



EVERY YOUTH A SUCCESS STORY

A SERIES OF TRYBE SUCCESS STORIES

+ Contents

Diamond in the rough **page 2**

How I broke my father's heart and tried to fix it **page 6**

From 'shattered' to 'restored' **page 8**

Never alone **page 10**

Diamond in the rough

A Trybe youth's journey towards a purposeful life

"I want to inspire the next generation of boxers and help them overcome their challenges too!"

- NARISH

As a teenager, Narish was always getting into fights. As a result of his mischief, he would often be subject to various forms of punishment at home, most of them physical. Narish recalls, "There was once when I came home late, covered with bruises after having gotten into a fight, I lied to my dad saying I was just playing with my friends. My dad took a spoon, heated it over the stove, and placed it on my thigh." This incident alongside other similar episodes of physical punishment led Narish to avoid home.

It was his time in the Singapore Boys' Hostel that changed Narish's outlook on life.

The time away from home was spent with his friends, and he subsequently hung out with the wrong company. He started being more aggressive with his friends, pushing those who were genuinely concerned for his well-being, away. Getting into more fights, taking part in gang-related activities naturally followed. He was then placed into a Guidance Programme when he stabbed someone after a staring incident between the two. Narish did not succeed in the Guidance Programme, leading him to delve into substance abuse – an act that saw him arrested and placed on probation in the Singapore Boys' Hostel.

Trybe Caseworker's Influence

It was his time in the Singapore Boys' Hostel that changed Narish's outlook on life. A Trybe Staff on the first time he met Narish, "When I first met Narish, he was quite a jovial and cheerful person, and I decided to spend more time talking to him. Soon after, he started to open up and share about how he came into the Hostel. He also spoke about the problems he faced with his family."

The same staff would eventually become Narish's caseworker upon his discharge from the Hostel, and subsequent enrollment into Trybe's post-rehabilitation care service. "After I was discharged from the Hostel, my caseworker continued to help me and was there for me. When I was tempted to take drugs again, I would immediately call him and inform him. He was the strong pillar of support that I needed during this time." Narish's words indicate the deep levels of trust that he has built with his caseworker and the continued mentoring relationship the two enjoy.

Staying meaningfully engaged in pro-social activities was also an essential aspect to Narish's journey of rehabilitation. "The plan for Narish has always been to get him to complete his education. During our conversations, he indicated an interest in becoming a mechanic or engineer in the automotive industry. He also shared that he wanted to learn and take part in boxing." Armed with this knowledge, his caseworker would eventually succeed in rallying the community to aid Narish in achieving his goals and desires. | [Continued on next page](#) |



"When I was tempted to take drugs again, I would immediately call him and inform him. He was the strong pillar of support that I needed during this time."

Community's Role

Aware of his desire to pursue these interest, Narish's caseworker sought help from the community. The first step was rallying like-minded people that could support Narish through his studies. A group of students from Yale-NUS College banded together to provide tuition in certain subjects, whilst another member of the community volunteered to provide Malay language tuition. Narish's Probation Officer also chipped in, securing an English tutor for Narish.

Through the combined effort of the community, Narish completed his N-Levels and even qualified for the course that he wanted. "I did well for my N-Levels and am happy with my results. I'm really thankful for all the tutors who taught me, even if it was for a short period of time."

Additionally, Narish was also introduced to Legends Fight Sport, a community that accepted him and has set him on his path to achieve his dreams.

The Resilience of Youth

Narish has always loved keeping himself active. Although he has participated in a variety of sports (such as dragon boating and canoe polo), his first love has always been boxing. At a young age, he has repeatedly gotten into fights, having no other means to channel his energy and aggression.

He was first introduced to Legends Fight Sport through his caseworker. The manager of Legends Fight Sport, Khairizal, recalls his first impression of Narish, "My first impression of him was 'Can he commit?', 'Can he walk the talk?'" Concerned with the rigors of training, he was wondering if Narish had what it takes to succeed in the sport.

Through the combined effort of the community, Narish completed his N-Levels and even qualified for the course that he wanted

Whilst still a resident in the Singapore Boys' Hostel, Narish had issues with discipline, especially in the area of time management. His repeated infringements of curfews and time restrictions placed on him had resulted in him being placed on remand in Singapore Boys' Home. It was at the Boys' Home that he read motivational books on discipline and preparing himself for life after his probation. It was then that he understood the value of discipline and decided that he needed to change.

The next two months saw a different side of Narish, he stopped committing infringements, started to listen to the staff's instruction and carried himself with humility. It was these important lessons that would carry him through his training at Legends.

"My first lesson was really boring, they taught me how to walk - forward and backward. Although it was a very basic thing, I realized an important lesson - that I master the foundations before moving on." Narish eventually moved on to join the regular classes at Legends but he encountered yet another setback - his smoking had compromised his ability to achieve his full potential.

When asked if he was smoking, Narish lied, denying that he did for fear of being kicked out of the programme. It was only when he was invited to attend the Fight Team training that he understood the impact smoking had on his performance. "The first training session was exhausting. I was tired and nearly cried during the training. That day, I made a decision to quit smoking." A few weeks of Fight Team training saw his stamina improve and saw a more enjoyable training experience for Narish.



Narish has also been extremely dedicated to his training, going above and beyond in pursuing his dream. Although it is not a requirement, Narish can be regularly found in the regular classes on top of his existing commitments with the Fight Team. "Such a commitment from Narish was needed and it was not forced unto him." Kharizal shares.

The results of Narish's desire and commitment to improve himself and pursue his dream has led to success in the boxing ring - winning his first bout. Narish's encouragement to all youth, "Never give up. Think of what you want to be when you grow up. There will be people around you who are willing to journey with you."

Continued Growth

At present, Narish continues to pursue his interests and his dreams. He is currently in a traineeship programme with a car manufacturer, while still spending most of his free time in the gym, training and improving his skills as a boxer. At Legends, he has been asked to take on part-time coaching responsibilities, in addition to his Fight Team training.

"Coaching is something totally new to me, and something I struggle with. However, with each challenge, I need to step out of my comfort zone and strive to improve myself, so that I can overcome this challenge." Narish admits that, at the tender age of 19, he does not feel equipped or qualified to coach. However, seeing how much faith his coaches have put in him while also wanting to better himself, Narish takes on this responsibility willingly, knowing that it is his own way of giving back to a community that has invested so much in him.

Narish continues to value his relationship with his caseworker. Although they may not be in contact all that often, Narish knows that he can always depend on his caseworker for guidance, seeking advice on his dreams of one day winning an Olympic medal and starting his own gym. Narish reflects, "My caseworker and my coaches at Legends Fight Sport have had a huge impact in my life. They have helped me through a lot and have always had faith in me. My way of repaying them is to stay true to what they have done for me and to pay it forward. I want to inspire the next generation of boxers and help them overcome their challenges too! You never know who will be the next diamond in the rough." 🙏

Narish knows that he can always depend on his caseworker for guidance, seeking advice on his dreams of one day winning an Olympic medal and starting his own gym.



How I broke my father's heart and tried to fix it

A Trybe youth's journey towards a healthier family life



Jackson had never seen his parents' broken hearts displayed in such a way before.


It was while he was in remand, awaiting his sentence, that he first saw his father cry. Jackson had never seen his parents' broken hearts displayed in such a way before. He has been shouted at, lectured, and nagged, but he has never seen his parents so visibly distressed. He was determined to change.

The second half of Jackson's stay in the Boys' Hostel was when Jackson was finally able to control his emotions and open up to the staff. His behavior within the Hostel improved dramatically. He credits the transformation to the guidance and support that his parents and the staff have given him. "The staff really cares for me. They were patient and always try to engage me even if I'm not open to them. One of the staff has always been direct and honest with me too – telling me plainly what I have done wrong and how this will impact me in the real world."

"We didn't really spend that much time together last time. We didn't really talk much at home. But now, we go out for dinner more. I also like to go and visit my dad's workplace to spend time with him after school." Jackson's family life has also gotten better. He now spends most of his time either in school or with his family at home.

It was in the Hostel that Jackson decided that he wanted to continue his studies. Although he never completed his Upper Secondary education, he was still determined to do so. When asked why he wanted to study, "I felt like I was missing out on school. I tried working, but I wasn't able to earn much. I also saw a few of my fellow Hostel residents going to school and that made me miss school life too – especially the friends I'd make there." His determination, coupled with advice from his social worker, led him to take his WPLN assessment, which consequently allowed him to pursue a course in an ITE. Jackson has indicated that he intends to work towards admission into a Polytechnic.

Reflecting on his time in Hostel, "I really appreciate the staff who have journeyed with me through my time in Hostel. I've learnt the value of discipline and had a change in my attitude. I learnt to control my emotions better too! I also miss the various outings I had with my dorm mates and staff – where we could hang out not as Hostel residents, but regular friends."

"I believe I was lucky I was arrested as it allowed me a chance to change. My advice to the youth in the Hostel, and even those who are on the same path as I – turn back if you have the chance. Get help in getting your life back on track. Don't wait until it's too late." 

Get help in getting your life back on track. Don't wait until it's too late.

- JACKSON

Jackson (not his real name) dropped out of school when he was 16 years old. Disinterested in studies, Jackson lived an unbridled lifestyle, spending time with his friends till the wee hours of the night. He was also very involved in gang activities. This involvement in gang activities would later lead to a chain of events that caused a drastic change in his life.

Jackson was involved in a gang altercation which led to his arrest and was subsequently sentenced to serve a probation period in the Singapore Boys' Hostel. Upon his admission to the Hostel, Jackson struggled with anger-related issues and had difficulties opening up to the staff. His inability to cope with his emotions gave him a quick trigger. "I remember when I first joined Hostel, I was so upset about some issue that I shouted at one of the Hostel staff. After I had cooled down, I felt guilty because I knew that he was only doing his job." Jackson's words reveal who he actually is – a young man with a good heart, struggling to overcome some issues in his life.

I really appreciate the staff who have journeyed with me through my time in Hostel. I've learnt the value of discipline and had a change in my attitude.

From 'shattered' to 'restored'

A Trybe youth's journey towards rebuilding his life

"I was very mischievous. I liked to have fun. So, when my friends asked me to join them, I just did!"

I've learnt to be responsible for my actions and how I live my life – and I believe we all should too!

- CHARLES

Under the influence of his peers, Charles (not his real name) was placed on probation in the Singapore Boys' Hostel for housebreaking and committing acts of mischief.

Charles's time as a resident in the Hostel was mostly unremarkable; he generally was well behaved and responded well to the programmes and activities. However, there were two related incidents that acted as a turning point for Charles' life.

Placed on employment in the food and beverage industry, Charles found himself in need of money. Believing that he could get away with it, Charles turned to theft, stealing a sum of money directly from the cash register. He quickly hid the amount of money that he stole, and later lied when confronted about it. "I just denied stealing the money and offered for them (his employers) to check me. Since I knew that the money was very well hidden, I was very confident that they won't be able to find it." Unable to prove that Charles had stolen the money, Charles was allowed to leave.

The effort of the community that rallied around Charles when he was down is what led him to successfully complete his residency in the Hostel.

"At first I was excited because I was not caught. But then I felt very guilty. I knew that it wasn't the right thing to do. I struggled with this until I was afraid of going back to the Hostel. Luckily one of my fellow residents advised me to not make matters worse by running away." The guilt Charles felt eventually led him to confess to his case worker, and apologized to his employer, returning the stolen sum in full. This incident caused Charles to receive a written warning on his probation. On the verge of failing his probation, Charles felt hopeless, responding negatively to his case worker during individual sessions.

"Although I wasn't religious, I was interested to find out more, so I just signed up." This was Charles' introduction to a group of volunteers that would help change his life. The volunteers, who were part of a religious organization, would conduct weekly classes to cater to the needs of the residents in the Hostel that professed to the faith. These classes were open to all residents but were not forced upon them. Charles chose to attend these classes with the sole aim of finding out more but ended up building strong relationships with the volunteers. "I enjoyed their company. They were very easy going, kind, treated me with respect and always made me feel welcome."

Encouragement from these volunteers, the staff of the Hostel, his probation officer, and most importantly, his mother allowed Charles to pick himself up. He displayed great improvement in his conduct and attitude in the Hostel and even found new employment at a bicycle shop. "When I was in the bicycle shop, I love cleaning bikes. It gives me immense satisfaction when I was able to make something filthy and dirty look like new again." Charles' own words act as a metaphor to his life. Just as he enjoyed restoring a bicycle, he was being restored in his own life too.

The effort of the community that rallied around Charles when he was down is what led him to successfully complete his residency in the Hostel. He currently pursues an education in culinary skills, still meets the volunteers regularly, and has this to say to all youth, "Not all incidents you can get away with. Some incidents happen to help you grow. I've learnt to be responsible for my actions and how I live my life – and I believe we all should too!"

Just as he enjoyed restoring a bicycle, he was being restored in his own life too.

Never alone

A Trybe youth's journey towards self-preservation

There are always people out there who want what's best for you and will guide you – if you allow them to.

- THEODORE

Arrested for unlicensed money lending, Theodore was placed on probation when he was 19 years old. A requirement of his probation was a 9-month residency at Singapore Boys' Hostel. He shares, "I got into trouble because I wanted to earn money fast. I needed the money but didn't want to be an additional burden to my mum who was working hard to make ends meet." The arrest would place Theodore on a journey toward maturity.

"My wake-up call came when I was placed on remand at the Changi Prison Complex. I knew I needed to mature – to think about the consequences of my actions before I take them." This was the turning point for Theodore. He had a conviction to grow as a person and was glad to have a second chance at the Hostel. This conviction led him to stay clear of trouble in the Hostel, completing his residency free of infringements or offences.

While residing in the Boys' Hostel, he attributes his growth to the staff of Trybe. He fondly remembers the staff of the Hostel who he actively sought for advice. "They were always there for me when I needed them. They have also given me great advice on how I can succeed in life while I was in the Hostel. Most importantly, they trusted me. I didn't want to betray their trust in me, so I tried my best to stay offence-free." The real test would come after he was discharged from Hostel.

A client of Trybe's Growing Resilient Youth in Transition (GRYT) service, Theodore was assigned a caseworker who would continue to journey with him

Without his support, I could have easily fallen into depression.

After he was discharged, Theodore continued to excel. He enjoyed the sense of freedom and the achievement that comes along with it. He continued to abide by the curfews set for him as part of his probation order and maintained the good routines and habits picked up during his stay in the Hostel. A client of Trybe's Growing Resilient Youth in Transition (GRYT) service, Theodore was assigned a caseworker who would continue to journey with him, mentoring him and seeing him through the remainder of his probation period.

Theodore credits his caseworker, "He was always there for me. He is like a father figure to me, making sure that I was okay and that no harm came to me." Finding someone he trusted, Theodore began opening up to his caseworker, sharing details about his struggles with his family, his concerns with his career and his general wellbeing. Theodore recalls two moments that left a lasting impression.

The first had to do with his brother, "Although he didn't have to, when I asked, my caseworker would come and help me out with my brother. I was worried that my brother would follow the same path as me and end up in Hostel, so I asked him to come talk to him. Sometimes, that means he will come even though it was at 2 am." The second was when Theodore's grandfather passed away, "He was there to help me when my grandfather passed away. Without his support, I could have easily fallen into depression."

At first, he was my caseworker. Now, we're friends.

Today, Theodore has successfully completed his probation and is pursuing a career in the shipping industry. He continues to value his relationship that he has with his caseworker saying, "At first, he was my caseworker. Now, we're friends." Advising the youth, Theodore shares, "You may feel restricted or supervised, but it's important to open up and learn to receive the support provided. There are always people out there who want what's best for you and will guide you – if you allow them to." 🙏

My wake-up call came when I was placed on remand at the Changi Prison Complex. I knew I needed to mature...



Established in 1995, Trybe is a social service agency that serves youth facing adversities. A member of the National Council of Social Services (NCSS), Trybe is a charity that has been granted the Institute of Public Character (IPC) status.

Our vision is "Every Youth a Success Story". We believe that all youth are able to reach the fullest of their potentials to live successful lives. Thus, we are united by our mission - to journey with youth who face adversities to lead purposeful lives, inspiring them to impact others.

Through our Community & Youth Services (CYS) Division, and management of the Singapore Boys' Hostel (SBHL) and the Community Rehabilitation Centre (CRC), Trybe provides youth with guidance and offer support for their families and communities by engaging them in our services spanning across developmental, prevention, intervention and rehabilitation work.

EVERY YOUTH A SUCCESS STORY

A SERIES OF TRYBE SUCCESS STORIES

www.trybe.org

479 Tampines Street 44, #01-241, S520479

facebook.com/trybesingapore

[@trybesg](https://instagram.com/trybesg)

