

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
25 March 2019

WORLD'S FIRST HAPPINESS FILM FESTIVAL ENDS WITH
ALL 10 EVENTS SOLD OUT, WITH MORE THAN 1,500 PARTICIPANTS



The world's first Happiness Film Festival ended yesterday with a resounding success, with more than 1,500 people from different walks of life attending all 10 completely sold out events and screenings. The festival was organized to promote greater awareness of happiness and well-being through films, with each film exploring different aspects of happiness - kindness, resilience, meaning, purpose, pain, vulnerability, technology, attachment, being present, contentment, and mindful consumption.

Sherman Ho, co-founder of Happiness Initiative and organiser of the film festival, said, "We are really humbled by the response to the film festival and the depth of discussion we had during the dialogue sessions. Happiness is a very personal and unique journey for everyone, and there is no one secret method to discovering happiness. We hope that everyone that came took away something positive from the discussions."



The post-screening dialogues with a panel of speakers delved deeper into the themes presented in the films. Each speaker brought in their own wealth of experiences and insights to the discussion, with over 20 panelists speaker over the course of the 5 days. Some panelists included:

- Dr William Wan, General Secretary, Singapore Kindness Movement
- Ms Jun Chu, Head of Public Policy and Philanthropy, Greater China, Twitter Inc.

- Mr Magnus Højberg Mernild, Head of Communications & Public Diplomacy, Royal Danish Embassy in Singapore
- Mr Mark Baildon, Associate Professor (Humanities and Social Studies), National Institute of Education
- Mr Stephen Lew, Founder, The School of Positive Psychology
- Ms Shanthi Pandian, Director (CARE Network Office), Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE)

Through these films and post-screening dialogues, a common theme weaves across them. Happiness is from within.

Simon Leow, co-founder of Happiness Initiative, remarked, “Happiness is on the minds of many people. Some came in search of happiness. Some came to share their perspectives on happiness. Some, candidly even asked, ‘Why am I not happier after watching the film?’.

Happiness has many facets. Everyone values these facets differently. Through this film festival, we want promote discussions and awareness of happiness and wellbeing. On a deeper level, we hope that people can get in touch with themselves on what truly matters to them - re-examining their choices and priorities.”



On a whole, the feedback to the film festival has been overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of the survey respondents reporting that they were satisfied with the screening and 98% said they will recommend this festival to their family and friends. 97% of the respondents also said that they have benefited from the panel discussions in this festival. 94% of the respondents also said that the event inspires them to do something more for the community.

It is important to note that 80% of the survey respondents were made up of Singaporeans and the majority of the respondents were youths - 55% of the respondents were 35 years and below. Happiness is close to the hearts of many people, particularly youths. It is thus important to continue to explore this issue and how this relates to the many different definitions of success.

Beyond this film festival, Happiness Initiative is starting a platform called Building Happiness Initiatives, where they hope to get more people to start community initiatives to bring about a greater sense of happiness and well-being in their own communities. The first session will happen on **30 March, 1PM – 3PM at *SCAPE HubQuarters**. Anyone who is interested in learning more about how they can start happiness initiatives in their own community are welcome to attend.

Happiness Initiative would also like to express their gratitude to **National Youth Council, Our Singapore Fund, the University of Pennsylvania Masters in Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) Alumni**, for putting their confidence in the project and making it possible. They would also like to thank their partners, volunteers, families and friends, and participants for all the support in making this festival a successful one.

Next year, Happiness Initiative intends to grow the film festival into a much broader international conference, where they want to bring in practitioners of Positive Psychology to start a bigger dialogue on how we as individuals can improve our happiness and well-being. The film festival will continue to happen as a part of the conference programme.

They hope that through these efforts, they can help people better understand the choices they can make to be happier, and to make Singapore a kinder, more gracious, and more resilient society.



Press Contact

Sherman Ho

Co-Founder, Happiness Initiative

sherman@happinessinitiative.sg

+65 9616 6213

Public Enquiries

info@happinessinitiative.sg

Press Kit

<http://bit.ly/HFFMediaKit>

Social Links

Website: <http://happinessinitiative.sg>

FB: <http://fb.com/happinessinitiative.sg>

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