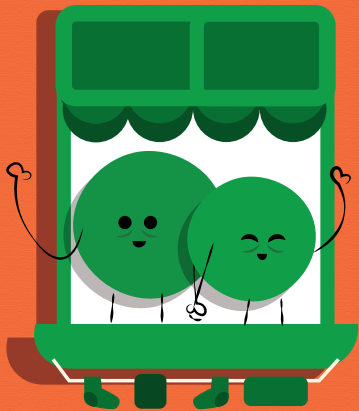
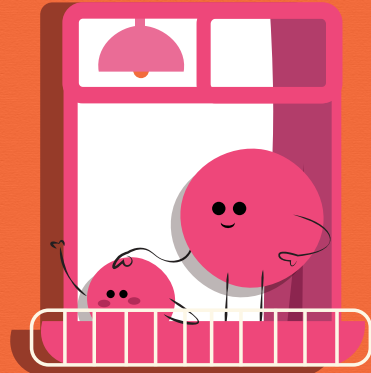


GIVING CIRCLES



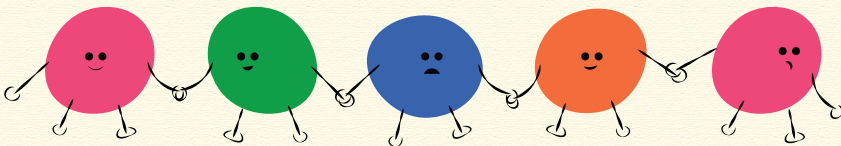
HELLO!



Roving Labs is an initiative that encourages everyday residents to participate in grassroots initiatives in Singapore's heartlands. With community-building as its focus, Roving Labs aims to equip residents with the tools, knowledge, and confidence needed to organise and kickstart their own community projects.

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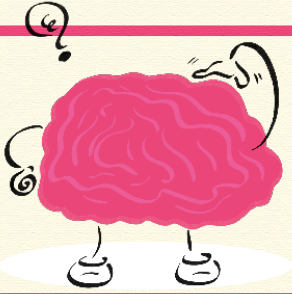


1. WHAT ARE GIVING CIRCLES?

Giving Circles are small groups of people—volunteers, friends, neighbours—formed around someone in need of help, or looking for a change in their lives. This person, who could be anyone from a senior to a child, lays out their needs and goals. Then, the group gets together to discuss how they can lend a helping hand. Support could include battling any challenges such as health or loneliness.

Giving Circles is not only about donating money, but giving in the value of support through collective resources to help an individual achieve their goals.

WHO'S INVOLVED IN A GIVING CIRCLE?

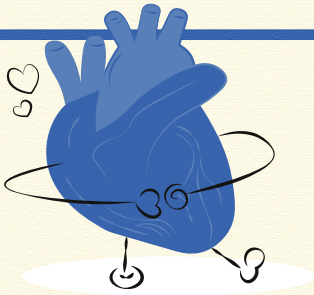
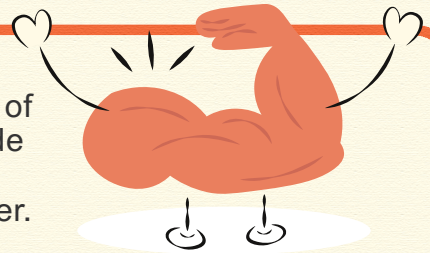


1 Facilitator

Facilitators are the **head** of the group. Their main goal is to support the recipients by making sure they receive the assistance agreed upon by the group.

2 Participants

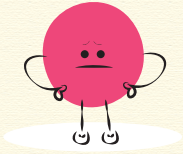
Participants are the **muscles** of the group. Participants provide support (be it financial aid or acts of service) to the receiver.



3 Recipients

Recipients are the **heart** of the group. A recipient's goal is to embrace the support offered to them, empowering them towards achieving their goals and bettering their situation.

2. WHY SHOULD I JOIN?



Did you notice your neighbours going through a rough patch, but weren't sure how to step in?

Have you ever faced a difficulty, but found that you had trouble seeking help?



It's time to break down your walls and open your hearts to your neighbours!

Let's keep the kampung spirit alive! Socialise and get to know residents living along your corridor better and be the positive change in your neighbour's lives.

Wish to contribute and want to help build a sense of belonging among the residents of your community? Get the conversations going as a facilitator and start a Giving Circle — be the mediator and the relationship builder that every community needs.



If you're in need of assistance, don't be shy— reach out!

And if you're worried about sharing your personal information with others, fret not! As a recipient, your information will remain anonymous until the receiving and giving parties have been decided.

**Are you ready to be part of a Giving Circles?
Keep reading this playbook to learn how it works!**

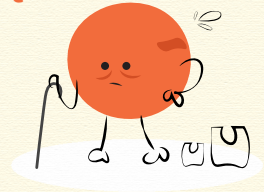
3. GETTING STARTED

Forming a Giving Circle:

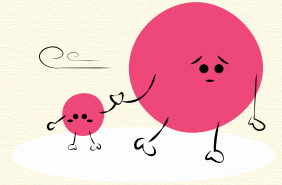
In the initial stages, starting a giving circle may seem complicated or maybe even daunting. Have no fear! The following section will equip you with the necessary knowledge that will help you in kickstarting your journey!

A) Selecting People Who Need Support

Ever noticed an elderly neighbour that lives alone and is struggling with their grocery runs? Heard of a young family struggling to finance their newborn child?



These residents can either be identified by the participants in your group, or someone who reaches out to be part of the circle—the most important factor is that they are in need of support. Do prioritise the people that need immediate help and care (i.e. those that are plagued with sickness or financial issues).



Since this is a voluntary initiative without the use of public funds, flexibility is allowed. There's no need for permission!

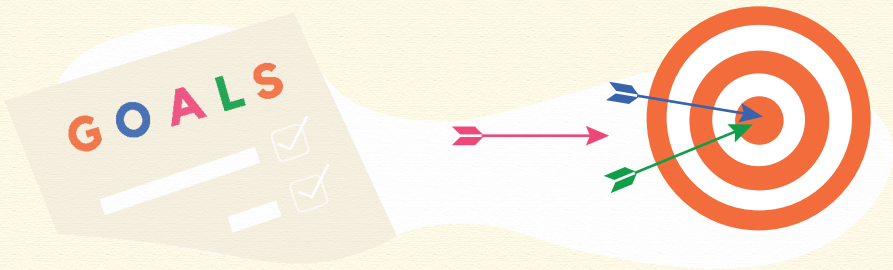
Should you face uncertainty in identifying these people, reach out to professional referrals from **Social Service Agencies (SSAs)** or **Family Service Centres (FSCs)** to identify and refer recipients to you and/or your group.

Goal Setting and Articulating Support Needs

Goal setting is important as it helps participants to better understand the support needs of the individual and their circumstances, allowing for everyone to work together cohesively and be accountable in meeting the personal goals and needs of the recipient.

If you do not have a group of volunteers and **are helping on your own**, you can converse with the intended recipient about their needs and goals.

If you are **part of a group**, the facilitator of the group should be chosen to hold this talk on the group's behalf.



Should you be unsure of how to carry out your goal setting conversation, the following prompts might be helpful for your client:

- Thinking about a year from now, how would you like your life to be?
- If you could do anything, what would you do?
- Is there something that's not working well in your life now that you would like to change?
- Is there something you did in the past that you would like to do again?
- Anything that you've always wanted to try, but never got around to or did not get the opportunity to do so?

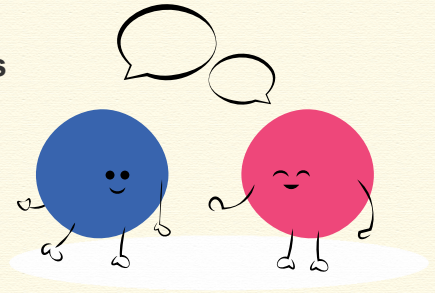
To note: It is of utmost importance that the receiver remains anonymous in their biography during the selection of volunteers to support them, as their identification information remains confidential and personal.

Mapping Out People You Already Know

There are many people that live among us who are struggling financially, physically or mentally. How do we identify them?

1

Talk to your neighbours, grassroots organisations and your family members to find out if they might know of anyone who is in need of assistance. This identification process does not necessarily have to rely on professional judgement.



3

The Community Circles in the UK has a guiding principle that: “When starting a Circle, you may feel worried about inviting people, some of the common things we hear are, ‘people are too busy’ or ‘I don’t want people to feel beholden to come.’ Our experience is that **people feel privileged to be asked and often want to help but don’t know how.** The Circle helps to let people know what they can do to help.”

2

After identifying these individuals, you can **start recruiting participants** that you deem suitable to join. For example, if you notice a neighbour who is struggling to pay their bills and you know someone who has the capacity to help, you can invite them to join!



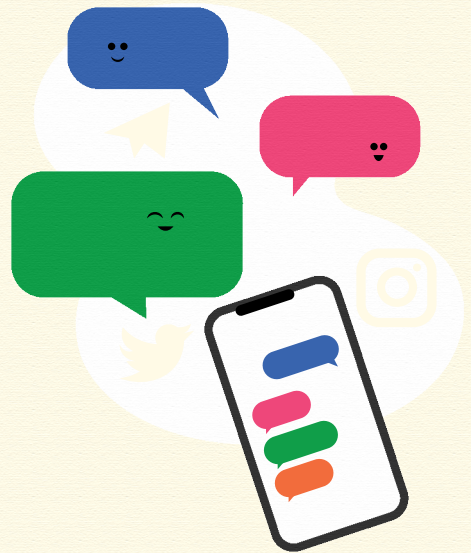
B) Recruiting Participants

If it's within your capacity, there is no need to form a group of participants to help these individuals. Instead, you can kickstart the Giving Circle yourself!

Should it be too much for you to handle, raise this issue and recruit participants to join your group. If you wish to work alongside other participants, there are many ways in which you can recruit them on this journey with you!

Our voices can be powerful tools of communication. Research shows that asking through word-of-mouth would encourage more individuals to join as there is a fundamental trust.

Consider spreading a participant **Recruit Form** around through social media channels such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram or Facebook. **Here's a template!** If you have a knack for design, design your own fliers and distribute them to anyone in the neighbourhood who you think might be interested in joining your Giving Circle!



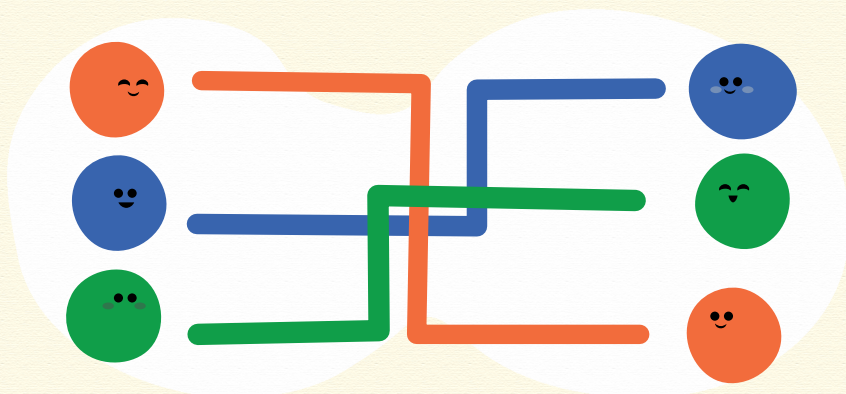
To facilitators: The Giving Circle works by gathering people you already know (family, friends, or neighbours), or a group of friendly strangers and participants for a monthly meet up to have conversations and share ideas that can turn into action.

C) Matching Participants to Recipients

Once a group of participants signs up to offer support, the facilitator will **review and show a one-page description** (refer to Annex A) of the person that is requesting the support. This allows participants to decide if they have the relevant skills, experience, or resources to help this person. It's recommended that the facilitator invites people that the client is familiar with to act as a support in the Giving Circle (if possible).

Remember, **not all participants** within the circle will have skill sets that can directly assist the person in need of support and that's perfectly fine! Participants often have many other resources and connections that may only surface once they are called upon to help.

It's good to prioritise participants with the skills, experience and resources directly relevant to those seeking support. But keep in mind that **having a variety** of opinions, resources, and skills in the circle will be beneficial to you and the community!

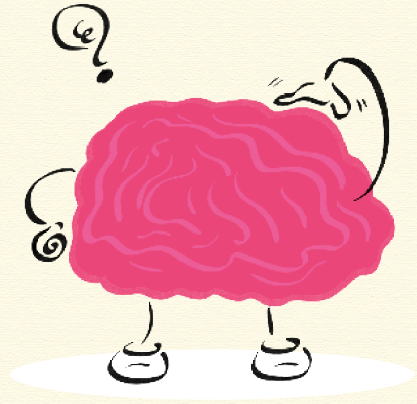


If you're working with your local SSAs or FSCs, the facilitator and partner organisations can sometimes broker possible relationships if they see a good fit. Instead of asking formally "Would you like to be part of this programme?," Community Circles UK suggests, "Would you like to share with Mrs Lim your passion for plants?"

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

a Facilitators

1. Keep track of the family you've been assigned to, and ensure they are receiving the aid your group has decided on.



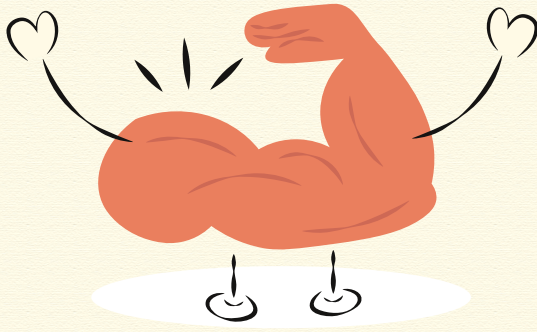
Remind participants to keep you updated on their status or any issues faced when providing aid, and to inform you once objectives have been completed.

2. Lead and organise regular meetings with your group (decide your own timeframe and frequency).

You can decide on how frequently the group meets internally based on everyone's comfort levels.

- Ensure all relevant people are present, and at the end of meetings, be aware of what everyone has been assigned to help with.
- Documenting meetings is important!

3. Solve disputes within the group, and help them troubleshoot issues they encounter.



b Participants

- 1. Don't forget to keep your facilitator regularly updated on your status.**

Make sure to let your facilitator know once you have fulfilled the aid you were providing.

- Let them know ahead of time if you cannot provide the aid you had chosen/were assigned.
- E.g. If you were supposed to bring someone down for a medical appointment, and you now cannot make it, make sure the facilitator is aware of the problem ASAP.

2. Keep in touch with the family you are assigned to.

More communication is better than less!

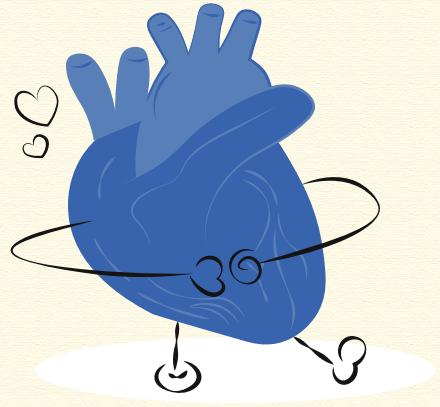
3. Remember, you can help in many more ways than just money!

Something as simple as spending time with the family, helping them with their groceries, helping their children with homework, or even something else entirely will definitely brighten their day!

C Recipients

1. Talk to the group!

Don't feel shy! The volunteers want to help you, so talk to them and let them know exactly how to do so.



2. Update your group if there are changes in your situation: if you need more aid or if it conflicts with the help provided.

- E.g. If you're facing sudden financial issues and need immediate assistance, you can raise it to the facilitators for them to help you
- E.g. If someone was scheduled to take you to an appointment, make sure to inform them if there are any special requirements or changes to the dates/times

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

For more information, please head to the Roving Labs website at rovinglabs-sg.com or scan the QR code here:



Q: I want to help out by being a facilitator but don't feel qualified enough. Should I be a participant instead?

A: Don't worry! There are no criterias in what qualifies for a facilitator. As long as you have the motivation to host and manage these giving circles, it's more than enough.

Q: I've decided to take on the facilitator role. Is there a format to follow for the first meeting?

A: Not necessarily, but we do recommend the following. Opening introductions, discuss how Giving Circles would work for your group, discussion of goals, norms, roles and the sharing of logistics and planning.

Q: Where may I get further information detailing Giving Circles?

A: Feel free to check out all the available resources at rovinglabs-sg.com

Q: How do I properly select recipients as the facilitator?

A: Your person to help can be chosen by the group, or it can be someone who asks to be part of the program. The most important thing is, they need help. Unfortunately, you can't help everyone, it's all about prioritising the Giving Circle's goals.

Some people need immediate help and care (the ones who are sick, facing financial issues etc.), while others might have to take a back seat if you don't have enough people. Either way, everyone will get the help they need eventually.

Q: I'm unsure how to select these recipients and would prefer to rely on professional agencies to map the clients to me. How do I go about this?

A: You can use MSF's directory and enter your postal code to find an FSC: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/our-services/directories>. Email or contact the SSA with background on Giving Circles, and explain your intent and liaise a meeting with the social worker in charge.

Q: Who do I contact for further inquiries?

A: You may contact Justin Lee at either **+65 6601 1419** or justin.lee@nus.edu.sg.

ANNEX

Annex A: 1-Page Bio of Recipient

Who is [Insert Name]?

He's a 42-year-old Chinese man who is currently doing food delivery after coming out of Comcare. He lives with his parents and enjoys playing with his young niece and nephew, but is not so close to his elder brother. His highest educational qualifications are A-levels.

He had his first nervous breakdown in the army, and after that, had to leave NUS and never completed his degree. As a result, he has mainly held part-time or ad hoc jobs. He tries to take less medication because he believes in using a more 'holistic' approach and has come to think of his mental health issues as a kind of 'spiritual malaise'.

His religious friends have recommended meditation and some course of prayer he chants every day, which he thinks helps him. When he comes off his meds, he may have suicidal thoughts, and he assures me that he gets back on his meds when he has them.

He is currently interested in copyediting and has signed up for online courses in Udemy, and wonders if he will be able to get freelance jobs in this field. He also hopes to teach tuition for a better income stream and is brushing up on his primary school science. His longer-term goals are to return to university, possibly SUSS, to complete a degree. He also hopes for better relationships with his family and friends, and worries of being a burden to his parents, specifically his mother, who is his greatest supporter.



**Scan this to visit the
Roving Labs website!**