

Media Clipping

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Headline: After tough times, this mother of four is smiling again
Summary: Madam Zuraidah, 42, had given up hope of finding work but Beyond Social Services, a voluntary welfare organisation, did not give up on her. It persisted in getting her to upgrade her skills.

After tough times, this mother of four is smiling again

ADELINETAN

When she was 13, Madam Zuraidah Zainuddin left school to support her family by working in a confectionery. Things did not get better. When she was 32, she was jobless with four young children to feed.

Madam Zuraidah, 42, had given up hope of finding work but Beyond Social Services, a voluntary welfare organisation, did not give up on her. It persisted in getting her to upgrade her skills.

With the help of the organisation, Madam Zuraidah gained enough confidence to apply for a job and today, she works at an elderly centre.

GIVING BACK

She is also giving back by helping the needy in the community.

School fees for her children – now aged 20, 16, 12 and 10 – will be less of a burden.

Said Madam Zuraidah: “There are many times when I am worried. But being able to help others distracts me and makes the days more bearable.”

After she divorced her first husband, she moved into a two-room rental flat with her four children, her second husband and her mother.

Madam Zuraidah added: “It was hard but as long as we had a roof over our heads, I could take it.”

She later quit her job to take care of her children. Her husband worked ad hoc. She also looked for items to recycle and sell, sometimes taking her oldest daughter with her.

“I felt bad. I was a mother who could not provide for her children. Life was meaningless.”

At the time, volunteers from Beyond Social Services regularly knocked on doors to engage residents.



After five years without a job, Madam Zuraidah Zainuddin now works at an elderly centre. TNP PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

When Madam Zuraidah saw them, she would close the door. But their persistence wore her down and she agreed to help organise a gathering, though she admitted it was to appease them.

Gradually, she grew to enjoy such meetings.

She said: “Previously, I felt like I was alone. But when I met more people, I drew strength from them because some of them faced more problems than me but still kept smiling.”

After five years of being jobless, things are looking up for Madam Zuraidah.

She moved to a three-room purchase flat in Sengkang with her family two years ago.

But she still goes back regularly to help the residents in her old Lengkok Bahru neighbourhood.

She said: “It may look like I am helping them but they are giving me strength too. I just want to give back what I have received.”

SINGAPORE

Helping the needy 'makes the days more bearable' for mother of four



Adeline Tan

Aug 26, 2019 06:00 am



13 Engagements

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