

# TAKE CHARGE

MENTORSHIP

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME FOR  
CATHOLIC YOUTH

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## Newsletter

January 2021

TC 4 - 03



*Dear Reader,*

I am sure all of you were only too happy to say “Goodbye 2020”. It has been the most unpredictable year, full of surprises! A year of massive change that we will be able to understand & make sense of, only later. In many ways, the world is not the same as it was a year ago & we don't know what it will be a year from now.

I've enjoyed the quiet time and although the months ahead will still be a challenge for all of us... I am grateful for all the moments it gave me, to stop and reflect on what was most important for me... family, friends and connections. I am even more appreciative of it and will treasure my loved ones a lot more and show deeper gratitude for every wonderful thing big or small that happens.

I say goodbye to this year & welcome the new one full of emotions, excitement, anxiety, hope, joy and love. Here's hoping for a better, kinder “new normal” 2021. Let us continue to be caring, generous and appreciative of our blessings, our health and our loved ones.

A new year is always a new beginning, no matter what!

Here's to a great 2021.

So let's **CELEBRATE** the New Year and New Beginnings!

**Cheryl Pereira**

[ Director at Take Charge Mentorship and  
Editorial Head ]

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# Celebration



This festive season definitely calls for a bigger celebration. We all have our reasons and different ways in which we celebrate. We asked our mentors and mentees; what celebration means to them. Though the outlook is different, the common ground is celebrating with loved ones. Once again, we're reminded how fortunate we are to have our family by our side. It made each of us look at something as simple as a celebration in a different perspective. Read on to see their views.

“

it's having a great time and fun with the people we love

Anslem D'souza

”



“

Celebration is where my whole family is together under one roof, talking and laughing and enjoying a meal cooked by our grandmother. ”

Angelina D'souza

“

Celebrating is rejoicing, getting together with loved ones and highlighting our reason for the celebration. ”

Chriselle Couto

“

We celebrate a person when they pass; good or bad doesn't matter at that point.

When something is happening it's an adventure.

Life's an adventure. We Celebrate the memory of it.

We celebrate their life.

Buddy Community - The ALchemist ”



“

Celebration does not need to be grand. It's the little things the tiny achievements; spending time with my grandparents and with the people I love, singing, dancing and dining together. ”

Maryann Lobo

# Christmas Party



*Carolling our merriment*

With carols and games, the Take Charge community celebrated the Christmas party with fun games and loads of laughter.

We connected virtually and opened with some jingling tunes. The session was hosted by Norma D'silva, Aaron D'mello, Neysa Rapose, Andre Lobo and Vanessa Quadros. At first, we put our knowledge to the test with some trivia questions related to the theme of the season... **'CELEBRATION'** Then we played the game 'Queen of Sheba' wherein Christmas decorations were in demand. It was a mix of fun and competitive spirit as both the mentors and the mentees scurried around the house searching the same. We then danced away to some carols.

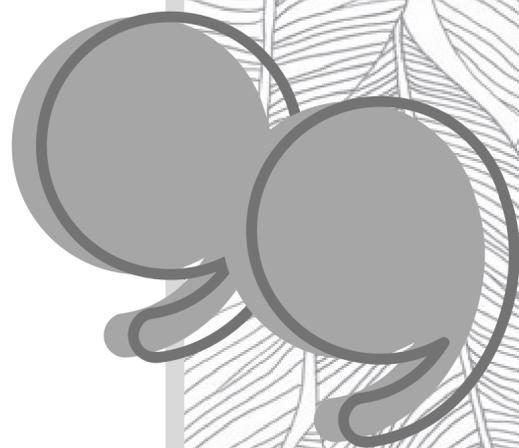
The best part was that everyone was decked up in Christmas colours and a Santa Claus hat. The party did not end there. Though the virtual meeting ended, our hearts still hummed all the way till new years. Oh! What a blast we would have had, had we met everyone in person. But no matter how the times change, we'll learn to roll with it!





A mentor is  
someone who  
allows you to  
see hope  
inside  
yourself

- Oprah Winfrey



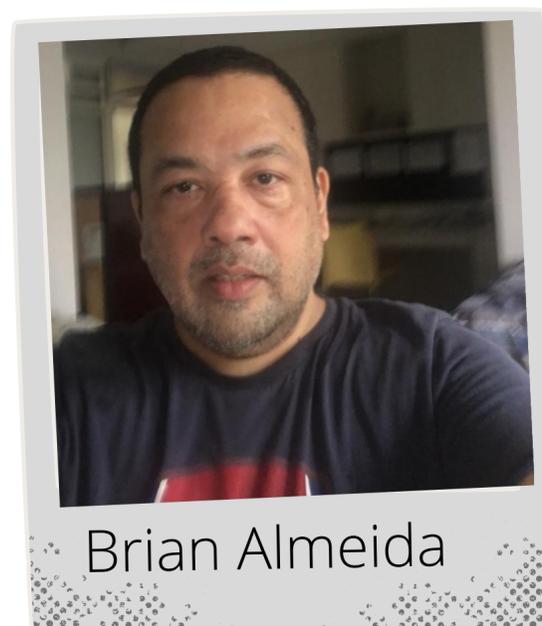


## Handling gap year(s) 2020

During the monsoons, fishermen mend their nets 2020 certainly sprung a surprise on all of us, when celebrating new year 2020 many of us did not even dream of what was about to come upon us. By early March it was becoming clear that the pandemic was beginning to cast a gloom around the globe, and everyone became tentative, by end March we were in a lockdown, something most of us had no experience of dealing with. Its now been 8 months since then and many of us have ambled along, some of us have become couch potatoes, some of us have lost our humor, and some completely lost hope, but many have used the time to their advantage.

In “Take Charge” one of the founding principles is “Never lose hope” – when everything around you is falling it’s time for you to Take Charge of your lives and pick up the pieces.

To help you along the way, here are a few tips to help you through rest of this uncertain period (and maybe even through regular times) - as a matter of fact, this uncertainty is expected to continue over the next couple of years. So let’s take charge of our lives and see how we can make the best of this situation.



### Time for introspection

Never before has life thrown such an overdose of time supply, reduced travel, reduced social pressures – does this provide you extra time to pause and think about where you are headed ??Many of us who grew up in the 70’s and 80’s had no luxury of a pause moment, one just went from school to college, to working and so on... This pause that life has thrown at us is a great time to think about where you are headed, what you need to do to get there, is there something you can enhance.

An introspection process can be a SWOT analyses of yourself, it can be a retreat, it can be a redefinition exercise..., don't let the time go to waste repair those holes in your net like the fisherman. A good guide or reference for this is "The Examen" from Ignatian spirituality.

### **Time for relearning**

Before learning new skills, it's also a great opportunity to review all that you have learnt till now, are there new perspectives that you can bring to existing learnings. The luxury of the internet and its vast resources is that there is never enough time for research and reading, use this to relearn some of the learning you have done in the past and surprise yourself with new perspectives!!!

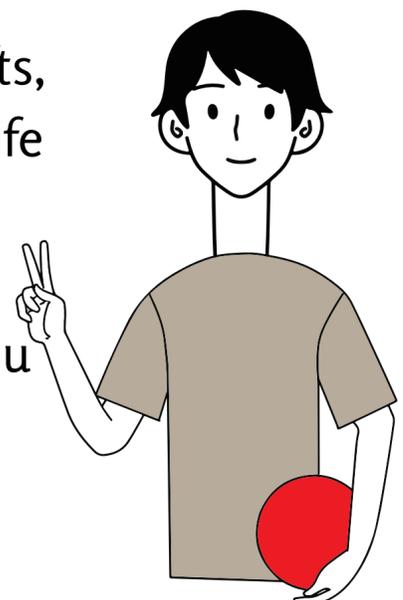


### **Time for new skill development and new learnings**

Now is the opportunity to do the things you always wanted to do but never had the time, that excuse is now a weak one isn't it? Learn a musical instrument, learn calligraphy, learn art, learn to cook, start reading, learn a new subject, learn how to code, build your Instagram profile, learn digital marketing, learn public speaking, ... everything helps in your journey of life... many of you would have read how Steve Jobs did a course in calligraphy course when he dropped out of university, this was attributed to the great design of Apple products when he launched Apple many years later.

### **Time to appreciate what you have**

Here is a time to look around you and appreciate all the gifts, talents, people around you. It's a time to understand that life can be more positive than you think it is, even with the seemingly heavy burden on your shoulder, you will soon begin to appreciate the positives and the people around you that can make your burden light. Your parents, teachers, colleagues, mentors, friends, nature and music too can be helpful a walk in the park, by the seaside, some music ...





## Time to lend a helping hand

Remember there could be friends of yours who need your help, a phone call to say hello, reach out to those around you and need a smile or someone to talk to.

Finally, as I end its time to put some perspective on the so called “lost year”, it’s just a year or 2 which in the journey of life is just another learning that will enrich your experience. Be positive and don’t look at it as depressing or as a lost year, the journey of life is long and these years would have left its lasting impressions on you as an individual and you would exit it richer and wiser. Be happy and take this in your stride – time to Take Charge of your life and make the best of it.

### **Brian Almeida**

[Founder Partner at Strategic Caravan International,  
Trustee at St. Joseph's trust



The year 2020 may have kicked some plans around but ye still remain positive of the coming one. Read on to find out what our mentees have in focus for the new year 2021...

“ For me the new year 2021 is an opportunity. Another year, I choose to be happy, to make more memories and to grow. ”

Chriselle Couto

“ I want to focus on my physical fitness, reading more books. Giving myself enough time so that I am not mentally drained and servitude to technology ”

Shawnel D'sousa

“ Since the Lockdown commenced, being on field and conducting research was on cease. In 2021, I would like to venture out to the areas and reach out on the field ”

Nicole Coutinho

2020 was different in many ways, but most of all it was a challenge.



# Thanksgiving

*Thankfully we've got something to be thankful for.*

We asked the mentors and mentees to share what they're most thankful for and it was humbling knowing them.

“ I am thankful for my parents and my God. For blessing with the gifts of talents . ”

Anslem D'sousa



“ Thankful for the little things in life. ”

Michelle Vaz

“ I am grateful for the camaraderie we share within our buddy group, the **SuBURPian UsTaAdS**. Eclectic professionals from different fields but very like-minded individuals. ”

Deepa Sebestain



“ I'm most thankful for the people that love me and whom I can count on for anything ”

Althea Miranda

“ My family above everything else ”

Cyneka Dsa

“ In a very special, way I'm thankful for this year. ”

Angelina D'sousa

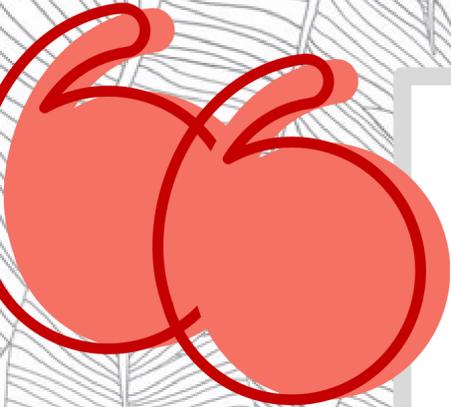
“ I'm thankful for my family and for all that I have ”

Angelina D'sousa

“ For opportunities that help me learn and grow ”

We're all learning to appreciate the things around us and not take them for granted through this journey in life.

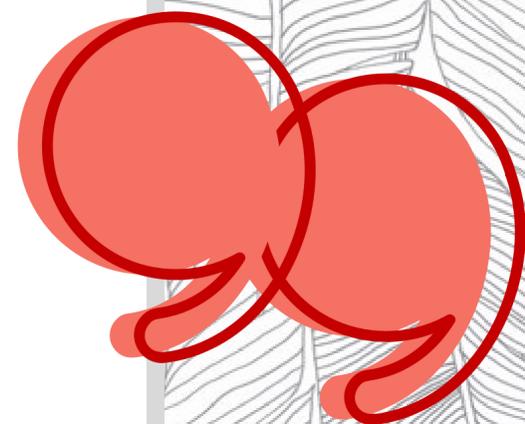
We're thankful for the take Charge journey and for all the memories we've made along the way.



# *Celebrate*

*Celebrate a new life  
each and every day  
put the past behind you  
clear your mind, make way.  
Won't You Celebrate With Me?  
There are lessons to learn  
memories to hold  
the future waits  
beckoning so bold.  
Won't You Celebrate With Me?  
To stand in one place  
not dealing with fear  
life goes stale  
nothing to cheer  
Still...Won't You Celebrate With Me?  
Start each day  
open heart, open mind.  
Make life a challenge,  
not just a grind.  
Won't You Celebrate With Me?  
Toasts and salute  
to loved ones  
offer thanks  
for life's blessings  
big and small.  
Won't You Celebrate With Me?*

**-Chrisann D'souza**





# FILTER ON. FILTER OFF

Navigating your Social Media Persona

A webinar by Rozzlin Pereira

Rozzlin...Auntie Maggie and her Magic!

Rozzlin Pereira aka Aunty Maggie is a loveable personality who brings us simple wisdom in a hilarious manner. Having used social media effectively and knowing it's benefits and pitfalls she was able to guide us through this maze. Aunty Maggie helped understand the world of social media making it a lot less scary.

Through personal stories and vivid examples, she brought out the importance of social media presence and also addressed issues like trolling and balancing reality.



Here are some of the key takeaways from the session:-

- Be careful of what you post on social media.
- Don't compare yourself to anyone or anything.
- Spread positivity, respond kindly and avoid aggressive behaviour
- Respond to negative comments politely or simply ignore them.
- Ensure your personal style matches your social media persona.
- Be authentic.



The session was fun, informative and entertaining though we connected virtually. A perfect fix for a newbie on social media. Oh, how we would have loved to meet auntie Maggie in person.



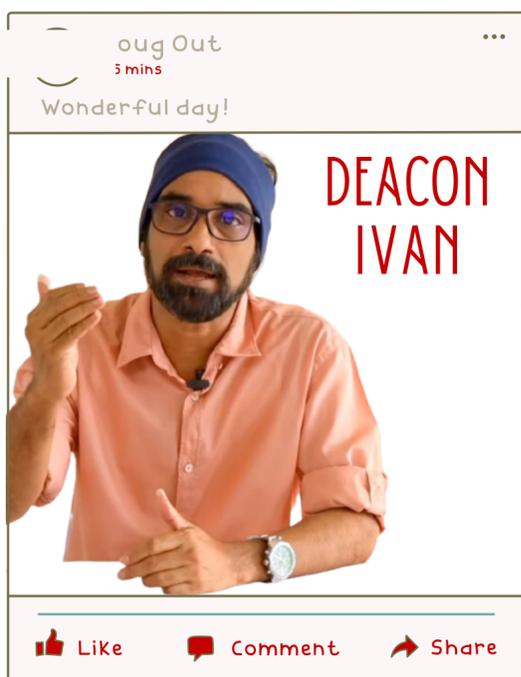
# UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS

...During The times of COVID

A Webinar with Deacon Ivan

Our family relationships are at the base of our personality and individuality. Deacon Ivan Fernandes, of the youth ministry of the Archdiocese of Mumbai, spoke about the importance of accepting, acknowledging admitting and acting on our family relationships. The pandemic has put a lot of pressure on this; our most important relationship, with our family members.

DEACON IVAN



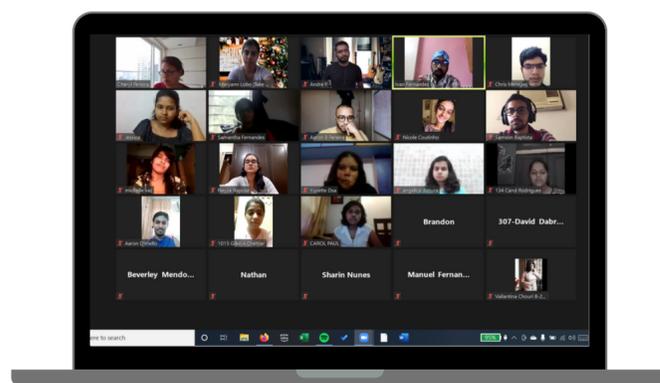
Deacon Ivan, reminded us about how and what we can do to keep our family relationships healthy and strong. Everyone has their own imperfections; we cannot expect our family to be perfect. We need to accept them for how they are instead of complaining. To this, he shared a theory that works best.

### The Three A's

- **Accept** your family and the relationship
- **Acknowledge** and **Admit** all that has happened
- **Act** on it to make it better.

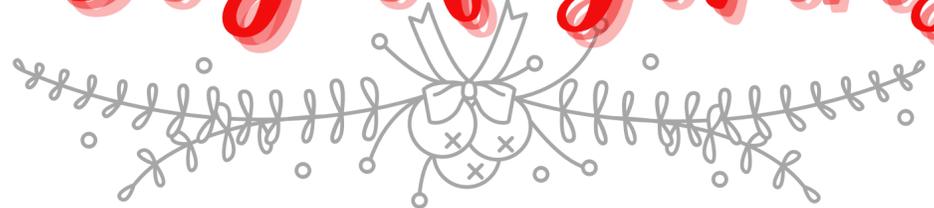
Here are some of the key takeaways from the session:

- No family is perfect. Families can be dysfunctional and that's absolutely normal.
- Learning to accept the things outside your circle of control that cannot be changed.
- Work on yourself first not on others. Be proactive instead of being reactive
- Our negative experiences of our childhood don't define us.
- Introduce our friends to our family



We need to distinguish between parrots and experts; then listen accordingly to them. The session truly did strike a chord with us With real-life examples. A need of the hour for the youths

# Joy of giving



The bible says, to give to the needy, without letting the left hand knowing what the right does. But the heart knows. There's a warm feeling in the heart, it is one of the most rewarding joys of life. Our mentors and mentees have shared theirs, read on.

I give whatever life has taught me, to the ones I meet along the way. The joy of giving for me is giving something and not expecting anything in return

Maryann Lobo



its a Joy to help someone as much as I can and put a smile on their face which in turn puts a smile on mine!

Althea Miranda



The joy in giving is being able to make a difference, however minuscule it may be.

Carol Paul

The joy of giving for me is the happiness and peace that I get in return. It's an indescribable feeling!

Angelina D'sousa

Sharing the things which I am blessed in abundance with

Anslem D'sousa

The joy of giving for me doesn't end at giving a candle but enabling them to light their own candle.

Nicole Coutinho



Chris Menezes



The picture to your future  
will always be a blur...  
until you change the  
resolution of your vision

- Aaron Savio D'mello



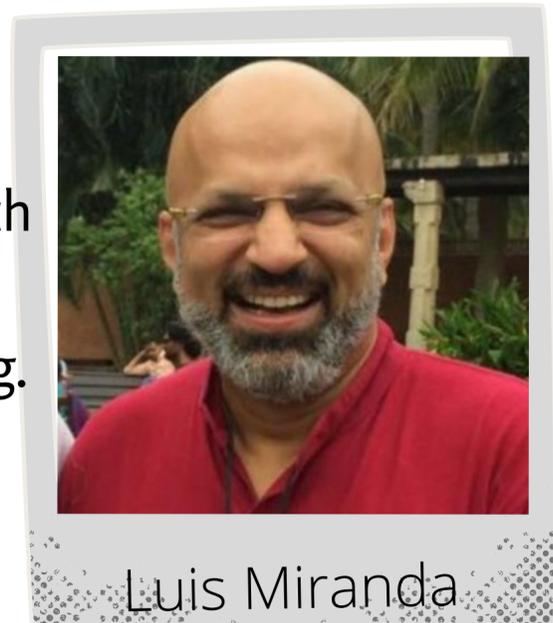


# BUILDING TRUST

...the Mentoring Journey continues

In our last issue, I wrote about the importance of building a relationship of trust between the mentor and mentee. I referred to five tools that could help all of us build trust – be vulnerable, be honest, don't be judgemental, don't betray confidentiality and listen. I missed out a sixth important tool – meet regularly.

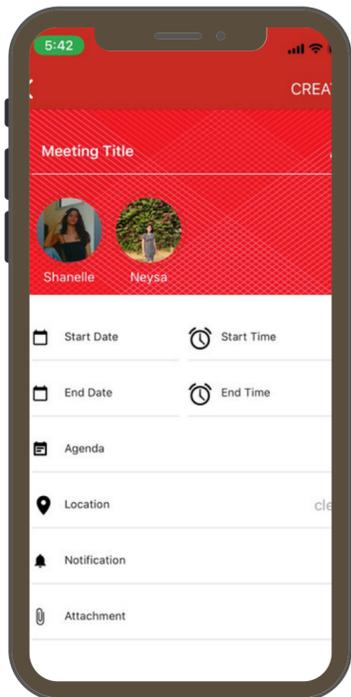
All of us are busy people. But at the start of the Take Charge Mentoring Programme each of us committed to spend at least one hour each month to meet our mentor or mentee and to update the Take Charge App immediately after each meeting.



“ Most relationships are developing splendidly, but some are still work-in-progress. ”

Most of us are doing a fabulous job, meeting our mentor or mentee and updating the App. However, the Take Charge team has noticed that some of us aren't meeting that regularly. Based on the data that we track, in December 2020, 97 mentoring pairs did not meet even once – exams and Christmas are not valid excuses. And the problem is not just with the month of December. We started our current mentoring cohort in July 2020, which is 6 months ago. Hence each pair should have met at least 6 times in 2020. However, only 88 pairs have met at least 5 times, 38 have met 4 times, 8 have met 3 times, 10 have met 2 times and 4 have met only once. Most relationships are developing splendidly, but some are still work-in-progress.

We track the above data primarily from the App, as we had discussed at various stages during the induction process.



Jessica and Maryann have struggled because there are some pairs who still do not update the App regularly. If we do not get data, we cannot monitor the impact of what we are doing – and the frequency of the meetings is one of the metrics that we track. It's good that you all have connected well on WhatsApp with your mentees but WhatsApp conversations must not replace mentoring sessions. If your mentee doesn't feel the need to spend only one hour a month talking to you, you can be assured that your mentee is not seeing the value in the mentoring relationship.

In order to build a good relationship of trust, the mentor and mentee need to meet at least once a month for at least an hour. This was what each of us had committed at the start of the programme. This year, because of COVID restrictions, we are holding our mentoring meetings online.

“ In an online world, it becomes even more critical to spend an hour of uninterrupted time with our mentee. ”

This creates added challenges to building relationships of trust. Hence, in an online world, it becomes even more critical to spend an hour of uninterrupted time with our mentee. So, dear mentors and mentees, if you consider your mentoring relationship to be important, you will create the time to meet at least once a month, for at least an hour. And you will update the App immediately. If any of you are facing a struggle getting an hour from your mentor or your mentee or struggling with the App, please contact Maryann, Jessica or Cheryl immediately thanks once again for volunteering to be a mentor or a mentee. Let's work towards making the relationship work better for the other person.

**Mentor - Luis Miranda**

[Chairman - Center for Civil Society,  
Co-Founder of Take Charge Mentoring programme]

# BUDDY COMMUNITY

## ...Cherishing our Bond



It is through interactive games that we connect so well. We're all navigating through the virtual space but that still hasn't stopped us from getting to know each other better. To strengthen the bonds of friendship, our buddy communities which include our mentors and mentees both organised online meeting full of fun and frolic.

“ During the session, we discussed around the theme of Celebration, and the conversation ran deep. Then, effortlessly, we slid into bursting laughter with the game Never Have I Ever. Playful and intense conversationalists, we were the perfect blend. ”

**The Alchemists**



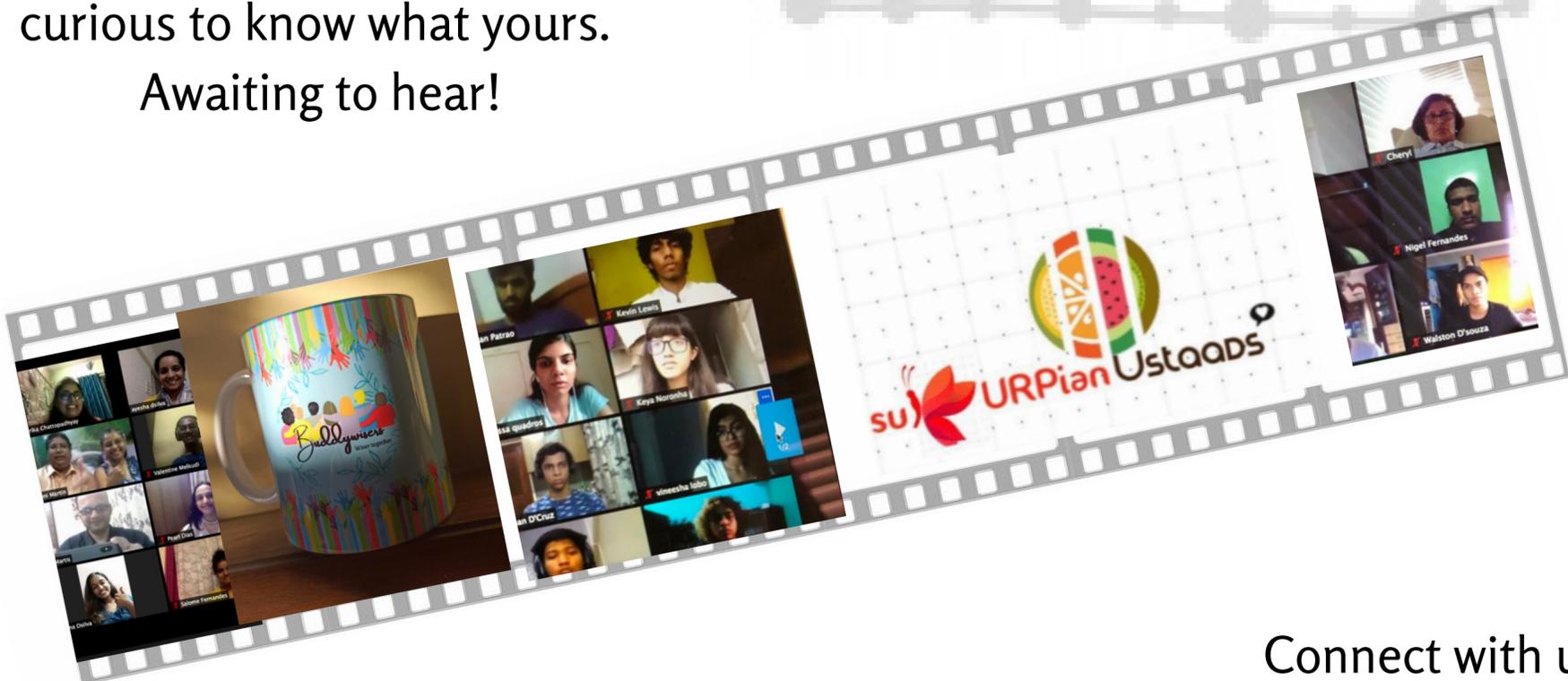
“The mentees organised the meet and called it a logo inauguration meet. We were divided into two groups and played the games Filmisthan Housie and Pictionary Riddle. The Buddy Wieser Pal Group have even styled a mug to go with all our meets. ”

**BuddyWisers**

“ The mentees have unveiled a group logo they'd worked on. They are now working on a group theme song. If this is the camaraderie we share, what a riot it would be when we all get together in person. ”

**SuBURPian UsTaAdS**

Every buddy group has their own uniqueness. We're curious to know what yours. Awaiting to hear!





## *Grow fearless.*

*A wise person once said...it's not what goes inside us that is bad...it's how we synthesis it and give back.*

*In the same way...visuals and words that go into your mind daily are not bad, they're just neutral...it's the reaction that your mind decides to give that creates the ripples.*

*some might just smile and shrug it off whilst others might ponder and dig deep in self-loathing or even worse use aggression and resentment.*

*you have to decide whether you want to use it as a step to grow or want to be stepped by it*

**-Aaron Savio D'mello**



# STAY IN TOUCH



Connect with us on...

**takechargementorship@gmail.com**

*Please do share your insights, learnings, feedback or suggestions with us. We are constantly looking to improve and to provide an enriching experience for all involved. Your contributions are welcome and appreciated. Help us make this experience more and more meaningful.*



Follow the Take Charge Community on Social Media



Click on the icon

*Again, a sincere thanks to all our contributors and to the team for helping us make this issue a success*

## THE EDITORIAL TEAM

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TAKE  
CHARGE

# THANK YOU

For your contributions

## From Mentees

Aaron Savio D'mello  
Chrisann D'souza  
Anslem D'souza  
Althea Miranda  
Angelina D'souza  
Chriselle Couto  
Shawnel D'souza  
Cyneka Dsa  
Nicole Coutinho  
Chris Menezes

## Special Thanks To Our Dear Mentors

Luis Miranda  
Brian Almeida  
Deepa Sebastian  
Asha Almeida

*Stay in touch.  
We'll be back soon!*

