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# one on one



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## One thing psychology could do better

I wish there were more psychologists, researchers or academics who are interested in cross-cultural research. We need more diversity to help our discipline to grow and there is so much that we don't know. We need to learn from different groups of people, to share and reflect on what we know, to learn from other cultures as well as to help promote mental health in developing countries.

## One moment that changed the course of my career

I was involved in research related to refugee children's mental health, screening for depression and PTSD. My experience was incredibly profound, as I saw for myself how fragile and vulnerable children could be from their traumatising life experiences as a result of maltreatment. In aiding those who have been hurt, the listeners too are exposed to the pain suffered. I was both shocked and emotionally pained as I listened to the children whose stories I recorded, but with them, I grew more resilient, and found the strength to assist them in getting help.

## One book that inspired me

*Damaged* by Cathy Glass. This book was the first that inspired me to work in the area of child abuse and neglect. Cathy is a foster carer who cared for a little girl who was sexually abused and had already been through numerous foster families because she was violent and aggressive. Cathy talks about her struggles as a foster carer, the slow process of social welfare and the patience needed to help the child open up and talk about her dark past. That truly inspired me and I appreciate the work that foster carers and social workers do to help these children.

## One motto

A few years back I came across an inspiring speaker named Brene Brown. I have followed her work and one of her many quotes that still sticks with me today is this: 'Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path.' This quote became my motto that I try to live with every day.

## One proud moment

Every year, I get to see different groups of psychology students in the university. I get to see my students grow to be psychologists – competent, knowledgeable, inspired and passionate with what they can do and what they plan to do once they have graduated. I've learned so much from them as an academic and I hope I've done the same for them.

## One nugget of advice for aspiring psychologists

Back when I was an undergraduate psychology student in Malaysia, psychology was at its infancy stage, so there were limited work experiences if you aspired to be a practitioner psychologist. However, I persevered, working as a research assistant for different psychological projects. I gained clinical experiences and volunteered in different social events and non-profit organisations, which helped me to widen my perspective, knowledge and skills. Try to get different kinds of experiences from different fields of psychology wherever you are, wherever you can. Every little step will get you where you want eventually. Be passionate, brave and do not give up.

## One interesting thing about my job

I get to work with different groups of psychologists and academics from different parts of Asia, who all work in a similar area to promote psychology and to promote better safeguarding for vulnerable children from abuses and violence.

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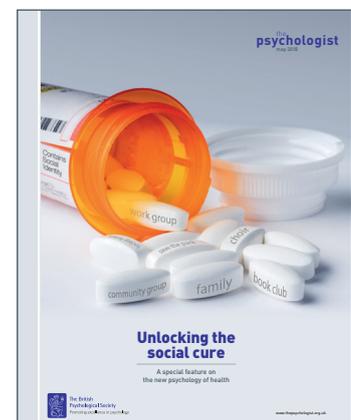
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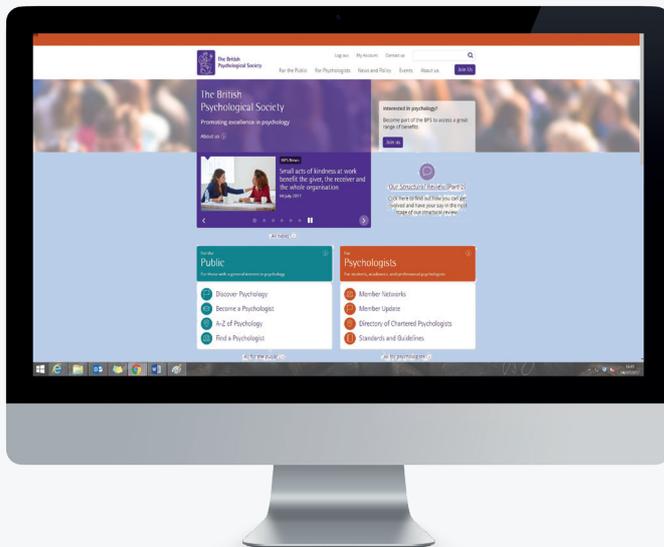
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