

My Life's Journey:

From Darkness to Light



My life journey has been a roller coaster since I left school in 1978. A rebel during my teenage years I started mixing with the wrong crowd after school and soon started experimenting with marijuana. My philosophy and motto in life was *"Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die"*.

This hedonistic lifestyle of drugs, sex and parties lasted for 15 years and during that time I was arrested twice for possession of drugs and was once detained in a Thai Prison. My consumption of marijuana eventually progressed to harder drugs like heroin and my life spiraled downwards to an eventual despair.

The turning point came when I was admitted to Rumah Petros in December 1994 after being discharged from a government rehabilitation centre. I was miserable and without direction and during one of our morning devotions, God spoke to me through Proverbs 16:9—A man may plan his life but it is the Lord who directs. At that point I knew God had a plan and purpose for me. I decided to heed my leader's advice to enter into further rehabilitation and discipleship training in a Christian Centre called Shekinah Home in Malacca. My 2 years of discipleship training developed my character and disciplined me in many areas of my life.

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I joined Malaysian Care as a staff in Rumah Petros in October 1997 as I felt God was calling me to work among substance abusers as I could identify with them and help them to recover due to my past involvement with drugs.

It has been a joy and privilege to work in Malaysian Care and as I journey along with my colleagues and clients, I can see my own maturity and growth blossoming and making a difference in the lives of the clients, which has given me a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

Life is certainly not perfect and I still have my struggles; but with God at the centre of my life, the journey is more bearable. As in the words of St. Paul in Philippians 4:13, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"*, this verse never fails to uplift me when I am feeling disheartened or disappointed with people or surrounding circumstances. ■

■ Martin Balhetchet has been a staff in Malaysian Care since 1997 and is working among substance abusers and prisoners.