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by Tamarai Chelvi

THIS MONTH, Glow puts the spotlight on two ladies from diverse backgrounds who have their focus on people empowerment and impacting lives.

Special person, special interest

Sabah-born Jun Tang fell in love with her programme studying Special Needs Education. Her interest in the subject has seen her travel halfway across the globe to pursue her dreams, and it all started at Dika College in Kuala Lumpur, she says. “I attended an education fair and the education counselor whom I chatted with felt that I had traits that would suit studying the field of special education,” said Tang, sharing about her journey pursuing her higher education and her decision to enrol in the Diploma in Special Needs Education at Dika College. “My time at college was memorable, it helped me a great deal, professionally and personally. I remember clearly, even to this day, the core values it has instilled in me,” the 24-year-old said.

Tang says it gave her a solid foundation in understanding the concepts of respect, empowerment and advocacy.

She recalls the times in class which were fun-filled with plenty of hands-on training and role-playing, which harmoniously bridged theories and practical work that focused on educating children with special needs such as autism, Down Syndrome, dyslexia - a favourite part of her studies.

Tang also informs that she worked as a full-time special needs teacher at a training centre while studying. It was there that she got to observe the many learning inconsistencies due to dysfunctional familial systems and the lack of resources, among others.

She realised then, that parallel to teaching, she would also need to be equipped with knowledge and skills in social work, which led to her decision in pursuing a Bachelor of Education in Social Work at the renowned Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei, Taiwan.

“I am currently interning in San Francisco through Supported Living Services (SLS),” said Tang, who quipped that it was hard to refuse the summer internship offer from Friends of Children with Special Needs (FCSN) in California, USA.

Her experiences have set her on encouraging and promoting the idea



Jun Tang

of independent living for individuals with special needs, with support from the community, where the differently-abled can take charge of their lives and become less dependent.

“I strongly believe that by supporting them (special needs persons), and guiding them in making their own choices in life, we are empowering them and giving them the respect that they rightly deserve,” said Tang.

By women, for women

Lo and behold, it takes a lot for someone to help another, especially in these times where many are struggling to help themselves. But here is one, who from experience, dedicated her life to helping other women.

“Empowering women need not always run around the idea of saving a woman from an unfortunate incident. It could be as simple as sharing the right information to help improve their life or make it easier in some way,” says Hannah Lo, founder of “Soul Medicine Sessions”.

According to Lo, “Soul Medicine Sessions” involves a different kind of “medicine”, one that involves retreats and workshops, “catered to women, by women and for women.”

In a nutshell, Lo informs that her workshops are about sharing knowledge, practices and providing support in navigating a woman's inner world - “her emotions, beliefs and behaviours - these which block them from living their perfect lives and having healthy relationships,” she says.

One who felt compelled to share all that she discovered through her own experiences in life, including healing and transformation, Lo says that she merely wanted to pass on the “gifts” she received along life's passage from the many women who have helped her by sharing their own wisdom with her.

“My work helps women feel more confident, trust their intuition, learn how to heal themselves and create a more healthy relationship with their physical bodies and with other people,” Lo said.

Why only for women? “It's because of the huge amount of time I spent healing myself and understanding the gifts and challenges of being in a woman's body; I can thus, relate to women's struggles and know how to help through my own personal experiences,” she shares.

Says Lo, her biggest challenge is the type of work she is involved in, “which is still very new in Asia. Most women don't understand what it is about really and how they can benefit from it. It takes time for the concept to really sink in,” she says, remaining positive and resolute in her calling.



Lo at one of her 'Soul Medicine Sessions'.

One's calling

> Two women, each bringing about immeasurable change to the lives of others

The consensus says Lo, is that society generally puts women in boxes; they like to stereotype - mother, business woman, wife - and they have expectations for each of these roles.

“If a woman is beautiful, she may not be smart, if she is emotional then she is weak or crazy.

“I also love the fact that women's bodies have seasons and cycles, like the earth; and that women can literally give birth to a new life. Our senses are also so much more intense compared to a man's and we are naturally more intuitive and connected to our surroundings,” Lo shares.

The biggest myth about women says Lo - “Society makes a woman one-dimensional when she has so many dimensions and different sides. We cannot and shouldn't be limited by these ideas that we can only be one or two things. We are a whole lot more” ... each individuals.

To better skin days

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