked for two years and gained a sense of achievement. Participants became more positive and strived for a better life in the future⁴⁰.

³⁸ Youth C9: "會將個注專力就會放係個動物身上,答嗰時就唔洗淨係你望我, 我望你咁樣。"

Youth A3: "而家開始就盡量去試下主動啲,唔好咁拘緊,覺得同班差唔多年紀嘅朋友傾計嘅時候,應該盡量放開啲,唔好將自己收到咁埋,我諗應該都要俾人了解下自己先,所以要放開自己俾人哋睇到自己係點,再開始同佢地融入會好啲"

Youth C1: "而家係有計劃, 診下自己想去邊呀,要去做乜,以前係無嘅"Youth C3: "覺得自己有好大成功感,以前乜都唔想去做,而家已經做完一份兩年嘅工作,覺得個轉變好大…有一班朋友,有一份穩定嘅工作,而家搵到更好嘅生活嗰份成功感"

Discussion and Conclusion

- 64. The youth social withdrawal phenomenon has been increasingly observed in some developed societies, especially those in Asia. Although this issue was first identified in Japan, similar cases have also been identified in Hong Kong, and the prevalence of this issue in Hong Kong is no lower than that in Japan. Unfortunately, empirically supported interventions for young people with this problem are limited.
- 65. As far as we know, this porgramme is one of the very few programme for social withdrawn youths which has been evaluated and positive findings were being identified. Although a more scientific rigor study approach was not utilized in the pilot and the current programmes, given the very new nature of this issue, a less rigorousness approach deem appropriate at the moment, not only in Hong Kong, but also across different societies.
- 66. When compared between the pilot and the current programme, there were some differences in the profiles of the service recipients. Firstly, the proportion of female cases referred for service was higher in the current programme. This may reflect that (1) there is an increase in the number of females who manifested social withdrawn behaviour in our society; and / or (2) there is a higher awareness of the problem in the community, and hence, more individuals with such problem are identified and referred either by parents or social workers. Secondly, there was an increase in the percentage of those with social withdrawal behaviour whose age were 19 years old or younger. There is no epidemiological data to support our observation, however, it seems that the onset age of social withdrawal problem is decreasing in our society. And if this observation reflects the reality, this trend must be closely monitored because the lower the onset age may lead to longer and more severe impacts of withdrawn behaviour.
- 67. In sum, the Regain Momentum programme seems to have the most significant impact on the self-esteem of the service recipients and to the perceived employability of some of the recipients. Importantly, after the intervention, 54.5% of the service recipients were employed as compared with only 6.8% before the intervention. In addition, 9.1% of the cases have gone back to school as well. This finding seems to support that our service recipients have "regained" their momentum and gradually starting again to pursue with their life goals. Also, the impact on self-esteem is especially important to note because with low and no self-esteem, individuals would be very reluctant to try or attempt to face challenges, and hence, lead to status quo.
- 68. Upon further analysis, varying impact was found for those with mental health problems. The programme was found to have more significant impact in terms of their self-esteem and perceived employability on cases with social withdrawal without mental health problems. For those with mild mental health problems, although the change was still positive, only changes in mean score for the RSES was found to be statistically significant. This was consistent with findings in the pilot project where factors associated with their mental health problems could have an effect on the outcome.

- 69. Another point worth noting was the timing of the intervention. It seems that the effect of the intervention follows a diminishing returns curve which means that the prime time for intervention of social withdrawal problems is between 3 to 12 months. The extent in positive changes in mean scores in all the three areas of self-esteem, social anxiety and perceived employability were found to be the greatest among those with the problems for 3-12 months. Hence, this finding not only shows that early intervention seems to be important in terms of the "regaining" the momentum of the withdrawn youths, but it also shows that the longer the untreated / non-intervened period, the less improvement could have been made.
- 70. Using therapy animals as a way to attract and engage the non-engaged or hard-to-reach cases appears to be an effective engagement method. There were 14 (20.6%) young people stated very clearly that they would not / may not participate in the programme if there were no therapy animals or AAT components in the programme. It is suspected that some of the social withdrawn individuals have lost interest or fear of interacting with strangers but were willing to give it a try when there is a presence of animals in the programme or centre. As reflected in the comments from some of the service recipients, they felt that the therapy dog accepts them, likes them, makes them feel happy and is not boring. These are important and essential components of rapport building in a therapeutic relationship.
- 71. In terms of the role of the therapy dog, the subscales of 'unconditional acceptance' and 'positive feelings / attachment' were the most prominent role perceived by the cases. This was again consistent with findings in the pilot project and reinforced the understanding that the therapy dog induced a sense of security and relax atmosphere to facilitate the intervention process.
- 72. In conclusion, this study reports one of the very few existing programmes that provides evidence in enhancing the psychosocial well-being of young people with social withdrawal problems. The AAT component was an appealing and important factor in engaging young people who might otherwise been slipped from the traditional social services. Young people in this sample who have jointed the AAT component was found to be able to benefit more as compared with their non-AAT counterparts. However, the variations in the extent of the impact on different target groups, in particular, for those with mental health problems, may indicate a need for a higher level of clinical input. For future research, more rigorous methodologies, e.g., randomized controlled trial, compared with other intervention models, may enhance the credibility of the AAT model. Also, follow-up interviews of service recipients are needed to examine the sustainability of the "regained momentum" of our participants. All in all, this innovative engagement and intervention model seems to be efficacious in helping individuals who may not benefited from traditional services and it is worth attempting to trial with other non-engaged individuals; for example, hidden elderly people, young people with difficulty in emotion expressions, or people who had negative experiences of previous social service experiences.

Appendix I

A summary of the profile of the respondents at pre-test

Table I: Respondents by gender

Gender	f	%
Male	57	60.6
Female	37	39.4
Total	94	100

Table II: Respondents by age

Age range	f	%
≤14	14	14.9
15-19	40	42.6
20-24	29	30.9
25-29	9	9.6
≥30	2	2.1
Total	94	100

Table III: Respondents by educational level

Highest educational level attained	f	%
Junior secondary	52	55.3
Senior secondary	31	33.0
Post-secondary	3	3.2
College	8	8.5
Total	94	100

Table IV: Respondents by current educational status

Current educational status	f	%
Full-time studying	26	27.7
Part-time studying / distance learning	7	7.4
Completed school / withdrawn	60	63.8
Missing	1	1.1
Total	94	100

Table V: Respondents by employment status

Employment status	f	%
Employed ⁴¹	1	1.6
Underemployed ⁴²	4	6.3
Unemployed	55	85.9
Not able to work due to health problem	4	6.3
Total	64	100.0

Table VI: Respondents by family situation

Family situation	f	%
Both parents	41	48.2
Single parent (father)	5	5.9
Single parent (mother)	34	40.0
Relatives other than their parents only	4	4.7
other	1	1.2
Total	85*	100

^{*}missing data = 8

Table VII: Respondents by social withdrawal behaviours

Social withdrawal behaviours	Strongly agree/ agree	neutral	Strongly disagree/ disagree
	%	%	%
Staying at home all day almost everyday	64.9	17.0	18.1
Avoid contacting with others	34.0	21.3	44.7
Would not leave home/room to go to school or to work	25.5	17.0	57.5
Would feel embarrass in social situations	37.2	36.2	26.6
Total	85*	85*	100

Works over 35 hours per week.
 Works less than 35 hours per week

Table VIII: Respondents by duration of social withdrawal behaviours

Duration of social withdrawal behaviours	f	%
Less than 3 months	15	16.0
≥ 3 months to < 6 months	11	11.7
≥ 6 months to < 1 year	8	8.5
≥ 1 year to < 2 years	24	25.5
≥ 2 year to < 3 years	12	12.8
≥3 year	24	25.5
Total	94	100.0

Table IX: Respondents by mental health problem

Mental health problem	f	%
Depression / depressive symptoms	9	47.4
Early psychosis	4	21.1
Anxiety disorder	2	10.5
Social anxiety	1	5.3
Asperger syndrome	1	5.3
Hyperactivity	1	5.3
Mild mental disability	1	5.3
Total	19*	100

Table X: Respondents by experience with companion animal(s)

Experience with companion animal(s)	f	%
Current experience	39	41.5
Previous experience	30	31.9
No experience	23	24.5
Missing	2	2.1
Total	94	100.0

Table XI: Respondents by type of companion animal(s)

Type of companion animal(s)	f	%
Fish	45	47.9
Tortoise	38	40.4
Hamster	30	31.9
Dog	22	23.4
Cat	11	11.7
Bird	11	11.7
Rabbit	10	10.6
Other	6	6.4
Missing	6	6.4

中華錫安傳道會社會服務部

中華錫安傳道會社會服務部為政府資助的非牟利基督教社會服務機構,自 1970 年起在慈雲山設立社會服務。

本會使命乃透過本會屬下各個地區教會和社會服務組織的緊密合作,在地區內傳 揚神與人、人與人(及自己)和人與自然環境(包括所處的社區、社會、國家, 甚至全世界)之間的復和關係。

本會轄下三間服務中心,慈雲山錫安青少年綜合服務中心、慈雲山錫安青少年綜合服務中心分處青少年就業培訓及創藝發展中心、恩慈家庭及幼兒互助中心。

中華錫安傳道會社會服務部

九龍慈雲山慈民邨民健樓地下(B翼及C翼)

電話: 2324 0111 傳真: 2326 7453

電郵:isc@hkzion.org.hk 網址:www.hkzion.org.hk

慈雲山錫安青少年綜合服務中心

九龍慈雲山慈民邨民健樓地下(B翼及C翼)

電話: 2324 0111 傳真: 2326 7453

慈雲山錫安青少年綜合服務中心分處 青少年就業培訓及創藝發展中心

九龍慈雲山慈正邨正暉樓地下 1 號舖

電話: 2324 0113 傳真: 2324 0138

恩慈家庭及幼兒互助中心

九龍慈雲山慈樂邨樂安樓地下 C 翼 2 號

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