



THE BURGEONING CLUBHOUSE MOVEMENT:

Adventures in Clubhouse Expansion Around the World

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Sri Lanka is a small island. It's most famously known as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, thanks to its diversity, the natural beauty of the landscape, and a reserved culture.

Ministry of Social Employment and welfare is the key government institution in charge of services for persons with disabilities. Since there is a lack of current information and survey conducted on the prevalence of disability I have used data from the year 2001 to provide you with a brief picture of the situation in Sri Lanka.

Definition/ Legislation

Slide number 6 presents the percentage distribution of disabilities in Sri Lanka.

I'm a clinical psychologist who has been working in the area for more than 16 years. I would like to go back with my memories to year 2007. I got coheirship through JICA (Japan international cooperation Agency) on Employment development of person with disabilities. I wanted to know what projects they had in japan for mentally challenged people and so I got an opportunity to visit HABATAKI clubhouse in 2007.

The concept was novel to me. I visited them on 2 days which I learnt and thoroughly enjoyed. I remember telling them I too hope to create a clubhouse in my country.

Once back I was busy with my higher education but always I had communication with HABATAKI and that is how I got an invitation from them to participate for the clubhouse conference 2014 in Tokyo.

I met some key leaders of the International clubhouse and I learnt the bigger picture of the Clubhouse concept. All these inspirations brought me to this forum today.

Vision of Apegedara Clubhouse

Apegedara to be the pioneer clubhouse in the Sri Lanka in providing psychosocial rehabilitation for people living with the mentally illness by facilitating a safe, dignified and cohesive environment geared towards community reintegration.

Mission of Apegedara Clubhouse

"Apegedara" Clubhouse strives to provide a social rehabilitation opportunity through Clubhouse model for adults living with mental illnesses, to empower them and provide them an environment to develop independence, rediscover their self-respect, and abilities and create meaningful relationships with family members, colleagues and community members while being involved in productive activities.

At the beginning we started with 6 friends of mine who are really interesting and devoted to mental health. Later I came to know few of them have had the same wish to have a center for mentally ill people in Sri Lanka.

Obstacles we face

- 1) Inaccessible of Government / NGO funds without proper starting of the Clubhouse
- 2) Obtaining a government registration as a nonprofit organization

Milestone which we achieved

- 1) Finalized the proposal and constitution
- 2) Finding a place to start our clubhouse
- 3) Collecting furniture
- 4) Opening a Bank account
- 5) Registration (On the process)
- 6) Creating a website and brochure
- 7) Gathering more participant

Key elements to our success

- 1). Creative Companionships
- 2). Unity
- 3). Motivation
- 4). Constant dedication

This is the story of Apegedara and we are hoping and planning to open the first clubhouse in Sri Lanka by the beginning of the next year.

Thank you for listening.