

Teaching Package for New Senior Secondary Liberal Studies

Socially Withdrawn Youth

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Issue: Socially Withdrawn Youths**(1) Areas of Study and Questions for Enquiry****Number of Lessons: 10**

Area of Study, Module and Theme	Question for Enquiry in the <i>Curriculum and Assessment Guide (C & A Guide)</i>	Page Number in <i>C & A Guide</i>
Area of Study: Self and Personal Development Module 1: Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationships Theme 1: Understanding Oneself What challenges and opportunities does a person have during adolescence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the current salient trends that pose particular challenges and opportunities to adolescents in Hong Kong and how do they respond to these trends?• What factors influence the self-esteem of adolescents? How is it related to adolescents' behaviour and aspirations for the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19
Area of Study: Society and Culture Module 2: Hong Kong Today Theme 1: Quality of Life Which directions might be chosen in maintaining and improving Hong Kong residents' quality of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the different opinions of Hong Kong residents on the priorities, which constitute the quality of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 27

(2) Content of Study

Related Concepts	Related Knowledge	Related Values(C & A Guide Page No.)	Related Generic Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially withdrawn youths (hikikomori) • NEETs (Not engaged in Employment, Education or Training) • Socially withdrawn • Self-esteem • Life skills • Lifestyle • Being aware of oneself and of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of socially withdrawn youths: reasons and impact • Quality of life • Emotional Intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem (p. 19) • Self-reflection (p. 19) • Self-discipline (p. 19) • Responsibility (p. 19) • Rationality (p. 19) • Respect for others (p. 21) • Interdependence (p. 21) • Care and concern(p. 27) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Technology Skills • Communication Skills • Study Skills • Problem-solving Skills • Creativity • Collaboration Skills • Critical Thinking Skills • Self-management Skills • Computing Skills <p>Skills other than Generic Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate on main points • Identify related concepts • Differentiate between facts, opinions and comments • Perceive different stakeholders' positions, situations and needs • Point out conflicts and internal contradictions faced by stakeholders • Compare the situations of the same social phenomenon in different regions/nations • Identify the main causes and supporting factors of an issue • Create associations

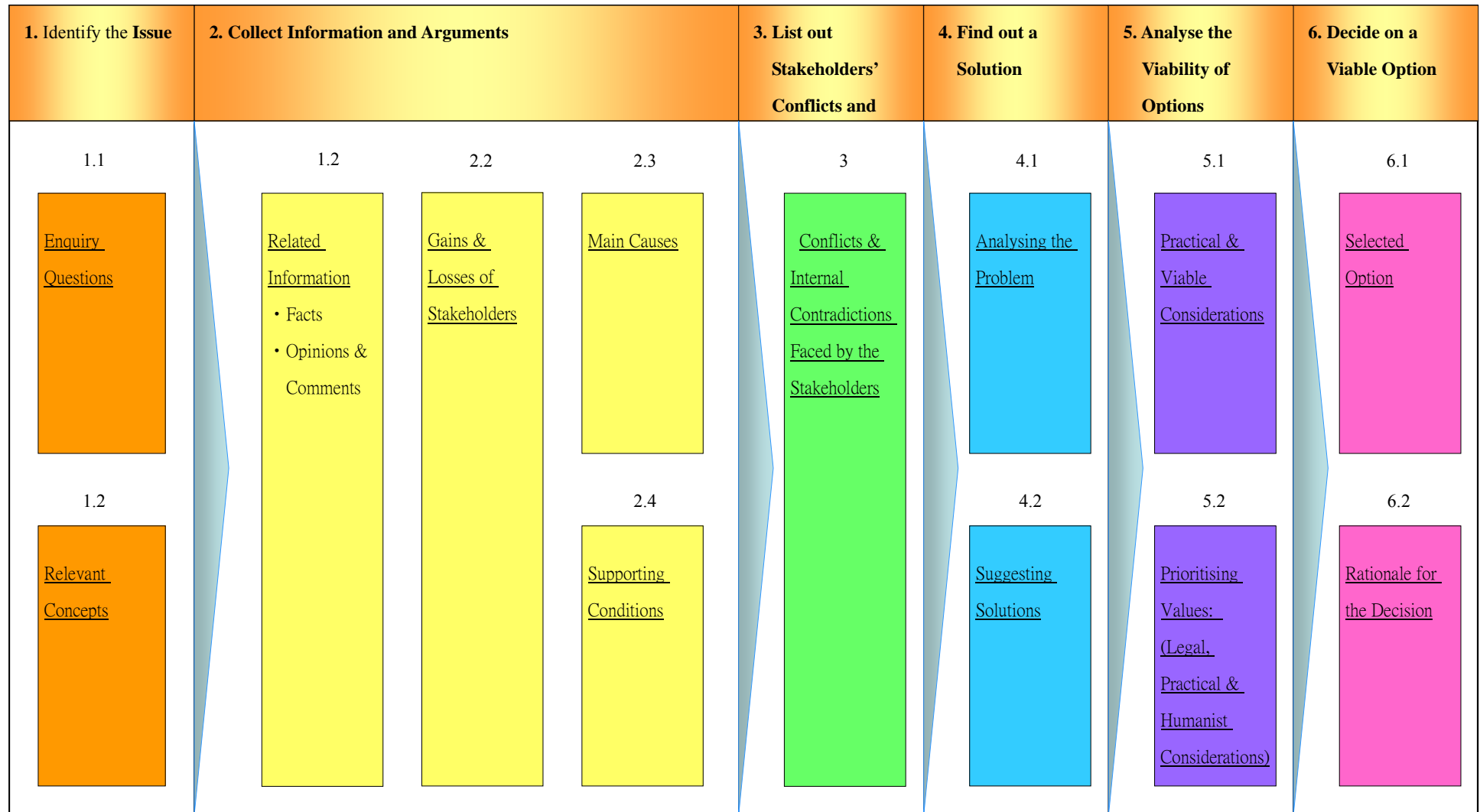
(3) Outline of Teaching Plan

Concept Map	Enquiry Questions	LEDO Process ¹
<pre> graph TD SF[Social Factors] -- Cause --> SWY[Socially Withdrawn Youths] PF[Personal Factors: Self-esteem] <--> Mutually Affect SWY FF[Family Factors] -- Cause --> SWY SWY -- Affect --> L[Lifestyle] L -- Affect --> QOL[Quality of Life] </pre> <p>The Concept Map illustrates the following flow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Factors and Family Factors are labeled as Cause and point to Socially Withdrawn Youths. Personal Factors: Self-esteem and Socially Withdrawn Youths are labeled as Mutually Affect each other. Socially Withdrawn Youths Affect Lifestyle. Lifestyle Affect Quality of Life. 	1. What are the characteristics of the phenomenon of socially withdrawn youths? To what extent has this phenomenon become a current, social trend?	1. Identify the issue 1.1 Enquiry question 1.2 Related concepts
	2. How are personal factors, family factors and social factors related to the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon?	2. Collecting information and arguments 2.1 Related information 2.2 Gains and losses sustained by the main stakeholders (Socially Withdrawn Youths) 2.3 Gains and losses sustained by other stakeholders (Family and Society)
	3. What is the relationship between adolescent withdrawn behaviour and self-esteem? How do the two affect each other?	2. Collecting information and arguments 2.4 Main reason 2.5 Supporting Factors
	4. How does the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle affect the quality of life at the various levels?	3. List out conflicts and internal contradictions faced by stakeholders
	5. How do people respond to the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle?	3. List out conflicts and internal contradictions faced by the youths
		4. Find out a solution 4.1 Analyse problems 4.2 Suggest options 5. Analyse the viability of options 5.1 Practical and viable considerations 5.2 Prioritising values 6. Decide on a viable option

¹ LEDO Process: “**L**ife **E**ducation Based on **D**ependent **O**rigination” Process is a thinking and learning tool developed by the Centre of Buddhist Studies of the University of Hong Kong for assisting students in tackling issues in Liberal Studies.

LEDO Process Flowchart[©]

Issue for Enquiry: _____



(4) Teaching Plan

✦ *To cater for differences in teaching and learning styles and to provide multiple teaching and learning approaches, this teaching plan has a rich variety of classroom activities and teaching resources. Teachers may select materials, activities and related resources in accordance with the classroom context and/ or student ability.*

Enquiry Question (1): What characteristics does the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon have? To what extent has this phenomenon become a current, social trend?

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>1.1 Topic Entry Point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show the movie posters or comics of the Japanese popular story, “A true love story”² (電車男), and the brief description of the content of the movie (Appendix 1). Ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Have you ever watched this movie or related TV series, or seen related novels and comics? Ask students to list the features of the lifestyle of the main character in the story. <p>Hint:</p> <p>The teacher should let the students voice their opinions. There is no rush at this point to make judgements or guide the students to establish correct values and attitudes. By exploring the question together, the teacher will learn about the students' understanding and impressions of socially withdrawn youths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Train Man</i> movie poster or comics <i>Train Man</i> story content (Appendix 1) 	<p>(i) Understanding concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socially withdrawn youths' characteristics and influences Socially withdrawn youths NEET (尼特族) Socially withdrawn <p>(ii) Learning/Thinking Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaborating on issues Recognising related concepts Analysing, handling and summarising information
	<p>1.2 Emphasize the Theme</p> <p>Briefly explain that in Japan the main character in “A true love story” is often linked to people called <i>hikikomori</i>. This kind of youth opts for self-confinement and lives the life of a hermit because they cannot face being excluded or the demands of society. Social services organisations in Hong Kong refer to youths opting for this socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle (Appendix 2).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Japanese hikikomori information (Appendix 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiating facts, opinions and comments

² *Train Man* is a story found on a Japanese BBS website. In the story, a young person with socially withdrawn tendencies falls for a girl whom he met on a train. Due to his lack of social skills and experience, he asks for advice from the Internet on ways to court the girl. In the end, he succeeds. The story has been made into a movie, a TV series, comics, plays and has become part of a popular culture.

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>1.3 Show clips of the documentary on socially withdrawn youths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher's introduction: For a socially withdrawn youth in real life, would there be such an ideal job and a romantic ending as in the "A true love story"? Show <i>Sunday Report</i> video segments (Appendix 3) <p>(Content outline: Due to the high youth unemployment rate, many deschooled and unemployed youths do not benefit from an economic recovery, and with a prolonged period of being down and lost, they become more inclined to giving up on themselves and becoming secluded from the outside world. For these youths, who are in the prime of their lives, what kind of life do they lead, and what are their thoughts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students to compare and contrast the modes of life of the main characters in "A true love story" and in the <i>Sunday Report</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Sunday Report</i> video segments (Appendix 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparing situation of the same social phenomenon in different regions/nations Able to use IT to collect and collate related information <p>(iii) Attitudes and Outlook on Life</p> <p>Understanding the mutual link between self, family and society: that personal lifestyles may become a burden on society; that it is not a long-term and beneficial life attitude if one builds one's happiness upon others' suffering or turns one's problem into that of others.</p>
	<p>1.4 Activity Explanation</p> <p>Teachers may choose direct teaching. If so, to consolidate student learning, they may distribute the supplementary resources: the definition of socially withdrawn youths in Hong Kong, their duration of continuous withdrawal and the extent of their social withdrawal (Appendix 4).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hong Kong's socially withdrawn youths definitions (Appendix 4) 	
	<p>1.5 State Enquiry Question 1: What are the characteristics of phenomenon of the socially withdrawn youths? To what extent has this phenomenon become a current, social trend?</p> <p>1.5.1 Ask students to form groups and organise and analyse the information with reference to Enquiry Question 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand out resources: Situation of Socially Withdrawn Youths in China (Appendix 5.1); Situation of Socially Withdrawn youths in Japan (Appendix 5.2); Situation of Socially Withdrawn Youths in Hong Kong (Appendix 5.3); and Situation of Socially Withdrawn Youths in Europe and America (Appendix 5.4).⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socially withdrawn youths in various contexts information (Appendix 5.1-4) LEDO Process Step 1: Determining the Gist of the Issue Worksheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Enquiry Questions 1.2 Related Concepts 	

⁴ In class, teachers may add or delete the resources according to student ability. They can also provide students with more current resources.

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand out the LEDO Process⁵ Step 1: Determining the Gist of the Issue Worksheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Teacher may complete the enquiry question (LEDO Process 1.1) as an introductory framework for exploring the issue of socially withdrawn youths before handing out the worksheet to students ii) Teacher may choose not to hand out related concepts (LEDO Process 1.2) to students and keep it to themselves for reference use, or hand it out to them to help them revise all the concepts they have learnt after the entire socially withdrawn youths learning activity is over. Hand out 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Exploring and completing related information (LEDO Process 2.1) ii) Exploring gains and losses of the main stakeholders (LEDO Process 2.2) iii) Exploring losses and gains of other stakeholders (LEDO Process 2.3) Ask students to begin discussion after reading the resources, and then complete the above worksheets to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Differentiate the facts, opinions and comments described in the resources. ii) Understand from the perspective of different stakeholders (e.g. socially withdrawn youths, family and society) the phenomenon of socially withdrawn youths and the social trends it represents. iii) Point out different stakeholders' opinions on socially withdrawn youths. <p>Advise students, when completing the worksheets, they may also use the definition on socially withdrawn youths provided in the documentary video clip in Teaching Procedures 3 and 5.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Related Information, 2.2 Gains and Losses of the Main Stakeholders, and 2.3 Gains and Losses of Other Stakeholders 	

⁵ At the end of each lesson, teachers should collect the LEDO Process worksheets completed by the students so that they can be returned to the students in the next lesson for their reference.

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Learning and Teaching Objectives
	<p>1.5.2 Ask students to present their analysis report and answer Enquiry Question 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Reminder <p>Guide students to tackle the enquiry question from both the positive and negative perspective, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Socially withdrawn youths' losses and gains ❖ How can socially withdrawn youths' lifestyles satisfy their personal needs? ❖ Socially withdrawn youths' interpersonal and family relationships ❖ Socially withdrawn youths' time management ❖ Socially withdrawn youths' influences on society ❖ Compare trends of Hong Kong's socially withdrawn youths with those overseas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher summarises the characteristics and influences of socially withdrawn youths from the positive and negative perspective. <hr/> <p>Ask students to prepare for the lesson by searching for data on socially withdrawal youths and the causes of their existence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of information: research reports, featured articles, current affairs, news, video, pictures, websites Distribute 2.4 and 2.5 of the LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Explore the Main Causes (LEDO Process 2.4) ii) Explore the Supporting Factors (LEDO Process 2.5) Ask students to complete the worksheet with the collected information to use for discussion in the next lesson. If students are relatively weak in collecting information, they may be helped to complete the worksheet for class preparation by being supplied with the supplementary information first (Appendix 6). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.4 Main Cause(s) and 2.5 Supporting Factors of LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet Supplementary information (Appendix 6) 	

Enquiry Question 2:

How are personal factors, family factors and social factors related to the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon'?

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
Lessons 4-5 Worksheets pp. 4-5: 2. Collecting Information and Arguments	2.1 Topic Entry Point <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show the confessions of a socially withdrawn youth in Hong Kong (Appendix 7) Ask students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ What are the main points of the youth's confessions? ❖ How do these main points reflect the causes of the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon? 2.2 State Enquiry Question 2: How are personal factors, family factors and social factors related to the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon? 2.2.1 Students are to discuss in groups the materials from their previous preparation lesson. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss Enquiry Question 2 using 2.4 and 2.5 of LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet. Distribute related research reports (Appendix 8) as supplementary resources so as to widen the students' horizons and to provide another perspective for discussion. ✦ Depending on student ability, the teacher may include information of other research reports, or select other information that is less directed so as to provide more perspectives for further thinking. 2.2.2 Ask students to present the analysis report and answer the Enquiry Question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise students to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Comment on the percentage of socially withdrawn youths in Hong Kong and the rising trend, as shown in the data. ❖ Differentiate which resources/charts in the research report summaries (Appendix 8) analyse personal factors, family factors and/or social factors of the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon, and point out the gist of each resource/chart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confessions of a socially withdrawn youth in Hong Kong (Appendix 7) 	(i) Understanding concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Causes of the creation of withdrawn youths Self-esteem Life Skills (ii) Learning/Thinking Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiating the main causes and the supporting factors of a phenomenon/ problem Able to compute (i.e. analysing charts and making comments) Able to communicate (discuss) Creating associations (psychological test) Perceiving the positions and situations of different stakeholders (iii) Attitude and Outlook of Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising clearly one's self-esteem and reviewing one's values system Reflecting on methods to achieve the balance among self-esteem, expectations and behaviour, so as to deal with the objective reality

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>Suggested Answers</p> <p><i>Personal factors</i> <i>Family factors</i> <i>Social factors</i></p> <p><i>Diagrams 3, 4, 5 and 6</i> <i>Diagrams 7 and 8</i> <i>Diagrams 2, 9 and 10</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher summarises: The main reason for youth to be socially withdrawn such as low self-esteem, motivation and inadequate skills. Other factors being family, and society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.4 Main Cause(s) and 2.5 Supporting Factors of LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet Related research reports summaries (Appendix 8) 	
	<p>2.2.3. Activity Explanations</p> <p>For using supplementary resources to consolidate the learning of the above activities, teachers may select direct lecturing or handouts to explain concepts of self-esteem (Appendix 9) and life skills (Appendix 10).</p> <p>* Lesson 6 will explore how to apply the above concepts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related concepts of self-esteem and life skills (Appendices 9-10) 	
	<p>2.4 Arousing interest with familiar psychological tests</p> <p>(* Teacher may decide whether to use this game in accordance with time constraints and actual teaching needs.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample (Appendix 11) 	
	<p>2.5. Students complete the Self-esteem Measurement Chart (teacher please download the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale from the web) to understand their self-esteem with a questionnaire widely used in psychological studies.</p> <p>(* Teacher may decide whether to use this game in accordance with time constraints and actual teaching needs.)</p> <p>Homework: Ask students to write a short description, using a real life example on how one's self-esteem affects one's expectations and behaviour.</p>		

Enquiry Question 3:

What is the relationship between adolescent withdrawn behaviour and self-esteem? How do the two affect each other?

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
Lesson 6 Worksheet p. 6: 3. Listing conflicts and internal contradictions faced by stakeholders	3.1 State Enquiry Question 3: What is the relationship between adolescent withdrawn behaviour and self-esteem? How do the two affect each other? 3.1.1 Self-esteem Matching Game or Self-esteem vs Withdrawn Behaviour Concept Map (* Teacher may decide whether to use this game in accordance with time constraints and actual teaching needs.) 3.1.2 Self-esteem Matching Game ♦ The teacher may choose to show segments of the TV drama as an introduction to this part, using the story of Fu Cha (King of Wu) and Gou Jian (King of Yue) to bring up the point that exaggerated self-esteem will bring about very different results (Appendix 12). • Ask students to form groups. Distribute to each group the Self-esteem Case Cards, the Self-esteem Matching Worksheet, and Self-esteem Matching labels (Appendix 13, sample: Appendix 14). ❖ The Case Cards are numbered in the letters identical to those of the 6 cases/stories. ❖ The worksheet keeps the lettering of the 6 cases/stories. The oval-shaped blanks are for students to complete the practice results related to each lettered case/story. The rectangular blanks are for students to complete the self-esteem, ability and expectation related to each lettered case/story. ❖ Ask students to cut the oval-shaped and rectangular answers on the label and stick them to the blanks of each case/story. • Ask students to read the cases on the Case Card. After discussing, analysing, and collating their opinions, they are to stick the various labels with the matching cases on the worksheet, and then stick the labels describing the different self-esteem, ability and expectations on places that match them with the cases.	• TV drama <i>Zheng Ba (Struggle for Hegemony)</i> Segments (Appendix 14) • Self-esteem Case Study Cards • Self-esteem Matching Worksheet and Self-esteem Matching labels (Appendix 15) • Sample (Appendix 16)	(i) Understanding concepts • Self-esteem • Self-awareness (ii) Learning/Thinking Skills • Able to analyse (Matching Game) • Able to create and analyse concepts (concept map) • Able to self-manage (e.g. developing proper self-esteem) (iii) Attitude and Outlook of life • Cultivating the habit of being self-aware • Reflecting on balancing self-esteem, expectations and behaviour so as to deal with objective reality

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ If students are less able, the teacher may complete the answers on the oval-shaped blanks of the worksheet first, or complete all the answers first and ask students to fill in the letter for each case/story. ✦ If students are able, the teacher may ask students to deduce the results on their own after reading the 6 cases. • Each group of students is to send a representative to present their results and the reasons for their matching. <p>Advise students to pay attention to the fact that self-knowledge can bring about a balance between the psychological conditions of being too conceited or too self-abasing, so taking appropriate action to enhance one's ability through practice, to make one's life better is necessary.</p> <p>3.1.3 Self-esteem vs Withdrawn Behaviour Concept Map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ If students are able, the teacher may also let students make the Self-esteem vs Withdrawn Behaviour Concept Map themselves to describe the mutual cause-and-effect relationship between self-esteem and withdrawn behaviour (example: Appendices 15 and 16) so as to further cultivate the students' ability to understand concepts and be creative. • Ask students to form groups. Hand out colour pens and drawing paper. • Let students collectively create through discussing, brainstorming or mind mapping the concept map showing that self-esteem and withdrawn behaviour being are mutual causes and results of each other. • Ask each group of students to present their concept map and elaborate their arguments. • Advise students to pay attention to the relationship between self-esteem, expectations, life skills and concrete practice and how such relationships affect withdrawn behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem vs Withdrawn Behaviour Concept Map • Examples (Appendices 17-18) ❖ colour pens and drawing paper 	

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>❖ Explore the pros and cons of having too high/low self-esteem (e.g. Some socially withdrawn youths have low self-esteem due to low educational qualifications and vocational skills and consider themselves unable to handle the demands of society and therefore avoid it; thus, gradually reducing expectations of themselves and the motive to improve their lives. Some socially withdrawn youths have high educational qualifications, but for that reason they refuse to accept low-paid jobs during times of economic recession due to their high self-esteem and expectations, and so choose to lead a life of social withdrawal as their means to express their dissatisfaction with society. As time passes by, they lose the motive to integrate with society.)</p> <p>✦ If students are unable to have comprehensive discussions in the Matching and Concept Map class activities, the teacher may let students write a summary on the content of the class activities for homework, as a reflection exercise to deepen their constructed knowledge. For example, they may elaborate on 2 of the cases in the Matching Game, or on how the visual design of the Concept Map reveals the relationships between self-esteem, expectations, life skills and concrete practices, and how such relationships affects socially withdrawn behaviour.</p> <p>3.2 Sharing the Wisdom of Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher's Explanations Self-awareness means being able to observe and understand oneself objectively and clearly. It is also our key to enhancing self-knowledge and emotional intelligence. As one matures, one often gets affected by external factors and internal biases and becomes either conceited due to inflated self-esteem or self-abasing due to deflated self-esteem. One can develop self-knowledge true to reality through training on self-awareness. Introduce to students the description about self-awareness by Daniel Goleman in his book <i>Emotional Intelligence</i> (Appendix 17). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-awareness by Daniel Goleman in his book <i>Emotional Intelligence</i> Descriptions (Appendix 19) 	

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>3.3. Complete LEDO Process Step 3: Investigating the Main Cause: Self-esteem of Socially Withdrawn Youths Worksheet so as to further consolidate knowledge constructed in this lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand out on LEDO Process Step 3: Investigating the Main Cause: Self-esteem of Socially Withdrawn Youths Worksheet. • Let students complete the worksheet, analyzing the internal conflicts and contradictions of the socially withdrawn youths brought about by their inappropriate self-esteem and the pros and cons of their socially withdrawn lifestyle, and point out the opinions and values held by these youths. • The teacher may let students revisit case resources: Situation of Socially Withdrawn Youths in Hong Kong (Appendixes 5.1-4) and revisit LEDO Process 2.2 worksheet (comparing gains and losses experienced by the socially withdrawn youths). The teacher may also revisit the LEDO Process 2.4 worksheet to explore in more depth the main cause/s of the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEDO Process Step 3: Listing Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders: Investigating the Main Cause: Self-esteem of Socially Withdrawn Youths Worksheet 	
	<p>3.4 Extension Exercise Homework (Appendix 18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the From Self-esteem to Happiness Worksheet, using real life cases to reflect on how we examine our self-esteem and self-awareness so as to live more happily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Self-esteem to Happiness Worksheet Homework – Extension Exercise (Appendix 20) 	

Enquiry Question 4: How does the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle affect the quality of life at the various levels?

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
Lessons 7-8 Worksheet p. 7: 3. Listing conflicts and internal contradictions faced by stakeholders	<p>4.2 State Enquiry Question 4: How does the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle affect the quality of life at the various levels?</p> <p>4.2.1 Activity Explanations</p> <p>Use supplementary resources as learning explanations to consolidate the previous activities. The teacher may choose direct teaching or distributing the handouts to explain the concept of quality of life (Appendix 19) to emphasise the relationship between values and quality of life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher's Introduction <p>The definition of quality of life varies according to different people and changes along with social and cultural changes. Hitherto, there are two ways of judging the quality of life: objective and subjective ones. Examples of the objective ways include using the United Nations Index of National Development, literacy rates, average life span and education levels as benchmarks. Examples of subjective ways include placing emphasis on happiness, freedom, interpersonal relationship and peace of mind. Actually, whether a person's quality of life is acceptable depends on how far their needs and ideals in life are satisfied. Since people have different values, the priorities of their needs and ideals in life are also different. Therefore, a person's values play a key role in determining their quality of life.</p> <p>4.2.2. Game: Inspection of The Quality of Life of Socially Withdrawn Youths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students to form groups, and then, within 3 minutes, list on the whiteboard the different quality of life levels of needs of socially withdrawn youths (including both objective and subjective aspects). The group that lists the greatest number of quality of life levels of needs along with real examples will be the winner and will be given a small prize. Ask students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How does the quality of life satisfy different the levels of needs in life? (e.g. physical needs, safety needs, social needs, needs for being respected, needs for self-actualisation, etc.) ❖ Check whether there are restrictions on this type of lifestyle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of Life Resources (Appendix 19) 	<p>(iii) Attitude and Outlook of Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciating and understanding different stakeholders' demands on quality of life Knowing clearly the importance of self-discipline and responsibilities for a healthy family Communicating with parents frankly and tactfully so as to seek sympathy and consensus Other awarenesses: empathy, learn to understand and be sympathetic with them

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Appendix 20). • Conduct classroom discussion, using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to summarise the quality of life items (listed on the whiteboard by the students), and find out the reasons for these youths to be satisfied with living a life of social withdrawal. <p>Teacher References</p> <p>The socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle satisfies various levels of needs in life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ physical needs: food and bed provided by parents when living a hermit life at home ❖ safety need: parents provide shelter away from the risk of being bullied ❖ social needs: chatting with online friends ❖ needs for being respected: no need to accept criticisms from others ❖ needs for self-actualisation: be a hero in the virtual world of online games <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Conclusion <p>The mode of a socially withdrawn lifestyle possesses to a certain extent a quality of life at different levels of needs and can, for a short period of time, satisfy the personal needs of socially withdrawn youths. However, a lifestyle that is socially withdrawn and that exists in the virtual world can cause profound negative influences on the future of the socially withdrawn youths. The longer the time of social withdrawal, the more difficult it will be for the socially withdrawn youth to adapt to society again and to find work. At this time, the quality of life at the levels of needs for being respected and for self-actualisation will be lowered. In addition, at the level of social needs, socially withdrawn youths are unable to enjoy a normal life of romantic love, and their relationships with parents tend to be distant and lack communication and understanding; thus' affecting the normal quality of family life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Resources (Appendix 20) 	

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>4.2.3 Role Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher's Introduction <p>When we understand and appreciate the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle with an open and caring attitude, we need to at the same time reflect on the responsibilities and commitments that this mode involves. Most withdrawn youths refuse to commit themselves to family responsibilities. They do not do household chores and rely entirely on their parents for their living, even when having reached their working age.</p> Ask students: <p>How should conflicts and contradictions be resolved when an individual's lifestyle affects the quality of life of his/her family such as that of socially withdrawn youths affecting their family's quality of life?</p> Select students to act out the play, "A youth both without work and without study beats his mother when stopped from playing computer games" rewritten on the basis of a true case. (Appendix 21) Distribute the sample comic of the play if students lack a sense of imagination power (Appendix 22). When the play comes to the conflict climax (the youth hits his mother), ask the actors to freeze their action, and ask them one by one about their feelings and thoughts as the people involved. Ask the actors: If you are aware of your feelings and thoughts and those of your family members, would you still act in ways that leads to others and yourself getting hurt? Ask students to form groups and find ways to solve this family conflict case. Ask students to present the results of their discussion. Advise students: <p>Demands of the parents and children on the quality of life can affect the mode of communication, parent-child relationships and the ability to solve mutual problems together.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screenplay for the role play (Appendix 21) Comic sample for the role play (Appendix 22) 	

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	4.3. Sharing the Wisdom of Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of Others - Empathy Introduce to students the empathy descriptions by Daniel Goleman in his book <i>Emotional Intelligence</i> (Appendix 23) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daniel Goleman's <i>Emotional Intelligence</i> Empathy Descriptions (Appendix 23) 	
	4.4. Complete LEDO Process Step 3: Investigating the Supporting Factors: Socially Withdrawn Youths' Family Relationship Worksheet so as to further consolidate the knowledge constructed in this lesson. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand out LEDO Process Step 3: Investigating the Supporting Factors: Socially Withdrawn Youths' Family Relationship Worksheet. Ask students to complete the worksheet so as to understand in more depth the socially withdrawn youths' problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEDO Process Step 3: Listing Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders: Investigating the Supporting Factors: Socially Withdrawn Youths' Family Relationship Worksheet 	
	4.5. Ask students to collect before class options suggested by various sectors for solving the socially withdrawn youths' problem such as news items, press editorials and research studies.		

Enquiry Question 5: How do people respond to the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle?

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
Lessons 9-10 Worksheet pp. 8-13: 4. Finding and Identifying a Solution 5. Analysing the Viability of Options 6. Deciding on a Viable Option	5.1. State Enquiry Question 5: How do people respond to the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle? 5.2. Ask students to form groups and arrange in order the information collected; analyse it along with the completed LEDO Process worksheets (Steps 1 – 3); do a summary; and complete the LEDO Process Steps 4, 5 and 6. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to form groups. • Let students brainstorm and select options that can improve the socially withdrawn youths' problem. • After Step 5 is completed, ask students to make a 2-dimensional/4-directional chart with Viable, Not Viable vs Moral, Immoral to decide on which option to select, and then complete Step 6. • If students are might have difficulty in collecting information, the teacher may provide the supplementary resources on options for solving the socially withdrawn youths' problem (Appendix 24). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the problem of socially withdrawn youths supplementary resources (Appendix 24) • LEDO Process Step 4: Finding and Identifying a Solution Worksheet • LEDO Process Step 5: Analysing the Viability of Options Worksheet • LEDO Process Step 6: Deciding on a Viable Option Worksheet 	(i) Understanding Concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete methods to alleviate the problem of socially withdrawn youths (ii) Learning/Thinking Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to think critically: to view from different perspectives and to make judgements and decisions (iii) Attitude and Outlook of Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking truth rationally, being tolerant of moral and practical considerations, thinking from different perspectives and in a fair manner

Lessons / LEDO Process	Specific Teaching Procedure: Teaching Methods/Activities	Teaching Resources	Teaching and Learning Objectives
	<p>3. Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The options below could be considered in response to the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Personal level: e.g. psychological counselling, vocational training, understanding effects of withdrawn behaviour on family and society ii) Family level: e.g. educate parents to improve their parenting skills; enable parents to understand reasons for withdrawn youths to enjoy their life of withdrawal and the quality of life that this kind of life lacks so as to provide their children with suitable help iii) School and society level: e.g. increase adversities-resisting activities and curricula so as to enhance the students' values, attitude and ability; paying direct attention to the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon and its effects on society From the socially withdrawn youths' problem, we learn the importance of self-esteem and developing relationships between family and self. The knowledge is also beneficial to our personal development and can enhance our interpersonal relationships. In the future, we can reflect more on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the balance between self-esteem, expectations and behaviour ii) one's responsibilities and commitments iii) achieving consensus with parents on quality of life, and improving mode of communication with them iv) the cultivation of self-knowledge can improve emotional intelligence so as to achieve the ideal of being self-aware and aware of others 		

LEDO Process Flowchart© (for reference only)

Liberal Studies and Life Education Based on the Concept of Dependent Origination

Liberal Studies, as its name suggests, is a multi-topic and multi-discipline learning process. In such a learning process, the most important emphasis is the cultivation of the students' ability to learn independently and develop cross-curricular thinking skills, and not on the knowledge and content involved. In view of this, assessment is not focused on information recall but on the students' ability to comprehend and to demonstrate appropriate thinking skills.

“Article 5.5.3 Public Assessment” of the *Curriculum and Assessment Guide* offers a list of thirteen abilities that students are expected to demonstrate during examinations, such as the understanding of ideas, concepts and terminologies, and the ability to use such concepts to analyse and evaluate contemporary issues. When evaluating and analysing such issues, students should be able to offer arguments for the values they uphold, and to identify the values and arguments held by different stakeholders in the issue. At places where there are conflicts, contradictions and paradoxes, students should also be able to analyse the moral and social issues involved, and suggest methods for solving the relevant problems. Finally, students should be able to present their analysis clearly and accurately in a concise, logical and systematic manner.

Based on the above understanding, when the University of Hong Kong Centre of Buddhist Studies took up the task from the Education Bureau to compile a teaching package for the area of study, “Self and Personal Development” in Liberal Studies, it decided to adopt the *Life Education Based on the Concept of Dependent Origination* (LEDO) model, and make use of its thinking and learning process so as to enhance the students' comprehensibility, manageability and their sense of meaningfulness. It is expected that students will master their thinking and learning abilities so that they can skillfully apply them to different issues. When students master their thinking and learning abilities, they need not worry about facing unfamiliar issues and the difficulty in sorting out relevant information and data so as to develop logical and well-grounded convincing arguments. People say, “When you can master one theory, you'll comprehend a hundred”. All these in fact are the requisite meta-cognitive abilities for independent learning and cross-curricular thinking that the Liberal Studies curriculum aims to develop.

In addition to being a process of thinking and learning, LEDO also encompassed its own worldview, way of attending to matters and a value system based on the Law of

Dependent Origination. Certainly, when using the LEDO Thinking and Learning Process, teachers and students may choose not to accept or use the worldview, way of attending to matters and value system based on the Law of Dependent Origination.

Below is a brief introduction of the worldview, way of attending to matters and value system of the Law of Dependent Origination, along with its relevant thinking and learning process.

Law of Dependent Origination

The Law of Dependent Origination is a universal truth that Sakyamuni Buddha realised under the Bodhi tree. The Buddha pointed out that this objective truth existed inherently. He was able to master the right view and direction of life because of realising this truth, and subsequently attained genuine happiness and tranquility.

The Law of Dependent Origination refers to the principle that the arising of phenomena is dependent on the coalescence of causes and conditions. The Buddha often summarised its main teaching with the gatha – *“When this is, that is; This arising, that arises; When this is not, that is not; This ceasing, that ceases”*. The meaning of *“When this is, that is; This arising, that arises”* is that everything comes-to-be and emerges when causes and conditions coalesce. For example, an apple grows from an apple seed (main cause), with the help of soil, water, air, sunshine and time (supporting conditions). No apple could appear without an apple seed, and an apple seed can only grow into an apple. If supporting conditions are lacking, an apple seed would not grow into an apple. If there is a cause and all conditions are met, the fruit is inevitable.

The meaning of the second part of the sentence, *“When this is not, that is not; this ceasing, that ceases”* is that when the causes and conditions that bring about the emergence of phenomena disintegrate, the phenomena will also accordingly cease to be. Therefore, all phenomena arise from their corresponding causes and conditions, change as they change, and cease to exist as they disintegrate.

The Law of Dependent Origination itself does not imply good or bad, kind or evil. However, ordinary people prefer the coming-to-be and existence of things, but dread the coming of their demolition and disintegration. Yet, suffering also occurs due to the coalescence of causes and conditions, and ends along with their demolition and disintegration. Therefore, the Law of Dependent Origination only objectively expresses how phenomena arise, interact and disintegrate without any subjective connotation.

Apart from explaining the way how things come to be and operate, the Law of Dependent Origination also explains how individuals, matter and sentient beings come to be and operate. The mind is like a seed, which determines our future path. The body and all things in the world are the supporting conditions for our emergence. If the mind is clear and peaceful, the effects will also be peaceful, happy and worry-free; if our mind is ignorant and deluded, our retributions will also inevitably be painful.

The important characteristics of this seemingly simplistic Law of Dependent Origination are its trueness and universality. Regardless of who a person is, whether he/she believes in a religion or not, what his/her family situation is like, what race he/she belongs to, in which country he/she lives, the emergence and functioning of this person's life will be affected and governed by this objective truth – the Law of Dependent Origination.

Everyone, for a certain period of time, can live in the illusory world created by his/her own mind. However, reality will eventually catch up and demand attention. It is only a matter of time that people will awaken to the non-compromising nature of reality. As educators, it is our role to show our students the way to this awakening in order to comprehend the world as it is. Therefore, we have selected the Law of Dependent Origination as the theoretical basis for designing this teaching package for Liberal Studies.

LEDO's Thinking and Learning Process

The LEDO Thinking and Learning Process has six major characteristics:

1. It investigates into the main or preceding causes that lead to the formation of an issue. By doing so, it enables students to understand the core of an issue.
2. It investigates into various supporting conditions and factors that contribute toward the formation of an issue. By doing so, students will not think in a simplistic manner, and over simplify the arising of an issue or a problem.
3. It guides students to understand and analyse the intrapersonal factors of various stakeholders and understand that not only external circumstances but one's mental attitudes can also be the cause of conflicts and sufferings.
4. The logic of this thinking and learning process is clear and easy to grasp. Teachers have the freedom to decide the depth into which they want to explore a particular issue based on the actual conditions in the classroom.
5. Detailed worksheets are clear in structure. Students can follow step-by-step instructions to evaluate comprehensively an issue from different perspectives.
6. Using simple and easy means, it leads students to explore, identify and prioritise values while evaluating an issue.

In view of the above characteristics, it is believed that if students can repeatedly practise this thinking and learning process then they will be able to attain the objective of Liberal Studies of developing “independent learning capabilities and cross-curricular thinking skills”.

The LEDO Thinking and Learning Process consists of six major steps (see Diagram LEDO Thinking Method Flowchart© and related worksheets):

1. Identifying the focus of an issue
2. Collecting information and arguments
3. Listing the conflicts and internal contradictions faced by various stakeholders
4. Seeking and identifying possible solutions
5. Analysing the viability of each solution
6. Deciding on a viable solution

Students can follow these six steps to explore and analyse an issue. To illustrate in detail the actual problem-solving procedures, there are a total of 9 worksheets for teachers to choose from based on the ability and the needs of students.

LEDO’s Worldview, Way of Attending to Matters and Value System

During the process of designing LEDO, reference was not only made to the Law of Dependent Origination, but also incorporated as a theoretical basis, the concept of Sense of Coherence (SOC) (條理感), a model championed by Israeli medical sociologist, Aaron Antonovsky.¹

While analysing why some people were able to live on healthily under pressure (such as some of the Jews who had experienced the Nazi concentration camps), and yet some were not able to endure, and fell ill or even died, Antonovsky found that those who lived on all had a common characteristic, i.e. a very strong “sense of coherence”². According to Antonovsky:

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¹ Antonovsky A., *Unraveling the mystery of health. How people manage stress and stay well*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987

² Antonovsky A., *Unraveling the mystery of health. How people manage stress and stay well*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987

The sense of coherence is a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that

- (1) the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable and explicable;***
- (2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli;***
and
- (3) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement.***³

A research report published in *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* by Swedish scholars, Bengt Lindström and Monica Eriksson summarises the findings of research on SOC and the SOC questionnaire used in the past 25 years.⁴ Through meta-analysis of over 400 empirical studies of SOC, they found a negative relationship between SOC and anxiety and depression (the higher the SOC, the lower the anxiety and depression levels), and a positive relationship between SOC and life attitude, behaviour and quality of life (the higher the SOC, the more positive one's life attitude and behaviour, and higher quality of life). They also found the SOC questionnaire has acceptable validity and reliability. To date, the SOC questionnaire has been translated into 33 languages, and is widely accepted as a measure of stress and health with cross-cultural validity and reliability.⁵

In view of the relationship between the sense of coherence and emotions and the quality of life, we have selected the enhancement of three components of the sense of coherence, namely, comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness to be the main objectives of LEDO. Incidentally, there are many similarities between these three components and the ideals and objectives of Liberal Studies. For example, comprehensibility is equivalent to the demands of Liberal Studies on the students' ability to understand correctly ideas, concepts and vocabulary and to use such concepts to analyse and evaluate contemporary issues. Manageability is equivalent to the demands of Liberal Studies on the students' ability to analyse the moral and social issues involved when conflicts, contradictions and paradoxes arise, and to put forward strong arguments, proposals and solutions to problems. The sense of coherence emphasises values, but Liberal Studies places even more emphasis on the importance of instilling positive values in students.

Nowadays, the values of adolescents in Hong Kong are comparatively confused and loose. Confucianism and traditional family values have been largely displaced by western liberalism and individualism over the last few decades, while more people

³ Antonovsky A., p.19

⁴ Lindstrom, Bengt and Eriksson, Monica, *Salutogenesis*, *J. Epidemiol. Community Health* 2005 59: 440-442

⁵ Lindstrom, Bengt and Eriksson, Monica, *Validity of Antonovsky's sense of Coherence Scale: a systematic review*, *J. Epidemiol. Community Health* 2005 59: 460-466

eschew the concept of self-reliance and personal responsibility in favour of placing blames on others. We see a lot of teenagers who have no clear directions in sight and whose spiritual void has driven them into the virtual world of Internet and online games. Therefore, it is important that the Liberal Studies curriculum incorporates value education to help students to explore and reflect on values and to cultivate their own value system.

Yet, when we give guidance to students to construct their own values, what kind of teaching styles should we adopt? Should we let students explore on their own? Or should we define a goal and devise guidelines towards it? If there are goals and guidelines (for example, in the *Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide*, there are presets values and attitudes related to specific issues to be studied), is there a way for students to arrive at a certain set of values through subtly guided self-exploration instead of overt instructions? These are the challenges teachers have to face and overcome in a Liberal Studies class.

To solve these problems, we cannot sidestep the discussion of various worldviews, nor can we avoid the prioritisation of values. Without a coherent worldview and a consistent problem solving process, students would apply different worldviews and problem solving methods when facing different issues. By doing so, it would be difficult for them to achieve “when you can master one theory, you’ll comprehend a hundred”, or fulfil the learning requirements unique to Liberal Studies, i.e. cross-curricular thinking. Similarly, without a coherent worldview and a simple and effective method to prioritise values, students could easily conclude with values, subjectively and emotionally. Hence, it would also be difficult for students to master and develop the values and attitudes preset in Liberal Studies when they study the different issues listed in the *Curriculum and Assessment Guide*.

As far as teaching Liberal Studies is concerned, it should be quite open for teachers to select or emphasise which worldviews (e.g. materialist, idealist, scientific, religious) and problem solving methods they might use. However, regardless of which worldviews and problem solving methods are used, students should arrive at the preset values and attitudes of the various issues in this subject after exploring the relevant issues.

As a matter of fact, it is very difficult for the teaching of Liberal Studies to be absolutely objective and independent, and whether or not scholarly objective attitudes and independent thinking methods can guide students to arrive at the preset values and attitudes of Liberal Studies is also a question. Nevertheless, teachers should be aware of the positions and values they themselves hold, and at the same time, they should let students be aware of other positions and values so as to enable them to construct their own positions

and values.

In the following, the worldview, way of attending to matters and value system based on the Law of Dependent Origination is introduced. Because of the trueness and universality characteristics of the Law, it follows that its derivatives (worldview, way of attending to matters and value system) should also hold the same attributes of trueness and universality.

Worldview has two major focuses:

- (1) seeing the conditioned arising of life, seeing no-self, and seeing the limitlessness of possibility
- (2) seeing the relationship between causes and effects, and seeing the leading role and importance of the mind

Way of attending to matters can be summarised into what Buddhists abide by:

- (1) precepts: disciplined and measured behaviours in daily life while upholding the principle of “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.” in one’s behaviour;
- (2) concentration: being persistent and focused when attending to matters;
- (3) wisdom: maintain awareness, learn more, reflect often, and actively put to action

Values have four dimensions:

- (1) seeing the wonder of dependent genesis through dependent origination; thus, learn to appreciate and praise it
- (2) seeing the importance of conditions through dependent origination; thus, feel grateful
- (3) seeing impermanence through Dependent Origination; thus, know one should cherish things and yet let go of them
- (4) seeing the interdependence of causes and conditions through Dependent Origination; thus, know one should co-operate, give and share

We have summarised and integrated the above worldview, way to attend to matters and value system based on Dependent Origination in the *Outline of LEDO Training Process*. The Outline, as well as the interpretation and elaboration of relevant content are shown in Appendix 1 for reference. Certainly, as discussed above, the LEDO Thinking and Learning Process can be applied on its own without being affected by its worldviews, way to attend to matters and values. Students can make use of the worksheets provided in this teaching package entirely in accordance with the worldviews, way to attend to matters and values they select for themselves. However, they must be able to clearly explain the theory and argument behind such selections.

For example, take completing the “LEDO Process 5.2 Prioritising Values Worksheet (*Legal, Reasonableness, and Humanist Considerations*)”, students can find out the values held by various stakeholders in the inquiry from “Step 3: Listing Stakeholders’ Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Worksheet”, and then select what they consider to be the appropriate or important *legal* considerations (such as the Law of Human Rights, the Basic Law and/or the Christian’s Ten Commandments), *reasonableness* considerations (deontology, virtue theory, causality, divine sovereignty), and *humanist* considerations (such as all the feelings or emotions of the stakeholders) and use these considerations to work out their own priority of values.

Conclusion

To conclude the above discussion, we can see that the aim of Liberal Studies is to cultivate the students’ independent learning ability and cross-curricular thinking skills; plus, the assessment objectives of the subject, include recognising relevant issues, understanding the effect of different values on contemporary issues, using multi-perspectives, creativity and appropriate thinking skills to analyse issues, solve problems, make judgements, put forward conclusions and suggestions, etc.

To attain the aim of Liberal Studies and prepare students for the public examinations, when compiling this teaching package, teaching materials was compiled with a strong focus on imparting a more comprehensive set of thinking and learning skills that students could apply to different learning issues, similar to the “*Process of Issue-enquiry and the Development of Multiple Perspectives*” exercises specified in the *Curriculum and Assessment Guide*. We believe that students well trained in the LEDO’s Thinking and Learning Process can become autonomous learners, as LEDO’s comprehensive and multi-perspective thinking skills can provide a logical framework for problem analyses and value judgements. Therefore, it can assist students to cope with the demands of the public assessment of Liberal Studies.

LEDO Outline

Understanding Life

- To see the conditioned arising of life, No-self, and boundless possibilities
- To see the relationship between causes and results, the dominance of the mind and its importance

Sense of Meaningfulness

- On the basis of Dependent Origination, see the subtlety of dependent genesis; thus appreciate and praise it.
- On the basis of Dependent Origination, see the importance of various conditions; thus feel grateful.
- On the basis of Dependent Origination, see impermanence; thus know one should cherish things and yet let them go.
- On the basis of Dependent Origination, see the interdependence of causes and conditions; thus know one should co-operate, give and share.

Managing Life

- In order to cultivate favourable conditions for lucky things to occur and in order to eradicate unfavourable factors so that painful things cannot happen, we should acquire regulated and orderly life habits, and should use the principle of “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you” to guide our behaviour.
- In order to achieve our ambitions, we should learn to be persistent and focused when doing things.
- When handling things, the most important thing is to have the correct direction and means. In order to master the correct direction and means, we should all the time be alert, learn often, reflect often and actively take action.

Explanations on the LEDO Outline

Understanding Life

To see the conditioned arising of life, No-self, and boundless possibilities:

In the process of understanding life, the student should realise that the occurrence of life is dependent upon various causes and conditions. Since its occurrence is dependent upon causes and conditions, then when the conditions change, life also changes accordingly. Right from the beginning there is not a person or a self that is definitely good or definitely bad. Since the self is not a substance and unchangeable, then there are boundless possibilities in life. Anything is achievable, as long as there are the causes and conditions.

To see the relationship between causes and results, the dominance of mind, and its importance:

An important characteristic of the Law of Dependent Origination is: When this is, that is; this arising, that arises. This is a relationship of causes and results. Under suitable supporting conditions, the seeds of an apple will germinate into an apple tree, but not any other tree. Things do not occur arbitrarily, nor without causes, nor are they determined by a god. Things will occur as long as there are causes and conditions. Under the Law of Dependent Origination, our 'mind', being the original force of our thoughts and behaviour, plays a dominant part. When the mind is clear, calm and enlightened the behaviour that follows and the subsequent retributions will naturally be peaceful, happy and blessed. When the mind is contaminated and deluded, the behaviour that follows and the subsequent retributions will naturally be painful and helpless. Therefore, in the process of understanding and knowing life, it is very important to understand and care about the mind.

Sense of Meaningfulness

Through Dependent Origination, see the subtlety of dependent genesis; thus appreciate and praise it:

Through observing the conditioned arising of life, we can see how subtle and precious it is for life to emerge from nothing. The emergence of life is precious, and life as a human being is even more so. We should often appreciate this and praise it with joy.

Through Dependent Origination, see impermanence; thus know one should cherish things and yet let go of them:

Through observing the conditioned arising of life, we can also see the impermanence and instability of life. Therefore, we should cherish the causes and conditions that currently face us, and the various learning opportunities and the possibilities to grow, to share, and to

create that which life offers us. However, we also need to learn to accept facts and to let go of things because everything will change and vanish according to causes and conditions. Good things will become the past, and bad things will turn into history.

Through Dependent Origination, see the importance of various conditions, thus feel grateful:

Through observing the conditioned arising of life, we can also see that the occurrence of life is a result of many causes and conditions. Therefore, we should bear gratitude in our hearts to the various causes and conditions that support life. For example, as often mentioned in Buddhist sutras, a Buddhist should pay four kinds of debt of gratitude: that of our parents, that of the Buddha, that of our teachers and that of sentient beings.

Through Dependent Origination, see the interdependence of causes and conditions; thus know one should co-operate, give, and share:

Through observing the conditioned arising of life, we see that all things are formed due to causes and conditions, and are interdependent of each other, and so should support and co-operate with each other. Helping others is in fact helping oneself, and to make achievements, one often needs help from others. In this world that is formed by the inter-connectedness, it is impossible for one to make great achievements if one ignores others and strives to benefit only oneself. Therefore, the bodhisattvas can, based on the Law of Dependent Origination, see No-Self and eradicate the selfish mind, and, upon seeing the suffering of sentient beings, arouse the heart of general compassion and practice widely the path of giving.

Managing Life

In order to cultivate favourable conditions for lucky things to occur and in order to eradicate unfavourable factors so that painful things cannot happen, we should acquire regulated and orderly life habits, and should uphold the principle of “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.” in our behaviour:

All things arise upon causes and conditions. Therefore, cultivating conditions is an inevitable step in the process of achieving anything. However, if our life is not regulated and orderly, and if we act arbitrarily along with external circumstances, then it would be impossible for us to cultivate the appropriate causes and conditions for achieving our ambitions. On the contrary, if we can follow our wishes and are determined to cultivate the appropriate causes and conditions, then anything will be achievable.

In order to achieve our ambitions, we should learn to be persistent and focused when doing things:

“Being focused” enables us to notice and manage certain matter single-mindedly, and for that reason, we will know that matter more clearly and can handle it more skillfully. A disoriented mind is unable to cultivate true wisdom and will not persist in overcoming temptations and difficulties.

When handling things, the most important thing is to have the correct direction and means. In order to master the correct direction and means, we should all the time be alert, learn often, reflect often and actively take action:

When handling things, if the direction is wrong, then the more we act, the more wrong we will do. If the means is wrong, then no matter how good our ambition is and how hard we work, we would have to double our efforts, or even never achieve our ambition. If we want to find and master the correct direction and means, we have to be alert all the time, study and understand the experience and sharing acquired by people in the past, carefully observe and reflect on the objective facts currently existing, and then make choices and attempts and then take action.

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

LEDO Process Step 1: Determining the Gist of the Issue Worksheet

1.1 Enquiry Questions		1.2 Relevant Concepts

LEDO Process Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet

2.1 Related Information	
Facts	Opinions and Comments

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

	2.2 Main Stakeholders	2.3 Other Stakeholders
Gains Obtained	<p>Socially Withdrawn Youths</p>	<p>Family</p> <p>Society</p>
	<p>Socially Withdrawn Youths</p>	<p>Family</p> <p>Society</p>

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

	2.4 Main Reason	2.5 Other Factors

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

	2.4 Main Reason	2.5 Other Factors
Non-human Factors		

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

LEDO Process Step 3: Listing Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders Worksheet

Main Reason: _____

Stakeholders	Joy and Suffering Experienced	Objective Losses and Gains Sustained	Opinions and Values Held

Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders	
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Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

LEDO Process Step 3: Listing Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders Worksheet

Other Factors: _____

Stakeholders	Joy and Suffering Experienced	Objective Losses and Gains Sustained	Opinions and Values Held

Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders	
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Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

LEDO Process Step 4: Finding and Identifying a Solution Worksheet

4.1 Analysing Problems

1. How can you reduce the negative causes and supporting factors that have contributed to the issue?

2. How can you enhance the positive causes and supporting factors that have contributed to the issue?

3. What unreasonable and/ or unfair situations need to be addressed?

4. What contradictions are there between the values held by the various stakeholders?

4.2 Suggesting Options (3 Options)

(1)

(2)

(3)

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

LEDO Process Step 5: Analysing the Viability of Options Worksheet

Option 1: _____

5.1.1 Practical and Viable Considerations

Stakeholders Resources & Support Considerations	(1) Personal • _____	(2) Family • _____	(3) Group • _____	(4) Hong Kong Society
Financial Resources				
Material Resources				
Human Resources				
Community Support				
Time Factors				
Commitment Statement				
Other				

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

Option 2: _____

5.1.2 Practical and Viable Considerations

Stakeholders Resources & Support Considerations	(1) Personal • _____	(2) Family • _____	(3) Group • _____	(4) Hong Kong Society
Financial Resources				
Material Resources				
Human Resources				
Community Support				
Time Factors				
Commitment Statement				
Others				

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

Option 3: _____

5.1.3 Practical and Viable Considerations

Stakeholders Resource & Support Considerations	(1) Personal • _____	(2) Family • _____	(3) Group • _____	(4) Hong Kong Society
Financial Resources				
Material Resources				
Human Resources				
Community Support				
Time Factors				
Commitment Statement				
Others				

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

5.2 Prioritising Values: Considerations (Legal, Practical and Humanist Considerations)⁶

Related Values	Prioritising Values	Arguments for Prioritising Values
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
	5.	
	6.	

⁶ Moral standards and positions are to be determined by the students themselves based on their legality, practicality and humanism.

LEDO Process Step 6: Deciding on a Viable Option Worksheet

6.1 Selected Option: _____

6.2 Rationale for the Decision

1. How does this option solve the problem?

2. Is this decision moral?

3. Does this decision suit the practicality of the situation?

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

LEDO Process (Example)

Step 1: Determining the Gist of the Issue Worksheet

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

1.1 Enquiry Questions	1.2 Related Concepts
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What characteristic does the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon have? To what extent has this phenomenon become a current social trendy?2. How are personal factors, family factors and social factors related to the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon?3. What is the relationship between adolescent withdrawn behaviour and self-esteem? How do the two affect each other?4. How does the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle affect the quality of life at the various levels?5. How do people respond to the socially withdrawn youths' lifestyle?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● low self-esteem● low motivation● low skills● socially withdrawn● socially withdrawn youths● Hikikomori● <i>Jialidun</i> (lit. home-inside-squat)● NEET

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

LEDO Process (Example)

Step 2: Collecting Information and Arguments Worksheet

2.1 Related Information	
Facts	Opinions and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “I don’t have friends. What should I do while I’m alive?” – Socially withdrawn youth disappears, suspected to have jumped into sea (<i>Sing Tao Daily</i>, 21 September 2007) ● It is estimated that there are altogether 18,500 socially withdrawn youths in Hong Kong, which is about 2% of its young people and a rapid rise to three times of those in 2005. The duration of social withdrawal can be as long as 10 years. Some organisations have abandoned the social culture of <i>More Criticism Than Praises</i> and are promoting the practice of <i>A Praise A Day</i>. (<i>Wen Wei Po</i>, 15 January 2007) ● In the Mainland, 60.5% of the university students indicated that they would not consider jobs with a salary lower than RMB1,500 and would rather be a <i>jialidun</i> (lit. home-inside-stay). (<i>Shanghai Morning Post</i>, 9 February 2006) ● In Japan, a 17-year old hikikomori hijacked a bus and killed one of its passengers. Another kidnapped a teenage girl and imprisoned her for nine years. (BBC News, 18 October 2002) ● In Britain, 20% of the young people live on government assistance. There are about 1.2 million who do not have a job or any skills and do not study. (<i>Guangzhou Daily</i>, 11 April 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Winnie YING Fung Sau, Chief Coordinator of Hong Kong Christian Service: People with the problem of social withdrawal generally have relatively low self-esteem. They do not know clearly their own interests. They seldom talk, and are hot-tempered. In recent years, society has lacked the space for youngsters to develop themselves, with competition becoming keener and keener, while relationships between people becoming more and more isolated, making youngsters, who have experienced setbacks, feel that they have no place to stand so they seek emotional support from the virtual world. These are the main reasons for the rise of the number of socially withdrawn youths. (<i>Wen Wei Po</i>, 15 January 2007) ● Zhang Xuefang, Supervisory Doctor at Guangzhou Bai Yun Mental Health Hospital: Despite various excuses, they all have in their mind this idea - if I became a <i>jialidun</i>, I won’t have to compare jobs, incomes and status with those who work. They prefer not to be in competition so that they do not feel inferior to others in such comparisons. (<i>Shanghai Morning Post</i>, 9 February 2006) ● Due to setbacks that a person encounters in life and work and to the associated anxiety, some who are less capable of resisting setbacks will accumulate greater and greater pressure, and eventually become self-secluded to avoid society. The more serious ones may develop social phobia or other serious mental illnesses. (<i>Yang Cheng Evening News</i>, 29 May 2007) ● Okuyama, chief organiser of the Association of Mutual Assistance for Parents of hikikomori in Japan, mentions how he could not find any help when he was troubled by his son’s problems. He believes that the problem of hikikomori has become so serious that even social welfare organisations are unable to tackle it. (BBC News: Correspondent, 18 October 2002) ● According to a British report: Many youngsters are still excluded from prosperity and live jobless and out-of-school lives, despite social and economic developments. (<i>Guangzhou Daily</i>, 11 April 2007)

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

	2.2 Main Stakeholders	2.3 Other Stakeholders
Gains Obtained	<p><u>Socially Withdrawn Youths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No need to deal with the pressure brought about by study and work that harm one's self-esteem ● By refusing to interact with family members, friends and relatives, psychological damages can be avoided ● No need to go with current trends of those of a similar age, e.g. having to aim at pursuing personal success ● No need to take up adult responsibilities and can hide at home with their living supported by parents ● Enjoy life's necessities without having to work ● Can do various things at home freely, such as going on the Internet, sleeping, reading comics 	<p><u>Family</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents of socially withdrawn youths do not have to worry about their children becoming corrupted ● After their children stop going to school, the parents cease to experience pressure from the school and its teachers <p><u>Society</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Socially withdrawn youths are relatively harmless to society because they make no contact with the outside world ● Society can reduce its resources used on socially withdrawn youths and can allocated social resources to other areas

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

Losses Suffered	<p><u>Socially Withdrawn Youths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Labelled by people in society as lazy and losers ● May feel painful (in the heart) and helpless when facing such rejection/ depression, and yet, cannot change it ● Have restricted social circles, lack friends in the real world ● Easy to have misunderstanding and conflict with family members due to a lack of ways to release emotions as a result of staying home for a long period ● Consider that life is meaningless and develop a tendency of self-destruction and may even take such action ● Joblessness leads to a life short of money, which in turn could lead to a life of crime 	<p><u>Family</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents become disillusioned with the expectations of their children and may feel painful and angry (in their hearts) ● Other family members living with socially withdrawn youths may be verbally or physically abused by them ● The youths increase the family financial burden by retreating at home for a long period of time ● After being attacked by their socially withdrawn children, the parents may have psychological problems that cannot be relieved, even after many years ● Not only does the adult-child fail to pay back their parents after graduating from university, they still have to rely on their old-aged parents for living ● Lacking the ability to manage interpersonal relationships, the youths may have friction with their family members <p><u>Society</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some socially withdrawn youths do not only rely on their family members, but also on resources of society, such as Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ● Socially withdrawn youths cannot become part of society; furthermore, they do not increase economic productivity ● Society cannot offer assistance when needed due to its failure to understand the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon ● Some socially withdrawn youths may commit violent acts or crimes when they have conflicts with their family members, e.g. a youngster beating his mother when being stopped from going on the Internet
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Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

	2.4 Main Reason	2.5 Other Factors
Human Factors	<p><u>Self-esteem</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feel unable to cope with societal and family expectations due to an imbalance between self-esteem and ability ● Socially withdrawn youths lack dreams and aspirations and have no motivation to improve their life ● Feel like losers and are scared of the external world due to failure in study and work and thinking that others will harm them ● With an introverted personality, do not know that one should pro-actively seek help when encountering problems <p><u>Personal Ability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have difficulty finding jobs and do further study due to dropping out of school (secondary education) and lacking vocational skills ● Have poor social skills so making it hard to establish good relationships with peers, and afraid of encountering strangers 	<p><u>Family</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents cause a sense of frustration in their children by ignoring their children's ability and interests, trying every means to get their children into prestigious schools ● Family and school have different opinions about the issue of student dropout, e.g. teachers think that parents have not exercised adequate discipline, while parents think that it was the school that has caused students to lose the motivation to study; both parties find it hard to work together to solve the problems and help the drop-outs ● Parents adopt inappropriate disciplinary methods and easily resort to beating and scolding; making their children choose withdrawal as a means to avoid their parents ● Parents adopt inappropriate disciplinary methods by over-protecting and spoiling their children; thus, causing their self-esteem to become too high and lose self-knowledge, subsequently bringing about the discrepancies between self-esteem and real ability ● Parents believe it is the fault of the school that their children dropped out of school and that makes the socially withdrawn youths have the same thought so lack interest in returning to school ● When youths encounter problems that they do not know how to solve, and need external help, they would rather stay home to avoid the problems ● Parents provide for their child's daily living expenses; thus, the child does not worry about making a living ● Unsatisfactory relationships with parents and peers, deepening the feeling that no one understands them

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn

	2.4 Main Reason	2.5 Other Factors
Non-Human Factors		<p><u>Society</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youths from poor families with a heavy pressure of life develop a need to escape ● Rich families are able to support their adult-children in leading a life of social withdrawal ● Difficult to find a satisfactory and interesting job due to the keen competition at work ● The popularisation of hi-tech electronic products has turned them into the youths' main entertainment. Youths with relatively weak self-control find it hard to stop once becoming engrossed in them so relationships with family members are affected ● The job market fails to offer high-pay jobs in line with the increase in university places so many graduates find themselves in a situation where they are incapable of taking up high-position jobs and yet unwilling to take up low-position ones. Eventually they choose to live a secluded life at home ● Hong Kong society is highly competitive. Youths who fail to find a stable job after finishing school consider themselves losers so avoid other people by hiding at home ● Imbalances in pay have caused many youths to feel that their income is not in line with the efforts they give so would rather stay home to rely on their parents instead of taking up low-pay jobs ● Youths indulge in the cyber world to escape into the virtual world when experiencing setbacks in the real world ● The present economic environment is more affluent than it used to be so can afford to cater for socially withdrawn youths. They need not rush to get a job and make money to support their families, but instead, can be parasites because their families are well off ● People in society commonly regard that the socially withdrawn youth' phenomenon exists because of various social problems. This makes socially withdrawn youths believe that it is society's fault that they have to suffer so they become anti-social ● Bullying at school results in a small number of students being rejected and gradually lose interest in going to school, and even become afraid of facing other people

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

LEDO Process (Example)

Step 3: Listing Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders Worksheet

Main Reason: Personal Factor – Socially Withdrawn Youths' Self-esteem

Stakeholders	Joy and Suffering Sensed	Objective Losses and Gains Sustained	Opinions and Values Held
Socially Withdrawn Youths	They are empty inside, feeling rejected by society and craving admiration and recognition by others, and yet, unable to do much, they lose the motivation to improve their lives and achieve as time goes by so can only enjoy temporary stability acquired through avoidance.	They obtain the necessities for living without having to make physical and mental effort. Their lifestyles are opposite to a usual daily routine and are free from constraints; however, at the same time they lose their personal future, are physically weak, and cannot enjoy a normal social life.	Nobody likes me, accepts me, or understands me. Therefore, it's most important to protect myself. A secluded life is relatively safe and stable. It's the best way out: I don't have to face other people's rejections and criticisms and have my self-esteem get hurt.

Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders	Like ordinary people, socially withdrawn youths in Hong Kong desire to be appreciated and recognised by others. However, their self-esteem can be either too high or too low. In addition, their life skills may not be developed and they may be unable to fulfil their expectations in their work, study and social lives. As time goes by, they lose the motivation to improve their current situation. Although they do not pay much for living a stable life of seclusion, with nothing much to do all day, they feel empty inside, and are anxious about their future.
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Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

LEDO Process (Example)

Step 3: Listing Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders Worksheet

Other Factor/s: – Family Quality of Socially Withdrawn Youths

Stakeholders	Joy and Suffering Sensed	Objective Losses and Gains Sustained	Opinions and Values Held
Socially Withdrawn Youths	They fail to obtain recognition and support from their family; thus, feeling lonely and helpless.	They enjoy all of life's necessities without making a contribution, but have to bear condescending looks from their family members, as if they are a parasite of the family.	Individualism: choosing one's lifestyle by oneself. Parents are unkind: My parents do not appreciate my potential talents. They brought me into this world so they have the responsibility to raise me using their best efforts.
Parents	They feel angry, painful and helpless and disappointed with their children.	Their children will not learn bad things from outside and so they don't have to face social workers and teachers. They originally thought that they would be relieved of the heavy burden of parenting, yet, it has turned out to be even heavier.	The children are disrespectful: they refuse to communicate and so the love between both parties cannot be maintained. The parents have failed in their attempts to raise their children properly in order to be taken care of them during their old age. The grown up children should not be relying on the parents, even if they are not supporting them.
Siblings	They feel resentful and hateful, believing that they are being unfairly treated in the family.	They get more pressure and concerns from their parents and have to take up more family responsibilities.	Collectivism: seclusion is an excuse for escaping from work. Everyone is a child of the parents so everyone should shoulder the responsibility of supporting them.

Conflicts and Internal Contradictions Faced by Stakeholders	Socially withdrawn youths expect that their potential to be recognised by their family members. Since their parents have brought them into this world, they should make their best efforts to nurture them. However, the parents would think that after bringing up their children, the latter should not be doing nothing all day and continue to rely on them even if their children are unable to support their living. The siblings would even think that since all of them are the parents' children, why should the socially withdrawn youths not be required to share the responsibility of taking care of the parents and the family?
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Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

LEDO Process (Example)

Step 4: Finding and Identifying a Solution Worksheet

4.1 Analysing Problems	
3.	<p>How does one reduce the negative causes and supporting factors that contribute to the issue?</p> <p><u>Socially withdrawn youths develop their behaviour because of the imbalances between their self-esteem, ability and expectations. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance their understanding of their self-esteem and ability so that they can adjust their own expectations and real ability; thus, gradually retreating from their socially withdrawn lives. Furthermore, it is even necessary to strengthen the education of the people in the community to stop them from labelling socially withdrawn youths who are out of work and out of school as lazy and parasites; thereby, helping the latter to develop higher self-esteem.</u></p>
4.	<p>How does one enhance the positive causes and supporting factors that contribute to the issue?</p> <p><u>Society nowadays is economically prosperous so there should be resources for taking care of disadvantaged groups. Socially withdrawn youths are also in no hurry to earn money to support their families. They could equip themselves by returning to school first or learning vocational skills; thus, enhancing their sense of success, actual ability and self-confidence; and by exploring their personal strengths and expertises as objectives for further development.</u></p>
5.	<p>What unreasonable and unfair situations need to be addressed?</p> <p><u>Socially withdrawn youths need to be clear about their personal self-esteem and real ability and should not have expectations that are either too high or too low. They should develop self-knowledge, knowing their strengths and shortcomings then exercise their strengths and improve their shortcomings. At the same time, their family members and themselves need to achieve a consensus over their ideas about family; improve their communication skills; understand and support each other; and no longer develop contradictions and conflicts due to personal biases.</u></p>
6.	<p>What contradictions are there between the values held by various stakeholders?</p> <p><u>Socially withdrawn youths' values are individualistic, in that they protect themselves and satisfy their needs in life first, avoiding the expectations of family and society; and neglecting how their lifestyle affects other people's quality of life. Their parents' values are hoping their children would practise filial piety; and that they bring up their children for the sake of being taken care of when they are old; thus, contradictions arise between them and the socially withdrawn youths who avoid responsibility. The values of their siblings in the family are collectivistic and they take on a fair share of family responsibilities; thus, contradictions arise between them and the socially withdrawn youths who lack a sense of commitment.</u></p>
4.2 Suggesting Options (3 Options)	
1)	Take no measure and let the socially withdrawn youth continue with the current situation.
2)	Offer the socially withdrawn youth and his/her family counselling and assistance.
3)	Force the socially withdrawn youth to receive treatment and change his/her lifestyle.

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

LEDO Process (Example)

Step 5: Analysing the Viability of Options Worksheet

Option 1: Take no measure and let the socially withdrawn youths continue with the current situation.

5.1.1 Practical and Viable Considerations

Stakeholders Considerations of Resources and Support	(1) Personal • Socially Withdrawn Youths	(2) Family • Parents	(3) Group • School	(4) Hong Kong Society
Financial Resources	- no income: go on relying on family members, or even on the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA)	- go on supporting daily expenses of the socially withdrawn children - apply for CSSA if income is inadequate	- no need to follow up - no expenses	- some socially withdrawn youths may live on CSSA; thus, increasing the government's expenses and the tax-payers' burden
Material Resources	- go on using facilities at home (e.g. TV, computer)	- support the socially withdrawn youth's living necessities such as food, computer	- no need to provide support for the socially withdrawn youth	- no need to provide support for socially withdrawn youths
Human Resources	- secluded at home without a need to encounter others	- socially withdrawn youths do not do household work when staying at home; instead, family members need to take care of them	- no need to dispatch teachers or social workers to follow up	- no need to send social workers to follow up, but society will lose a group of young workers
Community Support	- secluded at home with no contact with society - not getting any support from society	- do not get any support from government, school or social organisations	- no need to provide support to the socially withdrawn youth	- no need to provide support for socially withdrawn youths
Time Factor	- use time every day according to their desires, without any constraints	- need not spend time worrying about children's withdrawal behaviour, but need to support their living indefinitely	- teachers need not concern themselves with the student's mental health after school	- no need to consider
Commitment Statement	- no need to make commitments to oneself or others	- need to continue with the commitment of supporting their children's living	- needs only to worry about students' study and not students' mental health	- no need to take up social responsibilities for socially withdrawn youths
Other	- no prospects or future if living conditions remain unchanged	- cannot prepare for their old age or bringing up children		

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

Option 2: Provide counselling and assistance to socially withdrawn youths and their family members

5.1.2 Practical and Viable Considerations

Stakeholders Considerations of Resources and Support	(1) Personal • Socially Withdrawn Youths	(2) Family • Parents	(3) Group • School	(4) Hong Kong Society
Financial Resources	- no need to consider	- need to continue to support the living of children under counselling	- applies to the government for the Youth Sustainable Development and Engagement Fund, which subsidises expenses for the referral of school drop-outs	- provides organisations or individuals in need or apply for them for the Youth Sustainable Development and Engagement Fund - people in the community may also make donations to the socially withdrawn youths and their family
Material Resources	- no need to consider	- no need to consider	- leases out school facilities during holidays and after school hours for related activities	- provides appropriate job positions
Human Resources	- need to be willing to encounter the social workers or counsellors	- may need to accompany their children to go to the counselling venue	- employ social workers and psychologists	- out-reach social workers take up the work of identifying youngsters with socially withdrawn tendencies and offer counselling and assistance - society may get a group of young workers with potential
Community Support	- people in the community may hold prejudice against those who receive psychotherapy	- their employers may not be willing to support them and may not give them leave accordingly since they have no responsibility to take care of their workers	- refers absentees from school to the family or youth service units administered by the Social Welfare Department for follow-up	- businesses cooperate with the government to offer socially withdrawn youths job opportunities - enhance public education and stop labelling socially withdrawn youths as lazy - establish the practice of helping each other
Time Factor	- duration of treatment varies according to individuals; may need six to eight hours a day	- need to use their after-work time	- teachers may need to reduce their teaching hours so as to help and follow up with students in need	- businesses employ socially withdrawn youths in long-term or short-term mode - social work organisations allow enough time to follow up cases because the problem of socially withdrawn youths cannot be solved in a short period

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

Stakeholders	(1) Personal • Socially Withdrawn Youths	(2) Family • Parents	(3) Group • School	(4) Hong Kong Society
Considerations of Resources and Support				
Commitment Statement	- promise to cooperative actively, with the objective of quitting the socially withdrawn life	- support their children to receive counselling and encourage them at home	- needs to provide assistance even after the student has left school	- the government commits itself to improving the socially withdrawn youth problem and not to give up on uncooperative cases
Other				- set up a Socially Withdrawn Youths Mutual Assistance Association

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

Option 3: Force socially withdrawn youths to receive treatment and change their lifestyle

5.1.3 Practical and Viable Considerations

Stakeholders Considerations of Resources and Support	(1) Personal • Socially Withdrawn Youths	(2) Family • Parents	(3) Group • School	(4) Hong Kong Society
Financial Resources	- make job training with wages compulsory	- stop endlessly supporting their socially withdrawn children financially to force them to change their lifestyle	- applies for government subsidy or private sponsorship	- imposes fines on socially withdrawn youths who refuse to receive treatment
Material Resources	- no need to consider	- no need to consider	- uses its community halls for offering counselling services for socially withdrawn youths	- turns vacant school buildings into socially withdrawn youths treatment centres
Human Resources	- make physical and mental efforts to deal with the demands of society	- support the socially withdrawn youths in receiving treatment	- dispatches out-reach social workers to identify socially withdrawn youths	- sends police, medical and correctional personnel to assist in enforcing compulsory treatment for socially withdrawn youths
Community Support	- no need to consider	- support family members of socially withdrawn youths to face their psychological burden when the latter are forced to receive treatment	- takes initiative to identify cases of socially withdrawn youths through family visits	- appeals to people in the community to report cases of socially withdrawn youths, so as to execute compulsory treatment
Time Factor	- personal time exploited; no longer able to life on a flexible time schedule	- no need to consider	- needs a few years to find all socially withdrawn youths in Hong Kong and provide them with treatment	- must spend several years to follow up conditions of socially withdrawn youths on a long-term basis
Promises and Persistence	- being forced to get back into society; cannot give up, even if they want to	- must not turn soft-hearted and give up letting their children receive treatment or go back to a hermit's life	- needs to maintain a firm attitude and cooperate with government's measures, even when encountering uncooperative cases	- must not change related method, even when encountering opposition from people in the community - continues to impose compulsory treatment for socially withdrawn youths
Other	- make job training with wages compulsory	- stop endlessly supporting their socially withdrawn youths financially to force them to change their lifestyle	- applies for government subsidy or private sponsorship	- imposes fines on socially withdrawn youths who refuse to receive treatment

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

5.2 Prioritising Values: Considerations (Legal, Practical and Humanist Considerations)⁷

Related Values	Prioritising Values	Arguments for Prioritising Values
Individualism	7. LEDO	Under reasonableness considerations, all worldly phenomena abide by the law of dependent origination, and if one's lifestyle affects other people's quality of life, one's interpersonal relationship will gradually decline, and in the end, one will suffer.
Children fulfilling filial piety	8. Spirit of Democracy	Under legal considerations, socially withdrawn youths have human rights and are entitled to enjoy a lifestyle that they like.
Raising sons to provide for one's old age	9. Collectivism	Under reasonableness considerations, only by being just and fair can people work with the same mind to get things done and create a beautiful and sustainable living environment together.
Collectivism	10. Children fulfilling filial piety	Under humanist considerations, their parents' love given to them from childhood can be repaid; thus, their parents will acquire comfort in their old age.
LEDO (Life Education Based on the Concept of Dependent Origination)	11. Raising sons to provide for one's old age	Under humanist considerations, it would be very pitiable if one has nothing and no one to rely in one's old age.
Spirit of Democracy	12. Individualism	Under humanist considerations, it allows one to have one's own way without having to take other people's feelings into consideration.

⁷ Moral standards and positions are to be determined by the students themselves based on legality, practical and humanism.

Issue for Enquiry: Socially Withdrawn Youths

LEDO Process - (Example)

Step 6: Deciding on a Viable Option Worksheet

6.1 Selected Option: Provide counselling and assistance to socially withdrawn youths and their family members

6.2 Rationale for the Decision

4. How does this option solve the problem?

The main cause of socially withdrawn youths is the imbalances among self-esteem, ability and expectations, to the extent that they use social withdrawal as a means to avoid responsibilities and pressure. By providing them with counselling, social workers can follow their situations; and they can be taught to balance self-esteem and expectations. Along with their family's support and encouragement, their psychological problems can be improved. Through parental counselling, they can be taught to achieve a consensus in their family discussions. With improvement in parenting, communication between the two parties can be enhanced. Furthermore, with schools assisting drop-outs and working with businesses to provide them with job training opportunities, their life skills can be further enhanced. This can further assist socially withdrawn youths with low academic qualifications and limited vocational skills to acquire opportunities for further study or work in order to join society again.

5. Is this decision moral?

This option enables society to fulfil its responsibilities towards the disadvantaged groups and to pay attention to the problem of socially withdrawn youths so that they do not get discarded by society. This option provides services, counselling and assistance to socially withdrawn youths and their family members who have the need and are willing to receive support and does not infringe on their human rights by forcing them to receive treatment. Furthermore, this option enables socially withdrawn youths to become self-reliant and to give back to society, while parents and schools can also learn effective ways to help with socially withdrawn youths. In the long-term, society could get larger returns with the resources it allocates to socially withdrawn youths, benefiting all stakeholders.

6. Does this decision suit the practical situation?

This option can practically solve the socially withdrawn youth problem: treating their psychological problems, enhancing their life skills, and providing them with opportunities to join society again. Counselling offered to family members of the socially withdrawn youths can even improve relationships between the two parties; continuous support from family members could prevent them from giving up their improvement. Also, society is becoming more and more concerned about the socially withdrawn youths' phenomenon. Schools and social organisations can apply for the Youth Sustainable Development and Engagement Fund for subsidising expenses. By working together, schools, social workers and businesses can further provide stepping stones for socially withdrawn youths to re-enter society so that they do not suffer setbacks again and that their sense of achievement and self-confidence are enhanced. For example, the LET'S Walk (Life Engagement Training Service) organised by the Hong Kong Christian Service has helped many socially withdrawn youths to re-enter society and continue with their study or work.

Appendix 1

The Story Outline of A True Love Story (1)

The story is about a 22-year old computer engineer who is a Otaku bachelor still living with his parents and whose whole world is made up of comics, cartoons, computer games and toys. One day on a commuter train, he saved a pretty, young woman from being molested by a middle-aged man.

Having no previous contact with the opposite sex, he found himself deeply attracted to this woman. She sent him a set of Hermes teacups as a token of thanks for his help. He had no idea what this famous brand Hermes was about because he had been leading a secluded life. In return, he wanted very much to invite this woman out for a meal. Yet, he did not know how to get a date with her. So, using the codename, *Train Man*, he asked for advice from other Otaku friends on a bulletin board website for *tokuo-s*.

His heart-yearning request: Please tell me where I can take her out for a meal, aroused sympathy from other tokuo-s (2) who eagerly came up with various ideas for him. Those who offered advice included a nurse who has just broken up with her boyfriend; a bored housewife; and others who spent days roaming around Internet cafés. Looking up to Train Man as their hero, the tokuo-s cheered him on everyday. Everyone logging onto the discussion board was involved in Train Man's courtship of the woman over the next two months. Their emotions were closely tied with Train Man's progress in his dating adventure; hence, fostering their own friendships with moments of joy and heartache. With the support and encouragement of his Internet friends, Train Man was gradually able to get closer to his Ms Hermes.

Appendix 2

Otaku

1. The Japanese Ministry of Health defines Otaku as individuals who refuse to leave their parents' house and isolate themselves in a single room away from their society and family for a period exceeding six months.
2. The definition of Otaku includes patients suffering from certain kinds of mental illness or split personality disorder, though they may not be diagnosed immediately. (By Japanese psychologist Tamaki Saitō)
3. Otaku (literally means pulling away, being confined, i.e. acute social withdrawal) is a Japanese term to refer to the phenomenon of reclusive adolescents and young adults who have chosen to withdraw from social life, often seeking extreme degrees of isolation and confinement due to various personal and social factors in their lives. The term, Otaku refers to both the sociological phenomenon in general as well as to individuals belonging to this societal group.
4. Although there are times where the Otaku may venture outdoors, the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare defines Otaku as individuals who refuse to leave their parents' house and isolate themselves away from society in their homes for a period exceeding six months.^[2] While the severity of the phenomenon varies depending on the individual, some youths remain in isolation for years, or in rare cases, decades. Often, Otaku start out as school refusals. (Source: Wikipedia)

[2] Reference: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hikikomori#cite_note-1#cite_note-1

Sunday Report – March 20, 2005**Behind the Unemployed School Dropouts (Double-Loss Youths): Otaku**

Time	Programme Details
01:35 – 03:51 07:58 – 11:10 16:40 – 20:50	Case No. 1: Ah Yuen, 22 years old. He becomes a Otaku after passing only in English at HKCEE and failing to find a full-time job. His mum wants him to find a proper job to share the family's financial burden, which is supported only by his 20-year old younger brother. Every morning she makes him go out to get the day's paper. Ah Yuen is afraid of meeting strangers and finds people on the street dangerous. His mum encourages him to enrol in prevocational courses, but his low self-esteem and confidence prevent him from handling work and getting employment. He has made promise after promise to his mum, but he never keeps any. His brother gets a slap from him when he urges him to look for a job. When asked what plans he has for the future, his only answer is: Dunno.
03:52 – 07:13 20:51 – 21:50	Case No. 2: Ah Wai, 16 years old. After changing to an English-medium school, he has had great difficulty keeping up with his studies and feels that his teachers do not understand his situation. As he moves from one school to another, he becomes a dropout. Relying on his family for support, he finds life is pleasurable if he just sleeps and plays computer games everyday. He also gets support from online friends who are in a similar situation, enduring a rather stress-free life. He feels respected by his online friends; whereas, going out in the streets brings risks. However, after being a Otaku for half a year, he is eager to become a student again; although he is not quite sure whether he will be accepted by any schools or teachers again.
11:37 – 14:32	After starting at a secondary school, Mr Chan's daughter has become reluctant to go to school. She has also stopped answering phone calls and does not like to go out anymore. She finds life at home is great. She doesn't think she is wasting time because she is doing something that she really enjoys. She explains it in terms of laziness. Maybe in five years time she will change. Mr Chan doesn't want to force his daughter, hoping that she may change when she is a bit more grown up. Yet, he is worried that if he dies, no one will take care of his daughter so he has got himself heavily insured for the sake of his daughter.
15:49 – 16:39	In Japan, the government will take action to intervene in a Otaku case if the person has been socially withdrawn for more than six months. According to some scholars in Hong Kong, the specific situation of Hong Kong with its problem of poverty among various social groups makes it impossible for Otaku to integrate into society again.

Appendix 4

The Hong Kong Definition of Otaku

- The Hong Kong version of the word, Otaku expressed literally as hidden youth was first created by Ms Ying Fung Shau, Principal Co-ordinator, LET'S Walk – Life Engagement Training Service, a special programme of the Hong Kong Christian Service.
- Commonly known as stay-homers or cocoon dwellers, the term, hidden youth is similar to the Japanese version of Otaku. All these names refer to youngsters who have chosen not to leave their homes after facing some challenges in life and feeling rejected by society (Note: there are quite a number of Otaku who have passed the youthful age). Considering it hard to find a position for themselves in society, these people have developed a kind of social inertia. Hidden youths often live with their parents or lock themselves up in their rooms for long periods of time. (Source: Translated from Chinese Wikipedia)
- According to Ms Ying Fung Shau, Principal Co-ordinator of the Hong Kong Christian Service and Prof. Wong Cheong Wing Victor of Hong Kong Baptist University, hidden youth is a social phenomenon that can affect people of various age ranges. People who have experienced the following conditions for more than three months can be considered to be suffering from hidden / social withdrawal:
 1. Disconnected from and a lack of participation in various social systems, including work, education, training, peer groups and the community; serious cases can include disassociation from the family unit
 2. Weak social networks characterised by fearfulness or refusal to contact or talk with others
 3. Lack of social status as students, employees, trainees or participants in social activities
 4. Social rejection of various kinds such as those associated with new immigrants, poverty, problems encountered in schools and labour market, as well as poor integration into the community and peer groups

Appendix 5.1

Otaku on the Mainland

Definition of Otaku:

The term Otaku originated from Japan and refers to people who prefer staying at home to going out to work or school. They have become fearful of social interaction and regard their home as the safest place. So, they lead a secluded life at home and depend on the Internet as their only means of communication with the outside world.

(Source: “Neighbourhood Gossips: Stay-homers in Guangzhou”, Yangcheng Evening News, May 29, 2007)

(There is no official definition of Hidden Youth / Social Withdrawal on the Mainland. Stay-homers is a noun illustrating Otaku.)

Source: Shanghai Morning News

Title of Article: Graduates’ High Hopes versus Low Income

Date: February 9, 2006

(Summary)

Graduates are aiming too high

According to the “Report of the Survey on Employment of Graduates of China in 2006”, only 2.4% of jobs carry a monthly salary of more than RMB5,000. However, no fewer than 60.5% of university graduates living in the cities indicated that they would prefer to become stay-homers rather than take up jobs that pay less than RMB1,500 a month. While many final-year university students are busy attending recruitment fairs after Chinese New Year every year, there are also a large number who have made up their minds to become stay-homers if the pay is too low. They may have all kinds of reason to justify themselves, yet almost all create their own internal monologue, which is that if they take up the role of stay-homers, they would not be compared with those who do get jobs in terms of the type of work, income and position. They prefer to be excluded from competition rather than being beaten by others.

Source: Yangcheng Evening News
Title of Article: Neighbourhood Gossips: Stay-homers in Guangzhou
Date: May 29, 2007

(Summary)

Stay-homers in Guangzhou

In just two years, Ms Wen has changed from a vibrant young girl to a tatty, spiritless person who prefers to stay at home doing nothing. She has been living like a recluse at her parents' place for more than a year. What contributed to such changes in her?

After graduating from university, Ms Wen worked for half a year. However, she felt that the pressure from work was so immense that she started to turn up late and leave early. Sometimes she even took leave from work just to stay at home on the Internet. She had difficulty holding jobs. She said she found it bothersome to go out to look for jobs, filling in forms and attending interviews. After losing jobs, she spent even more time staying at home except for a few times every month when she made a trip to the nearby supermarkets for necessities. She found her life had become free, with time for sleeping, eating and online surfing being scheduled as she wished. Going online became the major part of her life. She described herself and her computer as almost tied together. She often stayed online until 4 or 5 a.m. She found this kind of life very grounded and substantial. As for money, she said she would do some short-term part-time work. There were no big expenses in her life, as she didn't go out shopping much and she felt embarrassed to ask her parents for money.

Many people find it hard to imagine the kind of life led by stay-homers. Yet, Ms Wen didn't consider herself as a stay-homer. It is just that she didn't need to go out, as she could solve everything on the Internet, including her social life. Numerous cases of stay-homers are found in the city of Guangzhou and most of them are youngsters. According to Dr Zhang Xuefang, Chief Physician of Guangzhou Baiyun Psychological Hospital, those who have a weak immunity against setbacks, often tend to develop anxiety when they encounter turmoil in their personal lives and work situations. When the stress accumulates over time, the person will ultimately select a secluded way of living in order to stay away from society. For more serious cases, it may develop into a social phobia or other serious types of mental illness.

Appendix 5.2

Otaku in Japan

Source: <http://tw.news.yahoo.com/2002/05/30/international/ctnews/3268142.html>
Title of Article: Unable to Stand Social Pressure, Japanese Youths Caught in One's Own Trap
Author: Liu Li-er

Source: <http://fw123.blogspot.com>
Title of Article: Stay-homers are mostly the Eldest Sons
Author: Very Topical Blog

(Summary)

In Japan the word, Otaku or social withdrawal, refers to a group of young people who stay at home all day without venturing out to school or work; hence, having a very small social circle. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan points out that so far no specific names or diagnostic symptoms have been formulated for such social phenomena.

According to the statistics provided by the Government of Japan, there are more than 3 million Otaku in Japan. They have not ventured out from home, either to school or work over a long period of time. The Otaku are predominantly male and their average age is 26.7. They tend to be intelligent men but shy and sensitive. In a government survey of 3,292 Otaku, 17% indicated that they felt at ease at home and were afraid to go out. Up to 10% stated that they even had difficulty leaving their own rooms. About 20% of male interviewees have used violence against family members, whilst 14% of female interviewees have shown symptoms of eating disorders.

The values upheld by Japanese parents have not made life easy for young people who feel they cannot match up to their parents' expectations. When they encounter setbacks in life, they readily feel inferior to others and cannot continue on the same path as others. In their efforts to avoid being hurt emotionally, they prefer to shut themselves away without contact with family members or society. Such people are part of a growing trend in Japan. For Japanese families, having a child who is a Otaku is a shameful thing. The public often associate secluded behaviour with mental illness. In order to avoid public prejudice, parents would rather let their children continue to shut themselves away than seek professional help.

Source: BBC News Programmes: Correspondent

Title of Article: Otaku violence

Date: October 18, 2002

(Summary)

A Self-help Association for Parents of Socially Withdrawn Youth Sufferers

The phenomenon of social withdrawal or Otaku was first drawn to the attention of the Japanese public following a series of highly publicised crimes. Two years ago, a 17-year old Otaku sufferer left his isolation and hijacked a bus, killing a passenger. Another kidnapped a girl and held her captive in his bedroom for nine years. A fear of Otaku dominated newspaper headlines. But gradually, the Japanese public have become more sympathetic to the million in its midst who shun the outside world. Experts are quick to point out that most Otaku are simply anti-social, not violent.

However, the frustration that many sufferers experience - the desire to live a normal life, but the inability to do so - often expresses itself in anger and aggression towards those around them.

Masayuki Okuyama's son, Yoichi became a recluse when he was fifteen. He refused to leave the house and began threatening his parents. One day while Masayuki was at work, Yoichi attacked his mother. Masayuki immediately called the police who advised the couple to stay away from home that night since it was too dangerous. They spent the night in a hotel and went back home the next morning. Yoichi's behaviour became even more threatening. Later on, Masayuki was diagnosed with cancer. When he returned home from surgery, Yoichi said to him, "Please die. I want to claim your life insurance money. So die." Masayuki could stand it no more. He forced his son out of the house and provided money for him to buy his own flat. Yoichi is now 28 and has no contact with his father.

Masayuki felt that he had no one to turn to when his son became violent. This inspired him to establish a self-help association for the parents of Otaku sufferers. He receives about four or five letters a day from distraught parents, mostly about the violence of their children. Masayuki says the problem of Otaku is so widespread that Japan's rudimentary welfare system cannot cope with it. Most Japanese still regard the condition as a private family matter. Masayuki remains traumatised by his experience of bringing up a violent, reclusive child. He carries a spray can of mace with him wherever he goes, in case Yoichi attacks him. Masayuki has endured serious health problems, losing a leg and most of his lung and stomach to cancer. Yet these are nothing compared to the pain of being the parent of a Otaku sufferer.

Socially Withdrawn Young People in Hong Kong

Source: Sing Tao Daily News

Title of Article: “What’s the purpose of life when one has no friends?” A Socially Withdrawn Young Man Missing after Leaping into the Sea at Tsing Yi

Date: September 21, 2007

(Summary)

A 19-year old socially withdrawn young man ended his life by jumping into the sea after an earlier failed attempt to hang himself in the stairwell near his home. Surnamed Chan, he lived with his parents, grandmother and sisters in Tsing Yi. According to his father, he was able to do well at school in junior secondary forms, but once he got into the upper forms, he had difficulty keeping up. After graduating from secondary school, he worked for only 10 days. For the next two years, he lived in seclusion, spending time only on the Internet and watching TV at home, cutting out all kinds of social life. His family, in the hope that he would go out with his friends gave him a mobile phone and spending money. However, he returned the items, saying that he had no friends. Though he enrolled in Project Yijin with support from his family, he was always absent from class due to a lack of confidence. He often had arguments with his family about this and he was hospitalised for psychiatric treatment.

He once asked, “What is the purpose of life when one has no friends?” He tried hanging himself in the rear stairwell of the building where he lived, but was discovered by a security guard. Shocked by the news, the family tried to search for him, but failed to locate him. Later on, his identity card, clothes and belongings were found by the police on the waterfront of Tsing Yi pier. It was suspected that he took his life by jumping into the sea after failing to do so by hanging.

Source: Wen Wei Po

Title of Article: Isolation up to 10 Years, Organisations Encourage “A Praise A Day”

Number Doubled in Two Years, 18,000 Socially Withdrawn

Awaiting Help

Date: January 15, 2007

(Summary)

Survey shows 18,000 socially withdrawn in Hong Kong

In 2006, a survey was conducted by LET’S Walk – Life Engagement Training Service, a special programme of the Hong Kong Christian Service. A total of 53 mainstream schools took part in the survey. Among the students being interviewed, nearly half showed a tendency for socially withdrawn behaviour. From this figure, it was projected that there were about 18,500 socially withdrawn youths in Hong Kong, accounting for nearly 2% of the entire youth population in Hong Kong and showing a drastic threefold increase since 2005. This service is the only one available in Hong Kong providing home-visit counselling for socially withdrawn youths. More than 1,500 people have phoned to ask for help over the last two years. Among the 192 socially withdrawn youths who have received help from the centre, one has been secluded for nearly 10 years.

Ms Ying Fung Shau, Principal Co-ordinator of the Hong Kong Christian Service, pointed out that people who are socially withdrawn share some common features, including a low self-image, and a general lack of interest and quietness, combined with a hot temper. Society nowadays offers limited space for young people to develop themselves fully. Besides, the highly competitive nature of city life has widened the gap between human relationships. When facing setbacks, young people feel they have lost their ground; thus, turning to the virtual reality on the Internet for emotional support. All these factors contribute to the growth in the number of socially withdrawn youths. “Parents scolding their children regularly will only eat into their sense of confidence. We should abandon our deep-rooted culture of ‘more criticism and less praise’ and cultivate the practice of ‘a praise a day’ in society.”

Hong Kong society places a high value on successful results at school or work. Such a value system drives people to focus their entire life objectives in the pursuit of personal achievement. Labelled as failures, socially withdrawn youths are forced into a blind alley going nowhere; thus, hiding themselves in the Net world and avoiding contact with society.

Jacky, once socially withdrawn, shared his experiences. He worked as an electrician’s apprentice before an accident at work made him lose confidence in continuing his apprenticeship. His behaviour also became perverse. He often had conflicts with his family during his period of seclusion. Looking back, he likened the kind of life he had at that time to a lazy snake in hibernation. Chi-wai, who also once led a secluded life, had never found studying easy. Without a clear objective, she got admitted to an Associate Degree course. However, due to a wrong choice of subjects, she was asked to discontinue her studies. When she was interviewed for a job, she was criticised by the employer on the grounds that her thoughts were rather naïve. After that, she decided to stay at home. But, her family labelled her a parasite that lived off them. Fortunately, both Jacky and Chi-wai have left their secluded lives and returned to a normal life after receiving appropriate counselling.

Socially Withdrawn Young People in Europe and America

Source: Wikipedia

Definition of NEET

NEET is a government classification first used in the United Kingdom, but its use has spread to other countries. The full title of the classification is - Not currently engaged in Employment, Education or Training. In the United Kingdom, the classification is restricted to people aged between 16 and 18; whereas in Japan, it comprises people aged between 15 and 34 who are unemployed, unmarried, not enrolled in school or engaged in housework, and not seeking work or the technical training needed for work.

Source: Guangzhou Daily

Title of Article: Twenty Percent of British Youths Living off Welfare

Date: April 11, 2007

(Summary)

NEET problems getting worse in the UK

A study in the UK entitled The Cost of Exclusion warns that every year about 20% of youths are excluded from the mainstream and face a lifetime on government handouts. The report also warns that the problem of youth exclusion is using up to £3.65 billion a year from the Exchequer. These excluded youths are called NEETs who are without jobs, education and skills, and make up a population of about 1.2 million.

According to the report, behind the facade of economic development in the UK, many young people are excluded from the boom and lead a life that is without work or education. If society provides more chances for these youngsters to find employment and search for a new way of living, the government is expected to make an annual saving of at least several billions pounds. The report also traces the degenerating path of this lost generation: roughly 12 – 15% of young people who encounter obstacles at work, and face major difficulties in life, run the risk of falling into crime or undergo a state of declining health. The statistics show that more than two-thirds of youth criminals are unemployed.

Source: http://www.newsancai.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=449
Title of Article: The elderly are more to be depended on than provided for

(Summary)

The Global Phenomenon of Boomerang Kids

The term NEET refers to young people who are currently not engaged in education, employment, training or any vocational counselling and who are idling away their time. They are called Boomerang Kids in Canada and the US, meaning young adults moving back to their parents' homes after college and depending upon them again for care and financial support. In Germany, this boomerang generation is called nest squatters and mommy's kids in Italy.

Thus, it can be seen as a worldwide problem that occurs mainly in developed countries with high economic growth and quality of living. Some members of the younger generation in these places enjoy the results of economic prosperity, but lack the ability to contribute to society and avoid the responsibilities of being an adult.

According to a survey in the USA, the major factor that contributes to the boomerang generation is the increasing college tuition fees. Upon graduation, young people are already in heavy debt due to student loans. Compared to 10 years ago, the number of young people in debt right after college has increased by 85%. A survey conducted by Time Magazine reveals that upon graduation, 66% of college graduates have a debt of US\$10,000 and 5% of graduates owe more than US\$100,000. The financial value of diplomas awarded by USA universities and colleges has declined in real terms in the past decade. Also, the income of university graduates has not shown significant increases. Hoping to get better payment from work, many young people choose to continue their studies to acquire higher levels of academic or professional qualifications. In this way, their adulthood is also delayed.

According to the United States Bureau of Census and the American Sociological Association, the definition of adulthood refers to those who by the age of 30 have completed their schooling, established an independent household and are financially independent. A survey in September 2004 showed that only 31% of men and 46% of women had attained this adult status. Whereas, in a similar survey in 1970, the figures were 65% and 77% respectively. As Robert Schoeni, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the University of Michigan pointed out, the number of young people still staying at their parents' home at the age of 26 has nearly doubled from 11% to 20% since 1970.

Conditions of the Socially Withdrawn in Various Places

Source: Hong Kong Economic Times

Title of Article: Causes for NEET Differences from Place to Place

Author: Li Yee

Date: April 17, 2007

(Summary)

Causes for NEETs in various places

NEET refers to those who are unemployed as well as without education. In Hong Kong they are also called double-loss youths (unemployed school dropouts) or hidden youths (socially withdrawn). Since they have been cut off from society for a long period of time, they find it hard even to make simple social greetings such as - How are you? - when they meet others. Gradually their basic social skills are lost. Most of them have received little education and lack job skills; thus, making job-seeking almost impossible. They soon lose the motivation to work or are afraid of being rejected at job interviews. If their seclusion is prolonged, they will eventually lose their basic interpersonal skills as well as a sense of purpose and motivation for work and study.

In contrast, most NEETs in Japan come from well-off families who are themselves highly-educated with good vocational skills. The parents' affluence allows these young people to live and depend on them. If they cannot find jobs to their liking, they would rather stay at home and go online or play video games. This differs from the situation in Hong Kong where hidden youths usually come from low-income families. Their poor education and lack of work skills have undermined their motivation for work. Many double-loss youths are scared of job interviews and the failure of getting a job.

Source:

<http://ls.hket.com/hk/liberalStudiesTopicsAction.do?action=listdetail&method=N&id=ff8080810e799f03010f808053ea00ed>

Title of Article: The More Obsessed and the More Withdrawn Are Young People

(Summary)

The past decade or so has seen the emergence of video games and the Internet. In several decades time, perhaps our so-called collective memory will be more tied up with PSP, PS3, MSN and blogs rather than with Shek Kip Mei Public Estate and Star Ferry Pier. The popularity of these electronic gadgets has had negative impacts on our lives. They are likened to modern opium, as young people become readily obsessed and addicted, creating problems at the personal level and for society as a whole.

Headlines often appear on the news about related problems such as “Ten-year old stabs mother after not being allowed to play video games”; and “Youth with flu falls unconscious after playing overnight on video games”. Unfortunately, the public tends to focus only on the content of the incidents and fails to see what lies behind them. The reasons behind these two incidents include the obsession with video games and a lack of self-control. If young people are so self-indulged and lose control of their lives, they may become school dropouts or unemployed and spend their days only on the Internet as hidden youths.

Most socially withdrawn young people are obsessed with video games, but it doesn't necessarily mean that playing video games will make one become socially withdrawn. Apart from video games, there are many causes of the social withdrawn phenomenon including personal, family and social issues. Therefore, we should not equate those who are obsessed with video games with being socially withdrawn.

Source: am730

Title of Article: Causes for the Growing Number of Young People who are Socially Withdrawn

Author: Shih Wing Ching

Date: January 19, 2007

(Summary)

Recent studies show that many young people are unable to find a stable job after graduation. Considering themselves as losers, they start to avoid social contact with others, and in doing so, their sense of inferiority is further highlighted. In some cases, they shut themselves away at home and rely on their parents for support and become hidden youths (socially withdrawn).

This kind of social phenomenon did not occur several decades ago when there was a different economic situation. Previously, income raised in most households was only enough to feed the family. Young people had to do various kinds of subcontracting work at home, e.g. assembling plastic flowers, to supplement the family income. Before finishing school, they had already developed a strong sense of responsibility to lessen the burden on the parents. So, they would dare not look for jobs after graduation. Even if they did not find a desirable job, they would accept what they were offered. Though the work might be very hard, monotonous and without prospects, they would still accept it without moaning. Therefore, the social withdrawn phenomenon could be considered as a kind of rich man's disease; a person was not able to hide away at home if his or her basic living could not be maintained.

As shown in some wildlife documentary films, when wild animals are released back into the wild after a period in captivity, scientists will gradually reduce the amount of food supplied, forcing the animals to find food themselves. Such methods may sound cruel on the surface, but it may be the best approach to help hidden youths (socially withdrawn) to stand on their own two feet. However, society at large generally finds this opinion disagreeable. On the contrary, counselling services are offered to rationalise the behaviour of hidden youths, making them believe it is the society at fault. Until the problems of society are undone, individuals cannot deal with their own problems. Worst still, these hidden youths are led to blame society and lose their own ability to get out of their black hole.

Some problems in society, related to education and employment systems, as well as imbalances between salary and ability, may have indirectly led to the social withdrawn phenomenon. An effective solution to the problem may require the concerted efforts of a few generations. Life is fleeting. Before all the social problems are resolved, perhaps the hidden youths and their parents can try their best to solve their personal problems first, instead of waiting for other social problems to be resolved.

Source: Sing Tao Daily News

Title of Article: In Search of the Ultimate Answer for School Dropouts

Date: January 18, 2007

(Summary)

Figures released by the Education and Manpower Bureau show that in the past three years an average of 1,300 school student dropouts are recorded annually. Among them, nearly one percent is from Band One schools. Some of them are even outstanding students. Some school principals who have handled similar dropout cases have reflected that the disagreements and lack of co-operation between parents and the school, with neither party claiming responsibility, have created obstacles for students to return to school. According to a study conducted by the Department of Social Work at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, there is a huge gap between what the parents and teachers think. Up to 70% of interviewed teachers believe that school dropouts can mainly be attributed to the personality of the students and their parents; whereas, the majority of the parents think that the school is at fault.

An experienced teacher says that some parents try every means to send their children to distinguished schools regardless of their children's interests and abilities. Children with lesser ability will find it hard to keep up and start to develop resentment against the school. A school principal tells the story of a student from a poor family who is asked by his parents to leave school to go to work as they no longer can afford his schooling fees.

To enable school dropouts to return to school again, concerted co-operation between schools and parents is needed. However, many parents are hard to get in touch with due to their busy work schedules. Some parents have long been dissatisfied with schools, thinking that the teachers do not care enough for their children. Some parents even think that they will feel relieved when their children have dropped out from school; thus, no longer facing any more pressure from school. Most of the school dropouts cannot find a sense of accomplishment from their studies. The longer they delay returning to school, the less chance they have to integrate back into the study mode again, and the higher the chance they have of becoming hidden youths (socially withdrawn).

Source: Sing Tao Daily News

Title of Article: Parents at Fault for Hidden Youths

Author: Cheng Sheung-tat

Date: January 17, 2007

(Summary)

A study projects that there are about 18,000 hidden youths (socially withdrawn) in Hong Kong. With an average age of 17, they neither go to school nor work, but instead stay at home all day, either sleeping or going online. They may seem to be parasites living off their parents. In fact, they are incompetent problem solvers, who are escapists, shutting themselves away at home.

Causes contributing to the choice of a secluded life by these hidden youths include school bullying, falling behind with school work, household poverty, obstacles to job-finding, dissatisfying jobs, etc. Many young people who are fresh graduates also encounter these kinds of setback. Yet, the fact that some of them prefer to choose a secluded way of living reflects their rather introverted character with a lack of confidence and an inability to deal with setbacks. They are also poorly trained in terms of interpersonal communication skills.

The parents of hidden youths are mainly of two kinds. The first group knows only how to scold and inflict corporal punishment, belittling their children and making them feeling hopeless whenever problems arise. These children, lacking the skill to seek help, resort to running away from reality. The second group tends to spoil their children excessively by satisfying their insatiable desires. When the children encounter failure, the parents protect them immediately without teaching them the proper way to become stronger. When they are presented with seemingly insurmountable problems, they will easily give up and become hidden youths.

Many parents of the hidden youths complain about the lack of support from school and society. They are also incapable of handling problems. As a matter of fact, to help children from being socially withdrawn, the main responsibility lies with the parents to set up an effective method of management. Outside help can only be considered as secondary assistance.

Source: Hong Kong Daily News

Title of Article: Is the term, Socially Withdrawn confined to Young People?

Author: Eunice Lam

Date: January 21, 2007

(Summary)

If hidden youths cannot find their way back to society, very soon they will become hidden middle-aged persons. Obviously it is a social phenomenon belonging to affluent societies. In the past when Hong Kong was still a no-work-no-pay society, the chance for one to get socially withdrawn was very slim.

People become hidden youths because of a complexity of reasons. First, they can live off their family without bringing home any household income. Second, they look down on jobs with low pay. Then they only rely on computers for entertainment and find no reason to leave the comforts of home. Among these reasons, the prime one is the dependence they have on their family. These hidden youths have not the slightest sense that they are lazy, selfish and irresponsible. Also, their pride is affected if their parents have a word or two with them. If the family does not accept their hidden behaviour, they will strongly believe that their family is purposefully making things difficult for them.

As time goes by, they have no jobs and continue to stay hidden; they soon become hidden middle-aged and even hidden elderly, putting more burden on society.

附件 7 隱蔽青年自白

(P.46-47。隱蔽背後。香港基督教服務處 「有網能量」青年航導及發展中心。香港：香港基督教服務處，2006)

學校排斥



功課困難

學校的排斥

升上中學後，無論我多努力總是跟不上學校的功課，也聽不明白老師所說的，我不知如何是好，『好成績』對我來說總是遙不可及。每天上學，雖然坐在課室中，但卻魂遊太空。在學校裡我找不到成功感，也沒有滿足感。

我曾經被最好的朋友出賣，又多次被同學欺凌及羞辱，他們的說話總是對我百般留難，令我無地置容。每當他們經過我的身邊時，總是喜歡作弄我，不是踢我的椅子便是將我的書本亂丟。

在學校我沒有朋友，上學使我感到不開心。

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很高興聽到你們真心的分享及出書的消息，因為可以令大眾更加了解你地！

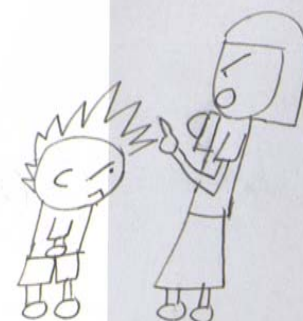


同學欺凌

親戚的排斥

母親天生身體有缺緩慢的學習速度、貧窮成為了親戚常常取笑我母親誕下一個蠢鈍兒，遠我們。在我的世界裡照顧我。

憾、自己未成熟的思想、的生活環境……這些境況們一家的藉口。他們取笑取笑我的家境清貧，更疏只有父親和母親會支持和



老師訓話

工作的排斥

19歲的我渴望擁有一份工作，它可以讓我獲得金錢以解決家庭的困難、脫離待學待業的生活、在親友前吐一口氣。但見工卻屢次碰釘，我不知所以亦不知為何，我十分氣餒。

面對不同的排斥，我開始對身邊的人失去信任，覺得自己比別人差，感到自卑、孤單和恐慌。我一文不值，世人亦嫌棄我，更無人明白我。最終我把自己匿藏在家一年，過著只有電腦為伴的生活。

多謝你們的分享，祝福你們。

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Confession by a Socially Withdrawn Youth

(Behind the Socially Withdrawn, published by LET'S Walk – Life Engagement Training Service, a special programme of the Hong Kong Christian Service, 2006, pg. 46-47).

Rejection in School

Since being in secondary school, I have had great difficulty keeping up with the school work and what the teachers taught, no matter how hard I tried. I have not known what to do. Although I went to school every day, most of the time I daydreamed. I couldn't find the slightest sense of achievement or satisfaction from school.

I have been betrayed by my best friend. My classmates often bullied and humiliated me. They always targeted me and said things that made me feel extremely embarrassed. Whenever they went past me, they would tease me by kicking at my chair or tossing my books.

I have no friends at school. Going to school has only brought me unhappiness.

Rejection by Relatives

My family is poor. My mom was born handicapped, and I'm a slow learner. We are the laughing-stock of our relatives. They tease my mom for having a dumbo son - me. They make fun of our poverty and always keep a distance from us. In my tiny little world, only my father and mother look after and support me.

Rejection at Work

I'm 19 years old and I am yearning for a job, hoping that it will provide financial support for my family and get me out of being an unemployed school dropout so that I can stand up with pride in front of my relatives and friends. However, every job interview for me has been unsuccessful. I have no idea why I fail and don't know how to move forward. I feel very discouraged.

Feeling rejected in many ways, I have started to lose trust in people around me. I feel inferior, lonely and scared. I am worse than others in every way. I feel worthless and abandoned by the world. No one understands me. I have now locked myself away at home for a year with only the computer as my companion.

Appendix 8

Research Data on Hidden Youths

(Source: “Survey on the Current Situation of Hidden Youths and the Pressure faced by their Parents”, LET’S Walk – Life Engagement Training Service, a special programme of the Hong Kong Christian Service, January 14, 2007.)

(資料來源：香港基督教服務處 「有網能量」青年導航及發展中心 「青年隱蔽現況及家長壓力調查」 2007年1月14日)

(圖一)



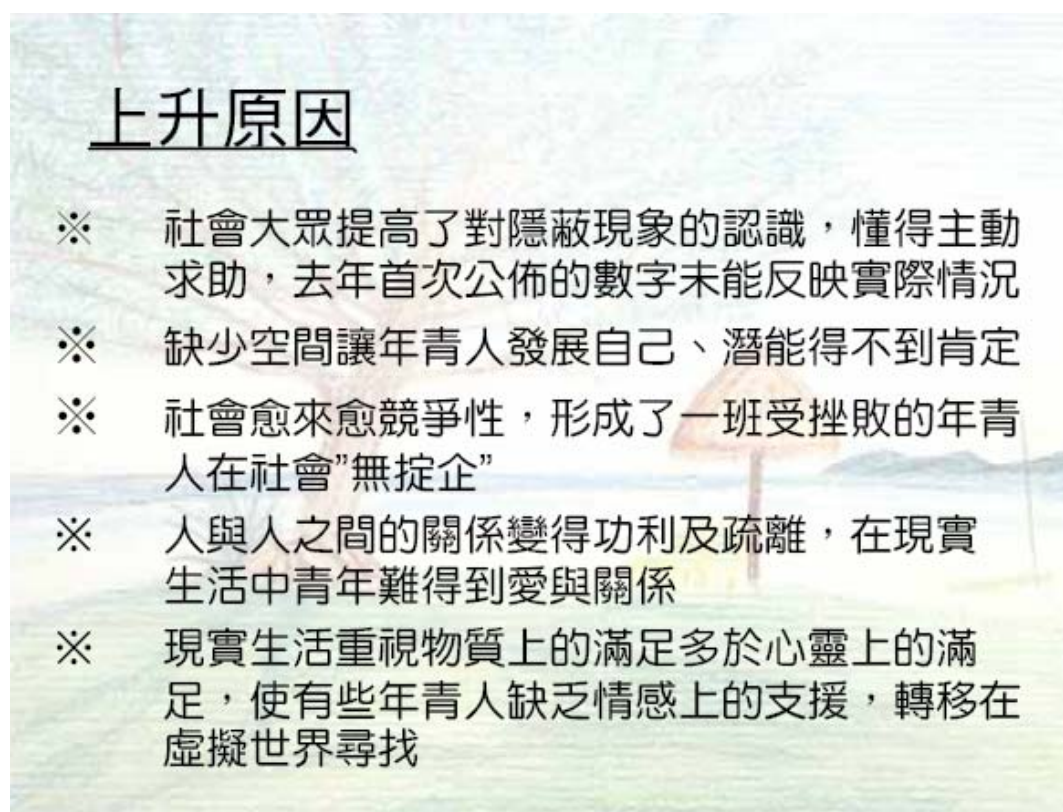
(Table 1 – English translation)

It is estimated that a total of 18,000 young people aged between 10 and 24 are socially withdrawn, a drastic three-fold increase from 6,000 estimated in March 2005.

Category of Social Withdrawal	Percentage (%)	Estimated Figures
Completely Withdrawn	5.6	1033
Withdrawn	45.7	8435
On the Verge of becoming Withdrawn	48.7	8989
	Total:	18457

We estimate that about 9000 young people are on the verge of being socially withdrawn. Appropriate support is urgently needed to stop the problem from worsening.

(圖二)



(Table 2 - English translation)

Reasons for the Rise in the Number of Socially Withdrawn Young People
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increased public awareness and understanding of the phenomenon: This leads to a more proactive seeking for help. The figures released last year did not fully reveal the actual situation.- Lack of opportunity for young people to develop themselves and their potential: This is not recognised.- Problem of young people who have met with setbacks finding it hard to establish themselves in a competitive society.- Changing human relationships: These are now based more on interests and some people become isolated. Young people have difficulty finding affection and building relationships in real life.- Misplaced reliance on virtual reality: Young people try to seek emotional support from virtual reality after failing to do so in real life. Material gratification is now emphasised more than spiritual satisfaction.

(圖三)



(Table 3 - English translation)

Basic information on 192 cases of socially withdrawn young people

Mode of Living	No. of Persons (%)
Job finding / pursuing further education	10 (5.2%)
Contemplating the direction of future life	10 (5.2%)
Spending excessive time on the phone	13 (6.8%)
Doing housework	16 (8.3%)
Reading comics	8 (9.4%)
Listening to music	30 (15.6%)
Other	33 (17.2%)
Sleeping more than 12 hours a day	39 (20.3%)
Day and night reversed	69 (35.9%)
Shutting oneself away	75 (39.1%)
Watching TV	100 (52.1%)
Playing on computer	153 (79.7%)

(圖四)



(Table 4 - English translation)

Basic information on 192 cases of socially withdrawn young people

Actions taken when problems arise	No. of Persons (%)
With enthusiasm	7 (3.6%)
Harming oneself	8 (4.2%)
Seeking help from family	8 (4.2%)
Unspecified	9 (4.7%)
Actively seeking help from professionals	10 (5.2%)
Seeking help from friends and classmates	17 (8.9%)
Crying	18 (9.4%)
Losing one's temper	69 (36.1%)
Running away to evade the problems	75 (40.6%)
Keeping it all to oneself and suppression	127 (66.1%)

(圖五)

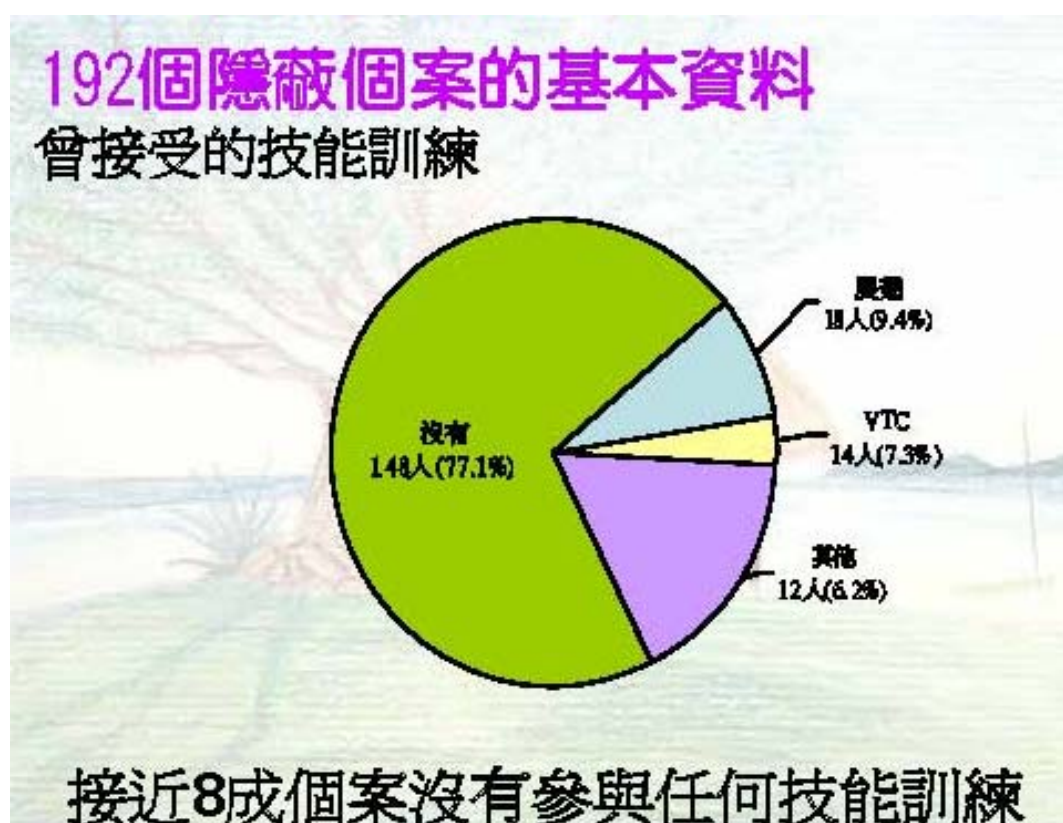


(Table 5 - English translation)

Basic information on 192 cases of socially withdrawn

Mental health status	No. of Persons (%)
Propensity to use violence	7 (3.6%)
Staying with parents	11 (5.7%)
Lack of appetite	12 (6.3%)
Insomnia	25 (13%)
Fear of going to school	28 (14.6%)
Becomes anxious easily	31 (16.1%)
Low-spirited	53 (27.6%)
Hot-tempered	57 (29.7%)
Tormented by emotions	65 (33.9%)
Fear of contacting people	76 (39.6%)
Introverted	112 (58.3%)

(圖六)



(Table 6 - English translation)

Basic information on 192 cases of socially withdrawn young people

Skills training received	No. of Persons (%)
Workplace attachment training	18 (9.4%)
Vocational training	14 (7.3%)
Other	12 (6.2%)
None	148 (77.1%)

Nearly 80% of the cases have not received any skills training

(圖七)

家庭方面

86.5%受訪青（45人）表示有遇過以下不同類別的負面經歷，分佈如下：

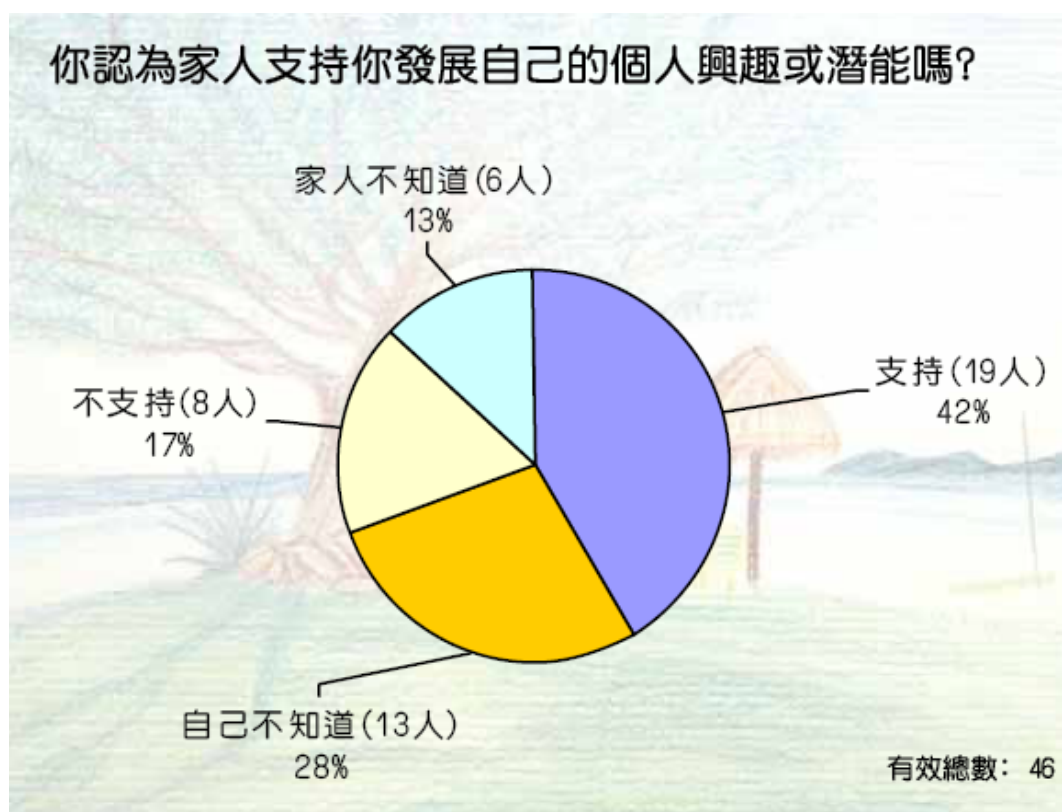
負面經歷	人數	百分比
很少得到家人的欣賞及鼓勵	29	64.4%
經常被父母批評、責罵	24	53.3%
家人間缺乏互相溝通	24	53.3%
與家人關係疏離	22	48.9%
父母重視個人學業成績及表現，缺乏支持及給予機會發展個人興趣	17	37.8%
父母很少主動關心自己	16	35.6%
缺乏照顧	15	33.3%
家人以暴力解決問題	12	26.7%

(Table 7)

With regard to the family, 86.5% (45) of the interviewed young people expressed that they have encountered the following various negative experiences:

Negative Experiences	No. of Persons (%)
Rarely receiving appreciation and encouragement from family	29 (64.4%)
Regularly criticized and scolded by parents	24 (53.3%)
Absence of mutual communication among family members	24 (53.3%)
Isolated relationships with family members	22 (48.9%)
Parents only focus on school performance and examination results without giving support to the development of personal interests	17 (37.8%)
Active care rarely provided by parents	16 (35.6%)
Lack of care	15 (33.3%)
Family members using violence as a means to solve problems	12 (26.7%)

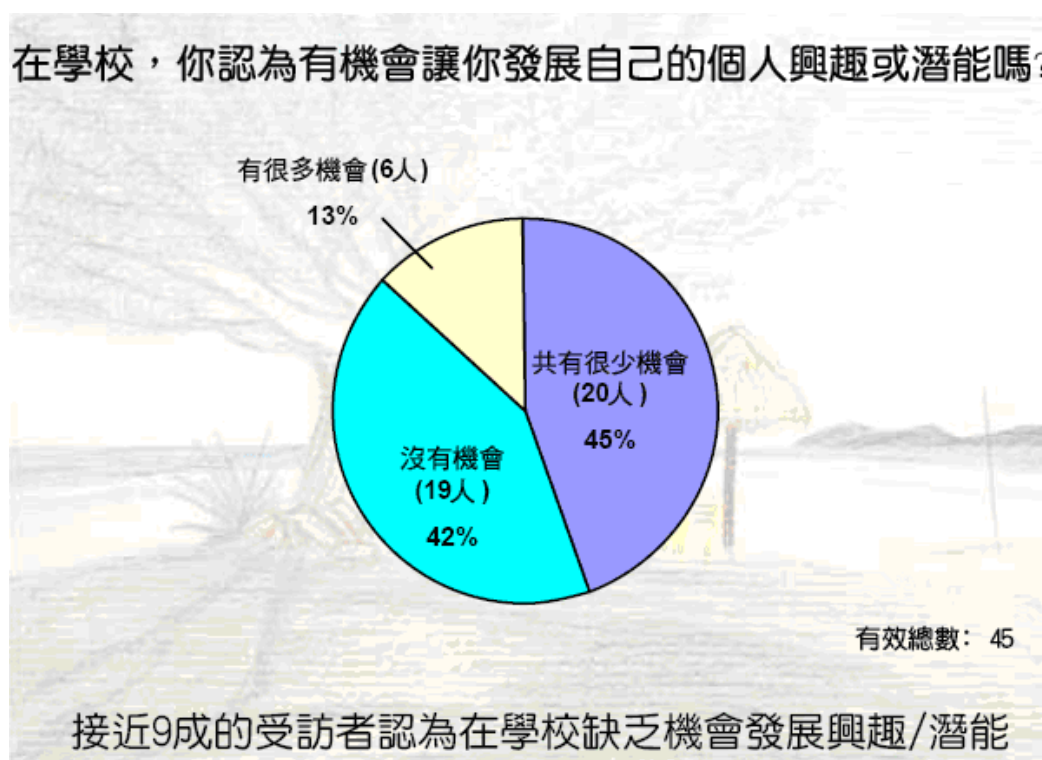
(圖八)



(Table 8)

Do you think your family supports you in your personal interests or in developing your potential?	No. of persons (%)
Yes, they do support me.	19 (42%)
No, they do not support me.	8 (17%)
They do not know.	6 (13%)
I am not sure.	13 (28%)

(圖九)

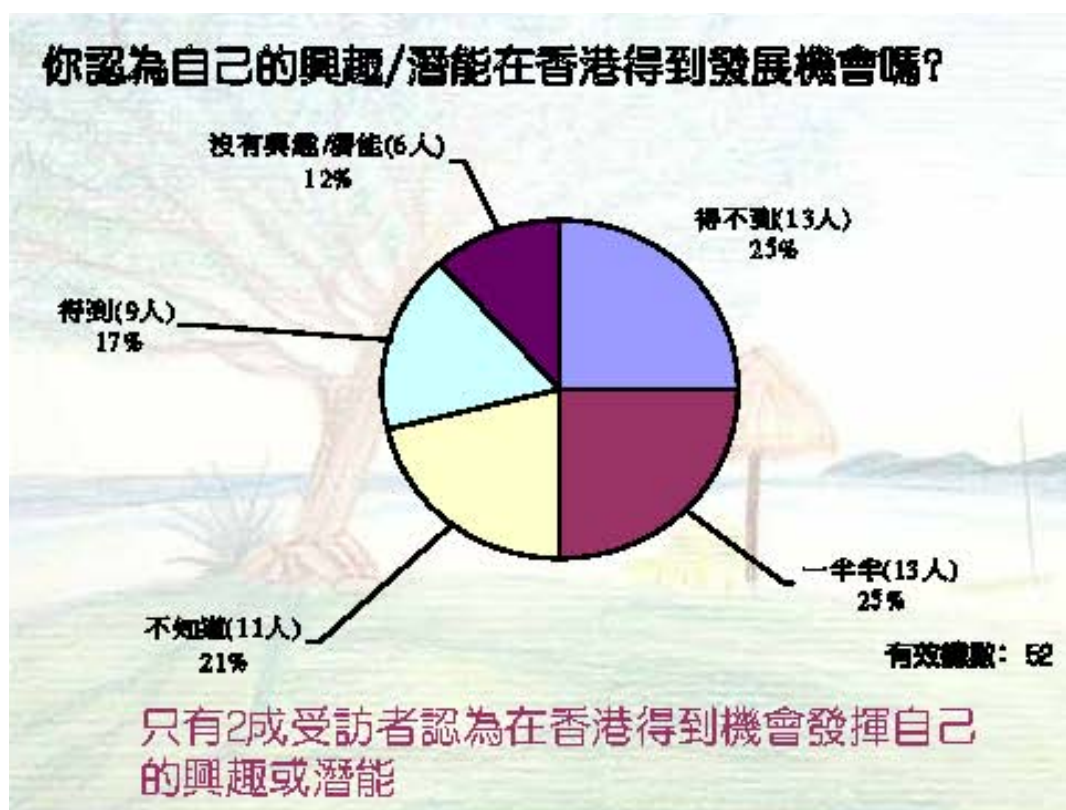


(Table 9)

In school, do you think you have chances to develop your personal interests or potential?	No. of persons (%)
Yes, lots of chances	6 (13 %)
Very few chances	20 (45%)
No, no chance at all	19 (42%)

Nearly 90% of the interviewees think that there is a lack of opportunity for them to develop interests or potential.

(圖十)



(Table 10)

Do you think you have a chance to develop your interests or potential in Hong Kong?	No. of persons (%)
Yes.	9 (17%)
No.	13 (25%)
I have no interests or potential.	6 (12%)

Concepts Related to Self-esteem

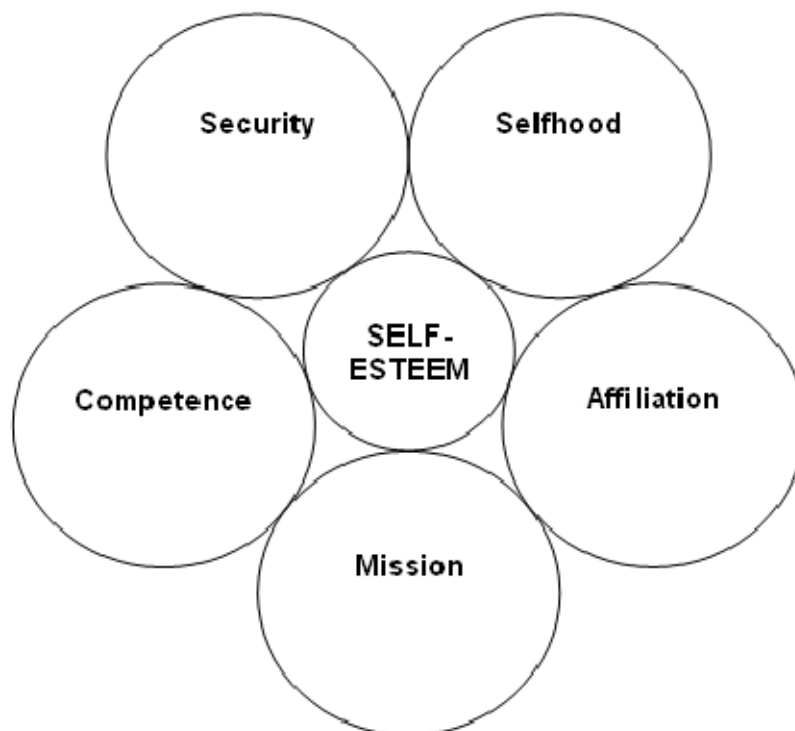
- Definition of Self-esteem: Self-esteem is the subjective feeling one has for oneself. Everyday, we keep on accessing our own values and capabilities without awareness. The conclusion from these assessments will generate a feeling for the self; this is self-esteem, which is different from “self-concept”. Self-concept is an objective standard while self-esteem is a subjective feeling. For example, a handicapped child with good grades may have very low self-esteem, even though he is a student with academic talent in terms of self-concept or how others perceive him. He may not care about his grades, but is concerned about his physical condition, like how it prevents him from participating in sports activities or he may brood over his unusual appearance. Children with good grades but low self-esteem also need our special attention and care. (Heep Hong Society)
- Self-esteem is the way you think about yourself and what you expect of yourself. The foundation for positive self-esteem is built at an early age and is influenced by relationships between you and your family. Your feelings about yourself will change, as you grow older. Praise and criticism from parents, friendships at school and attitudes from teachers will continue to affect you from preschool through high school. Persistent criticism, teasing and failure can make you feel worthless. Praise, support and finding something you are good at can help you develop confidence in yourself. (Discovery Health)
- All people have a mental picture of themselves, their strengths and weaknesses. This mental picture is called self-concept or self-image. It is formed through learned experiences beginning at birth. Self-esteem is the value judgement or degree of worth a person attributes to his/ her self-image. Considered an important component of emotional health, self-esteem encompasses both self-confidence and self-acceptance. The idea that self-esteem and self-image are related to how people behave in society, perform in school, react to peer pressure, and interact with others has received a great deal of attention from psychologists and child development experts since the 1980s. (Internet FAQ Archives)
- Criticisms on Self-esteem: Critics see the all pervading importance given to self-esteem in popular culture and in modern psychology as misleading and dogmatic. A review of self-esteem literature by Roy Baumeister confirmed that high self-regard per se is not necessarily good nor does it translate into higher estimates by others of a person's intellect, appearance or virtue.

Psychological literature and popular culture both concentrate on the presence or absence of high self-esteem; however, some evidence suggests that the overemphasis on the self-esteem mantra can lead to a rapid fall when the self becomes invalidated in the domains that one considers important. In addition, this pursuit may have negative consequences on the welfare of society as a whole. Eastern philosophy, particularly Buddhist and Hindu thought, sees the self in its limited form as illusory; it perceives a true self as a sublime and transcendent entity whose nature remains hidden from the limited or egotistic self. (Wikipedia)

The Five Building Blocks of Self-esteem

The five components in the esteem builder of Dr Michele Borba are:

1. **Security:** having a feeling of strong assuredness that involves feeling comfortable and safe; knowing what is expected; being able to depend on individuals and situations; and comprehending rules and limits
2. **Selfhood:** having a feeling of individuality; and acquiring self-knowledge, which includes accurate and realistic self-description sources of influences on the self
3. **Affiliation:** having a feeling of belonging, acceptance or relatedness, particularly in relationships that are considered important; and feeling approved of, appreciated and respected by others
4. **Mission:** having a feeling of purpose and motivation in life; self-empowerment through setting realistic and achievable goals; and being willing to take responsibility for the consequences of one's decisions
5. **Competence:** having a feeling of success and accomplishment in things regarded as important or valuable; aware of strengths; and able to accept weaknesses.



Source: An extract from: Borba, Michele. (1988) *"Esteem builders: a K-8 self-esteem curriculum for improving student achievement, behavior, and school climate."* Sacramento: Jalmar Press.

Appendix 10

Concepts Related to Living Skills

- Life skills refer to the ability of an individual to handle effectively the various needs and challenges encountered in daily living, as well as the means to maintain the well-being of one's psychological state. Life skills also include a person's ability to adapt and behave enthusiastically during interactive contact with others, with society and the environment. (Source: World Health Organisation)

Appendix 11

Examples of Psychological Tests

Implications of this psychological test:

The first kind of animal and its characteristics represent how you wish to be seen by others.

The second kind of animal and its characteristics represent how others see you.

The third kind of animal and its characteristics represent the true you.

Example 1:

First Animal: a kangaroo - hopping around all day, full of vitality

Second Animal: a koala bear - huggable and adorable; a mild character without ambition

Third Animal: a cat - aloof; ignoring calls from its owner and having a distinctive character

Example 2:

First Animal: an elephant - it knows how to violate rules

Second Animal: a pig - its unexpected smartness underneath its seeming harmlessness

Third Animal: a panda - it enjoys a long stay at Ocean Park where it eats and sleeps every day in air-conditioned comfort and doesn't need to pay anything

The Struggle for Leadership between the States of Wu and Yue

In the Spring and Autumn Period in China, the States of Yue and Wu were always at war with each other. Fuchai, the king of Wu State defeated Goujian, the king of Yue State at Huiji. Knowing he had come to a dead end, Goujian went to the State of Wu to surrender in person. At the same time, he ordered his people to continue to carry out their daily work and duties, as well as having his army to continue training in the hope that one day he would make a counter-attack on the State of Wu.

During three years of captivity in the State of Wu, Goujian was humiliated and bullied daily by Fuchai. He was made to strip off his royal costumes and put on prison attire and assigned to look after horses. Whenever Fuchai toured around his territory, he would bring Goujian with him and make him chase behind the chariot with a horsewhip in his hand. When they entered into cities, Fuchai would shout and call his people to come to look at the defeated king of Yue. Goujian silently tolerated the humiliation and waited quietly for the chance to return as king. Though repeatedly warned by his minister, Wu Zixu that Goujian must be killed to save future trouble, Fuchai did not heed the advice. He thought that since Goujian had become his slave, it would be too good for him if he killed him right away. He preferred to keep Goujian at his side to torture him as revenge for years of hatred.







Later on, Fuchai was again advised by Wu Zixu to stop his troops from attacking another State, Qi. This time Fuchai was furious with Wu Zixu and ordered him to end his own life. Wu Zixu cried out at the point of death, “Your Highness did not listen to my advice. I would watch with my own eyes that the State of Wu would be defeated by Yue State in less than 3 years.” After the death of his minister, the State of Wu was under pressure both internally and externally with the supply of food being cut off and the counter-attacks made by Yue State. Fuchai eventually took his own life.

Reminder:

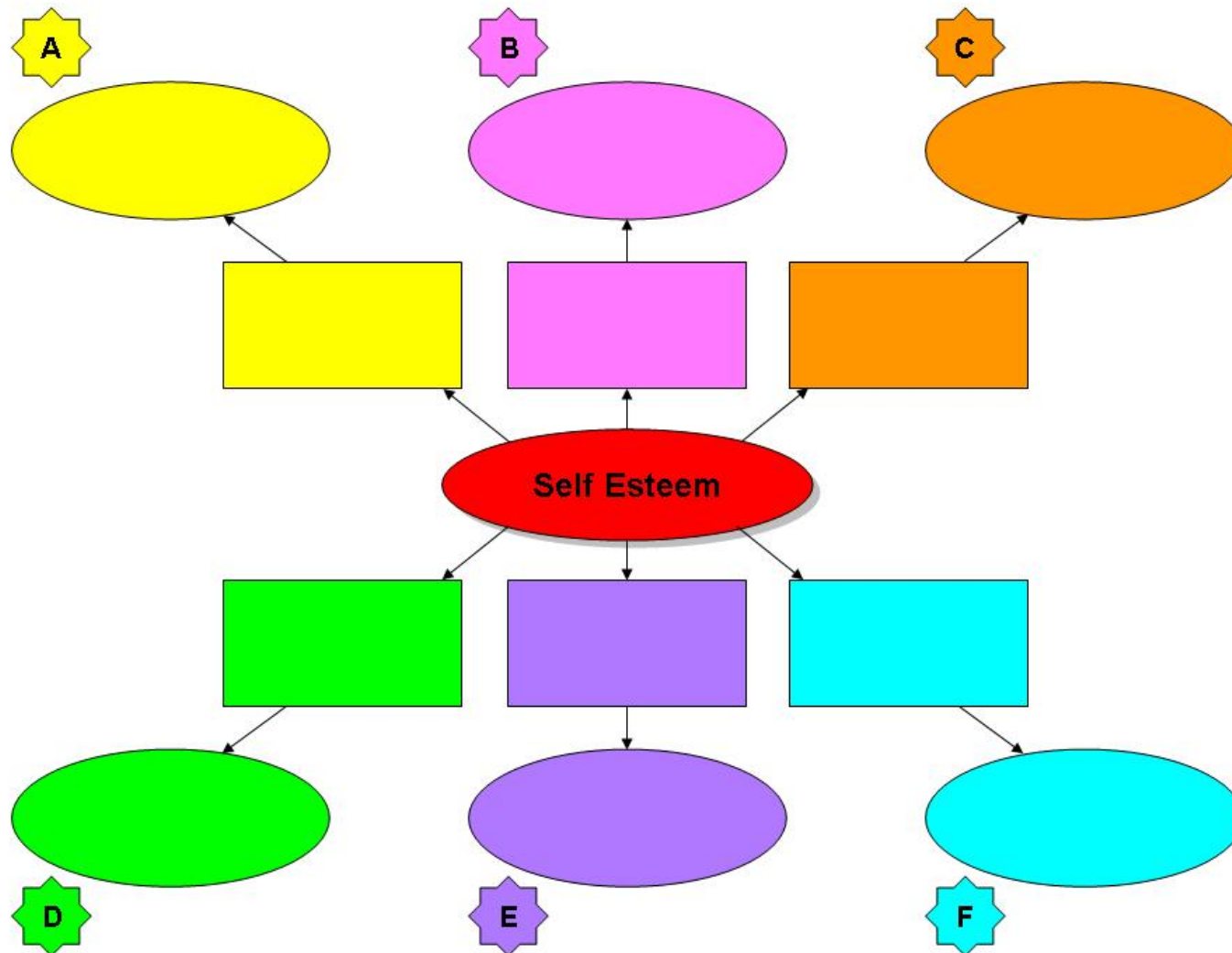
Fuchai is a typical example of someone whose self-esteem, expectations and actions show an imbalanced mental state. After defeating Goujian, he thought he was invincible. His self-esteem was inflated and he became arrogant; thus, making him unable to see his own limitations. Although he was repeatedly advised by Wu Zixu, that he should kill Goujian to avoid future trouble, he refused to follow the advice, as he strongly believed that Goujian was defeated and thoroughly weakened; not posing a threat to him. Moreover, he even let Goujian return to his own State of Yue after three years of captivity, allowing him to return to power to wipe out eventually the State of Wu. In contrast, Goujian’s self-esteem was not affected. He did not get dispirited even though he lived like a slave. Instead, he kept himself diligent and determined, and secretly built up his army. With a clear sense of self-knowledge and political charisma, he encouraged his people, making them prepared for counter-attacks on the State of Wu. When he was released to his own country, he immediately gathered his troops to attack the unprepared State of Wu.

Appendix 13

Self-esteem Case Study Cards

 <p>A majority of university graduates on the Mainland prefer to be stay-homers to taking up low-paid jobs. They can only see their educational background without realising they do not have any work experience.</p> <p>(“Graduates’ High Hopes versus Low Income” Shanghai Morning News, February 9, 2006)</p>	 <p>When Goujian, the king of Yue, was defeated and became a prisoner of war in the State of Wu, he was greatly humiliated by their king. Yet his self-esteem was not affected. He secretly ordered his people to carry on with their daily production and put his army into intensive training, day and night. When he was released and returned to his own state, he immediately gathered his troops and made a counter-attack on the State of Wu.</p>	 <p>In the Spring and Autumn Period of China, the State of Qin, located further to the west, was culturally and technologically behind various states in the central part of China. Qin Xiaokong, with high self-esteem, strongly believed that Qin, with the longest frontier among the six states, would become the leader on the central plain. Knowing his state was not powerful enough, he commissioned Shang Yang to be his minister to carry out extensive reforms and establish new laws, including rewarding according to merit and abolishing the aristocracy. The reformation strengthened the army of and production in Qin to lay down its future success of becoming a superpower over the other six states, and ultimately unified China.</p>
 <p>An 18-year old who had difficulty finding jobs after leaving school at Form 3 became an eccentric hidden youth. Encouraged by his family, he enrolled in a hotel management course offered by the Pre-employment Training Programme. However, he encountered setbacks, such as difficulty with returning to school life and his mother’s reproaches. Without the ability to review his situation calmly, he chose to jump off a building to end his life.</p> <p>(“18-year old King of Go falls to his death after bidding farewell to his mum”, Sing Tao Daily News, October 24, 2007)</p>	 <p>In <i>Journey to the West</i>, one of the four great classical novels of Chinese literature, there is a character called Monk Sha. Originally, he was a general in heaven responsible for curtain lifting. He was banished from heaven for the destruction of a valuable vase and was condemned to be born as a man-eating sand demon. He then became a disciple of the Buddhist monk, Xuanzang. With low self-esteem, Sha was often bullied by the other two fellow disciples, Monkey and Pigsy. However, Sha was able to lead a happy life with contentment.</p>	 <p>Having received counselling from a social worker, a young man who once led the life of a hidden youth made an attempt to re-integrate into society. He knew his ability was not acceptable, but he believed he would be able to succeed with the help from those around him.</p> <p>(LET’S Walk – Life Engagement Training Service, Hong Kong Christian Service, 2006)</p>

Self-esteem Matching Worksheet



Self-esteem Matching Labels

Self-esteem, ability and expectation:

low self-esteem
insufficient practical ability
self knowledge

low self-esteem
insufficient practical ability
no self knowledge

high self-esteem
high practical ability

high self-esteem
insufficient practical ability
no self-knowledge

low self-esteem
high practical ability

high self-esteem
insufficient practical ability
self-knowledge

Extended Results:

After reviewing, one is able
to stand firmly and exert
effort to strive to achieve

dispirited, hopeless, in pain

happy, ordinary

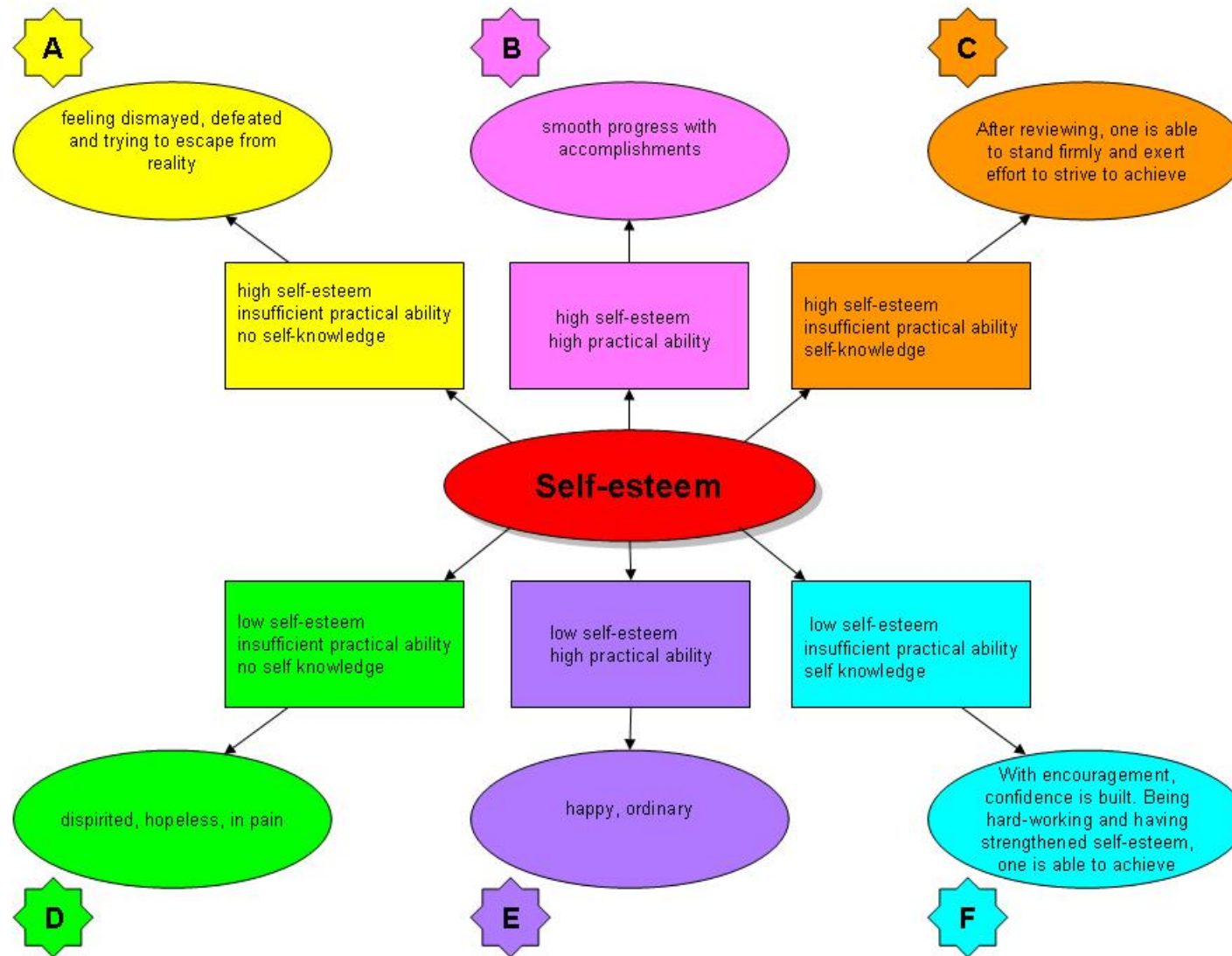
smooth progress with
accomplishments

feeling dismayed, defeated
and trying to escape from
reality

With encouragement,
confidence is built. Being
hard-working and having
strengthened self-esteem,
one is able to achieve

Appendix 14

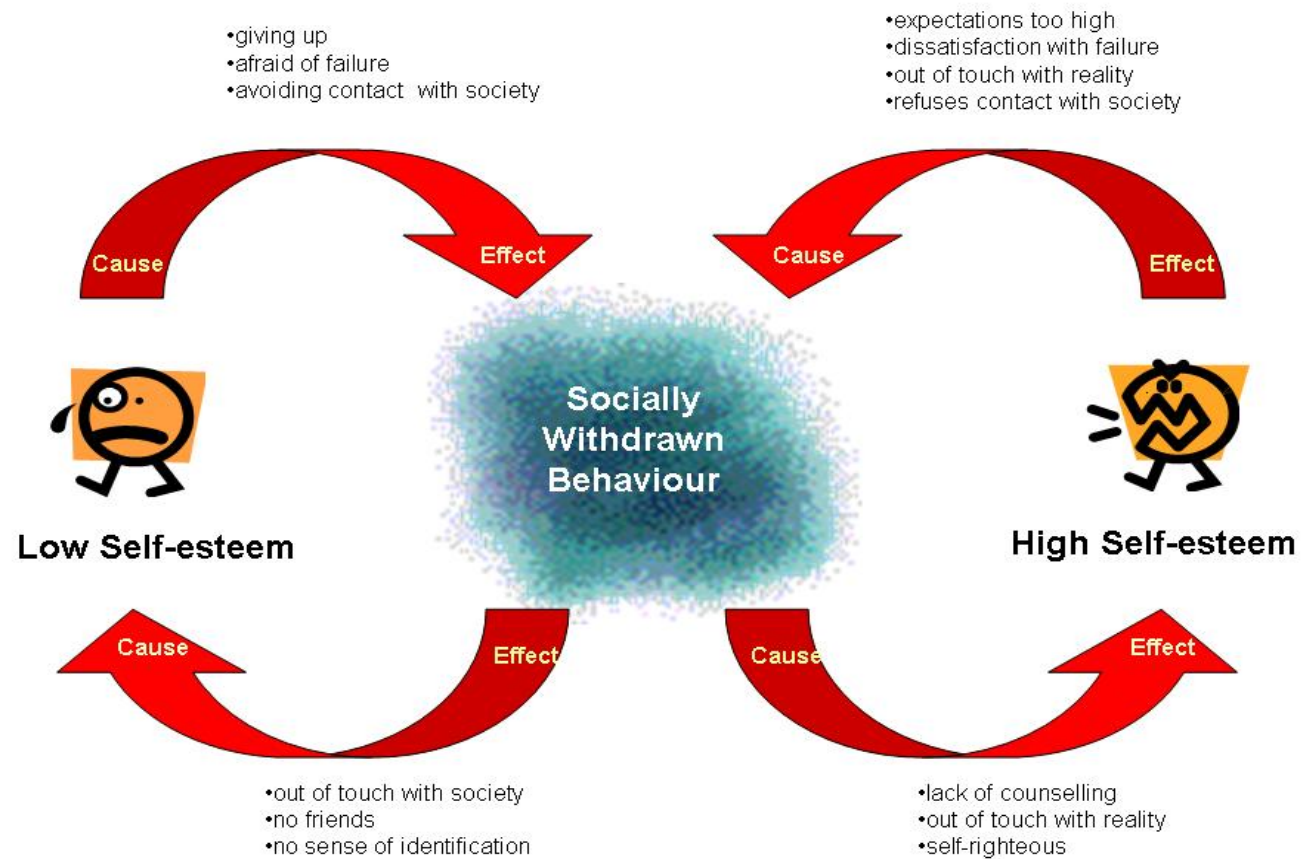
Self-esteem Matching Worksheet Sample



Self-esteem versus Socially Withdrawn Behaviour Concept Map (1)



Self-esteem versus Socially Withdrawn Behaviour Concept Map (2)
Mutual Causes and Effects on Each Other



Self-awareness by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence*

- Self-awareness is the sense of an ongoing attention to one's own internal state. In this self-reflexive awareness, the mind observes and investigates experience itself, including the emotions.
- Self-awareness is not an attention that gets carried away by emotions, overreacting and amplifying what is perceived. Rather, it is a neutral mode that maintains self-reflectiveness, even amidst turbulent emotions.
- According to John Mayer, people with self-awareness are able to be aware of their moods as they are having them. Their clarity about emotions may underpin other personality traits: they are autonomous and sure of their own boundaries, are in good psychological health, and tend to have a positive outlook on life. When they get into a bad mood, they don't ruminate and obsess about it, and are able to get out of it quickly. In short, their mindfulness helps them manage their emotions.
- Knowing one's emotions: Self-awareness – recognising a feeling as it happens – is the keystone of emotional intelligence. The ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment is crucial to psychological insight and self-understanding. An inability to notice our true feelings leaves us at their mercy. People with greater certainty about their feelings are better pilots of their lives, having a surer sense of how they really feel about personal decisions, from whom to marry to what job to take.
- To recognise a foul mood is to want to get out of it. This recognition, however, is distinct from the efforts we make to keep from acting on an emotional impulse. When we say - Stop that! - to a child whose anger has led him to hit a playmate, we may stop the hitting, but the anger still simmers. The child's thoughts are still fixated on the trigger for the anger - But he stole my toy! - and the anger continues unabated. Self-awareness has a more powerful effect on strong, aversive feelings: the realisation - This is anger I'm feeling. - offers a great degree of freedom; not just the option not to act on it, but the added option to try to let go of it.

Extended Exercise: From Self-esteem to Happiness

Students are required to complete the From Self-esteem to Happiness Worksheet to reflect on incidents from daily life so as to become aware of levels of self-esteem in order to live more happily.

- Reminders for students:

Direction and angle for thinking

- * With regard to expectations, can you differentiate between your own expectations, your expectations of your family, and your expectations of society?
- * With regard to practice, can you tell what kinds of behaviour have an impact on yourself; which ones have an impact on your family; and which ones affect society?
- * How do you strike a balance between your expectations, your practical capability and responses from others? How do you put into practice the actions that are beneficial for everyone, bringing happiness to yourself, your family and society?

- Explanations by teachers:

- * Analyse the subjective self-esteem and expectations. Examine the problems that result from a mismatch of subjective self-esteem and expectations with family, society and personal ability.
- * Use self-awareness to review the problem. Pay attention to the fact that an excessive level of self-esteem will put one out of touch with reality, while very low self-esteem will lead to passivity and despair. Both scenarios produce dissatisfaction and unhappiness in the same way.
- * Cultivate self-knowledge to adjust and balance one's subjective self-esteem and expectations, and apply objective practical capability to cater for the needs required by an individual, a family and society.

The key to happy living includes staying in contact with family and society; accepting encouragement, counselling and training offered by others; generating a sense of determination in oneself and striving to work hard; and, through applying concrete actions in practice, strengthen one's practical capability; thus, enhancing one's problem-solving ability.

From Self-esteem to Happiness Worksheet

“Four years have gone by since I left university. Yet my résumé is still no different from the time I graduated ‘cos I have been hiding myself at home for all these years. This year, under the pressure of my family, I finally got to organise my résumé again. I know the road ahead will be even more difficult than before.

At the beginning, I did try to look for jobs. There were also referrals by our school. A few companies in particular wanted me. One was in Suzhou, but I did not really want to go there. The rest offered a basic salary of not much more than a thousand dollars. Bonuses were available depending on ability, but it wasn’t easy to earn them. When I thought about how hard it was to go through the four years at university and how much money my parents had spent on me, I felt I would wrong myself as well as my parents if I only earned so little every month. It was a very simple thought then, thinking that if I couldn’t find a job this year, I would find one next year. Besides, my family was well-off enough to support me. My parents also agreed that I should not rush into getting a job. The first job must be a satisfying one with a high starting salary.

Thus, I became a home-stayer after graduation. My days were spent loosely playing basketball and learning English. Life was quite enjoyable. I planned to take an examination to qualify as a simultaneous interpreter. However, the drive of learning was weakened by the easy way of living at home. Thoughts of getting qualifications gradually faded away. Various other thoughts also came up during the period, such as further study and research, as well as going abroad. In the end, none of them was carried out and I continued my laid-back life at home doing nothing.

Before long, some of my classmates became leaders in their field; some bought cars, and some got married with children. At gatherings, they never ran out of topics to talk about. Yet, I was still hanging around without a fixed job. My parents started to get anxious about me too as I got older and older. They were eager to help me find a girlfriend. However, I was told by those around me that I had to get a job first. Otherwise, who would like to have an unemployed boyfriend?”

(Source: Shanghai Morning Post, February 9, 2006)

If the character above were your good friend, what specific suggestions would you offer him to help him strike a balance between his self-esteem, expectations and behaviour so that he would become happier?

From Self-esteem to Happiness Worksheet (Example)

“Four years have gone by since I left university. Yet my résumé is still no different from the time I graduated ‘cos I have been hiding myself at home for all these years. This year, under the pressure of my family, I finally got to organise my résumé again. I know the road ahead will be even more difficult than before.

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(Source: Shanghai Morning Post, February 9, 2006)

If the character above were your good friend, what specific suggestions would you offer him to help him strike a balance between his self-esteem, expectations and behaviour so that he would become happier?

Hints for the answer:

- The person concerned thinks that it has taken great pains to complete the four years at university. He has confidence in his own ability and his self-esteem is high.
- He has high expectations of his ability to contribute to society and thinks that the first job has to be an ideal one with a high starting salary.
- He also has high expectations of himself to contribute to his family since his parents have spent a lot of resources on his education.
- Due to his socially withdrawn behaviour, he is concerned about his inability to help himself and his family. Without a job, he is unable to find a girlfriend, and it makes his

parents feeling anxious for him.

- Suggest that the person involved apply self-awareness skills in order to have a clear understanding of whether his own ability is in balance with his level of self-esteem. Although he is a university graduate, he has no previous working experience so it is not easy for him to get a high-paid job right away.
- If he is able to have a thorough understanding of his own ability and conditions; keep his self-esteem in balance; find a job with a normal range of pay; and cultivate aspirations for better prospects in a couple of years then he would no longer shut himself away at home, and feel inferior and lost while knowing other classmates have progressed in terms of careers and romantic relationships.
- Even though he is unable to find a job for the time being, he could still do further education and enhance his interpersonal skills so that he is well-prepared for integration into society again.

Quality of Life

Quality of life normally refers to standard of living and is also associated with the concepts of happiness and freedom. Discussions on the concept of the quality of life are millennia old. Ancient Greek philosophers such as Aristotle tried to focus on happiness when discussing quality of life. Chinese philosophers of different schools looked at various aspects of life to build up the concept of the quality of life such as Confucius' five cardinal virtues of benevolence / humanity (ren), righteousness (yi), propriety (li), wisdom (zhi) and fidelity / sincerity (xin); or the Taoist emphasis on the union between man and nature.

In Hong Kong, which is an economy-driven society, the quality of life is often associated with material life and measured by the amount of income one earns. To say that “rich people enjoy a higher quality of life” seems beyond doubt. Another popular saying is that “one should earn more in order to improve one's quality of life”. In a highly commercialised society like Hong Kong in which nearly all of our daily necessities have to be purchased, it is not surprising that the quality of life is strongly linked with money and materialism.

Other places in the world have an understanding of the quality of life different from Hong Kong:

- In northern and western European countries, the indices measuring the quality of life include social equality, political freedom, and communal and ecological balances as well as relaxation and leisure. For example, according to the official website of Denmark, a country with a high quality of life includes aspects of low-crime rates, diverse cultural activities and a clean environment. In Holland, France and Germany, the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) is adopted to measure the country's quality of life.
- Hong Kong people are familiar with the economic term Gross National Product (GNP). In contrast, the King of Bhutan coined the new term Gross National Happiness (GNH).
- The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) is a standard means of measuring human development and the quality of life using literacy, life expectancy and educational attainment.
- As more and more social problems surface in well-to-do societies, there is a growing trend to examine whether material growth does in fact enhance the quality of life. In recent years, Hong Kong has also undergone a similar phase of reflection such as these debated issues: What is the aim of chasing after financial and material growth? Does an increase in income necessarily bring happiness, health, freedom and peace to humankind? If not, how can we improve our quality of life?

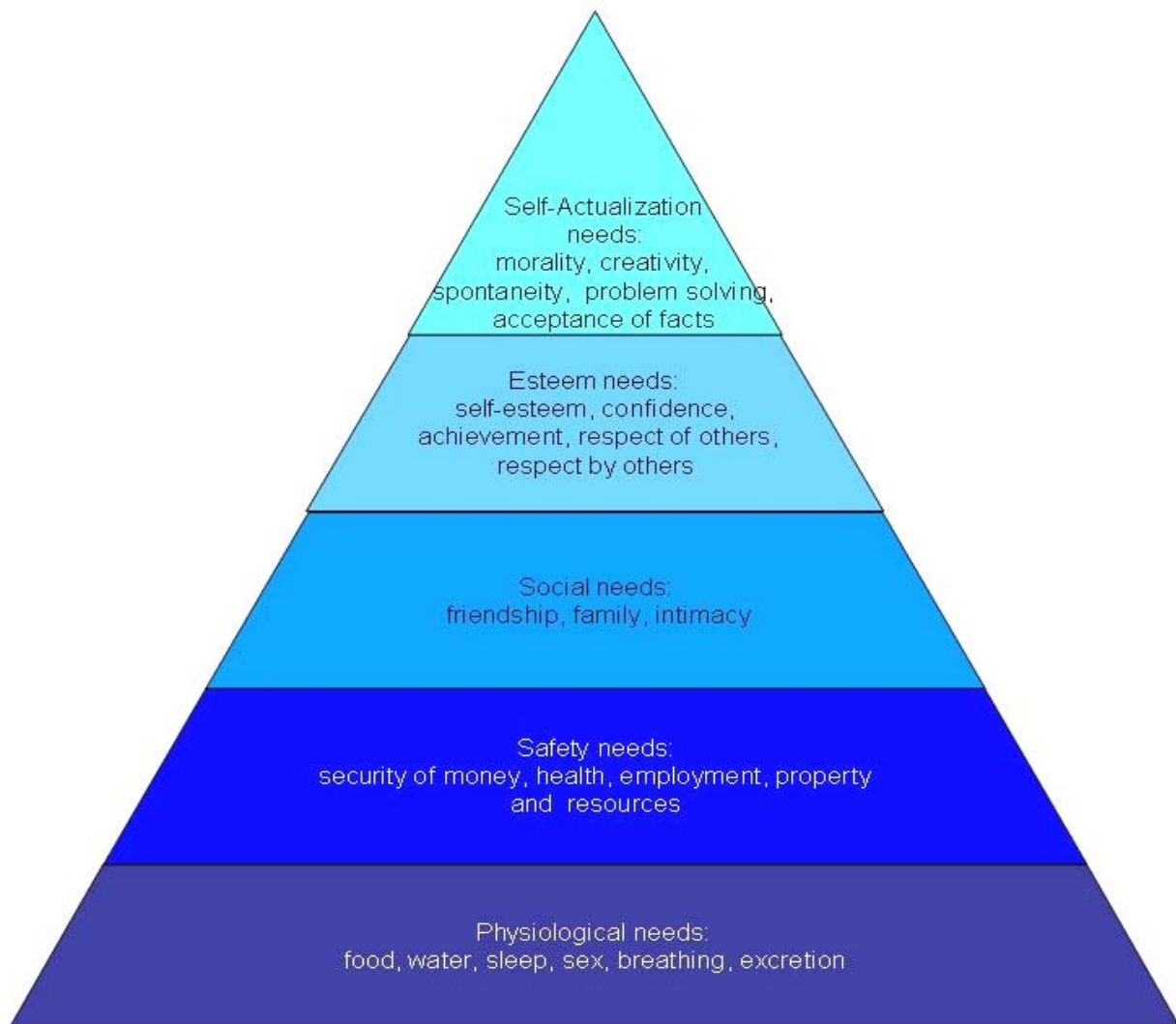
Take Hong Kong as an example, the wealth of the Hong Kong people has enjoyed a continued growth in the past 30 years. Yet, people are increasingly suffering from problems that are related to physical and mental health such as stress-induced emotional problems, aches and pains of joints, diabetes and respiratory tract infections. Working hours have become longer and longer, and the amount of free and resting time less and less; thus, affecting both the sex life of people in Hong Kong and reducing the birth rate. Intense competition also creates tension in relationships. It seems there is no evidence to show that happiness is tied with the growth of prosperity.

According to a study by American scholar, Robert Edwards Lane (2000), in developed countries such as Japan and the US where income has been on a rising curve, levels of subjective happiness have shown a sustained decline together with mental stress and increasing loss of trust and warmth in human relationships, family and the community. These findings support those of another US scholar, Robert Frank (1999) who observed that when the material wealth of a society has reached a certain level, more prosperity will not bring about a rise in the happiness index. In economics, this is known as the Diminishing Marginal Utility of Money. Another condition is that when people have more, they develop an illusory need for wanting more; thus, thinking that they never have enough.

Recent discussions tend not to equate the enhancement of the quality of life simply with the growth of material affluence. Some organisations even attempt to establish happiness and freedom as indexes for good quality of life.

(Extracted from “General Studies in New Senior Secondary Curriculum”, Hong Kong Education City: <http://www.hkedcity.net>)

Concepts Related to the Motivation of Existence



Maslow's hierarchy of needs is presented as a triangle consisting of five levels of needs. Those on the higher levels are associated with psychological needs, whereas the lower ones correspond to physiological needs. The higher needs in this hierarchy only come into focus when the lower needs in the triangle are satisfied.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a theory proposed by Abraham Maslow, is the most widely adopted theory in the study of Organisational Motivation. Maslow divides needs into five categories: physiological needs, security needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualisation needs, from lower needs for survival to higher needs that drive personal growth respectively.

**Double-loss youth hit mom after being prohibited from
playing computer games**

(a play inspired by a real life case)

Location: a public housing estate unit, open plan, no partition of rooms, only a curtain to divide the beds and sitting room

Characters: **Ah Sai** – 15 years old, male school dropout, no desire to work, interested in computer games and often indulges in it overnight

Ah Gill – 19 years old, Ah Sai's sister, once fought with Ah Sai over the use of computer and got punched by him

Mrs Cheng – 44 years old, Ah Sai's mother, both she and her husband are unemployed and rely on social security for living; they feel upset and frustrated by Ah Sai's obstinate behaviour

Time: 8 a.m.

(Still in bed, Mrs Cheng looks at the clock. It's 8 a.m. Drawing the curtain, she finds Ah Sai still playing computer games. She gets very angry.)

Mrs Cheng: What are you doing? You must have been playing computer games all night!
(Showing a face of disgust, Ah Sai doesn't even look at his mum and continues playing.)

Mrs Cheng: I'm really fed up with you. You don't respond to anything or anybody. You have school to go to, but you don't. I ask you to look for jobs, but you don't. Look at Mrs Ng's son next door, he is good to his parents; he is working; and he brings home \$3000 a month. What's that saying? Children are your insurance policy when you get old! Not at all! It's better for me to keep a dog. At least it will be good to me. How long do you expect me to support you?
(Ah Sai still unresponsive)

Mrs Cheng: If not for your sister who needs the computer, I would have dumped this thing long ago.

Ah Gill: *(bringing a bowl of instant noodles from the kitchen)* He has taken over the computer now. I can't even touch it. My files got erased all of a sudden. I just wanted to use it for half an hour then he beat me up.

Mrs Cheng: *(getting angrier)* Right! Let's dump it now if it has no use. *(Mrs Cheng unplugs the computer.)*

Ah Sai: *(furious)* Hey! I nearly beat the record! You're really asking for a punch!

(Ah Sai strikes his mum with his fist. His mum punches back. They are wrestling.)

Mrs Cheng: *(yelling with a broken heart)* Son beating mother! Son beating mother!

Ah Gill: *(shouting)* Not only beating me, you are beating mum too? OK. You're just like dad. He only knows about beating women!
(Ah Sai suddenly comes around. Stops. Mrs Cheng slaps him on the face.)
(The place is dead without sound. Ah Sai is crying.)

Ah Sai: I don't want to hit women. I just want to play computer games.
 Anyway I am not relying upon you. You are also jobless and rely on social security.

Mrs Cheng: *(also crying now)* I want to have self-respect. Although your dad is hanging around, I am looking for jobs all the time. I don't want to rely on social security.

Ah Sai: *(a bit crazy)* I also want to have self-respect. Everyone complains about my poor education; not a single skill. They look down on me. Here at home, you also look down on me.

***** Freeze-frame*****

A happy ending; is it possible?

Mrs Cheng: You are my son. How can I look down on you? Looking down on you means looking down on myself.

Ah Sai: I know you and Dad are not happy with each other. I don't want to bother you with my own troubles. I also understand our family is not doing well financially. That's why I live on computer games. My classmates used to ask me to hang out. But, I don't want to push you for cash, so I didn't go out and now I've no friends. I don't know what to do. I know I have problems, but I don't know what to do.

Ah Gill: Broe, when we see problems, we need to face them and solve them.

Mrs Cheng: That's good. Now you have it all out. Up to now, you haven't said a word to me.

Ah Sai: Sorry Mum. I'm not a good son and cannot fulfil your expectations.

Mrs Cheng: I'm not a good mum either. I also cannot fulfil your expectations.

Ah Gill: Let's change our hopes and expectations then. Let's put aside those that cannot be achieved for the time being. It doesn't mean there is no hope. We can look for help and see if there are other ways to solve our problems.

Mrs Cheng: Sis is right.

Ah Gill: Don't worry broe. I'll look for some relevant social services for you.

Ah Sai: Sis, why don't you go and search online then?

Ah Gill: *(smiling)* Now you let me use the computer!
(Ah Sai and Mrs Cheng also smile)

Mrs Cheng: Dear, why don't you make two more bowls of instant noodles? Let's have breakfast together today.

Ah Sai & Ah Gill: *(together)* Yeah! *(a heart-warming scene)*

Voice-over: As for the problems of Ah Sai's dad, they will be dealt with in another episode.



青少年上網成癮已成社會問題，秀茂坪一名雙失十五歲少年，沉迷上網打機引致家庭不和，日前涉打傷姊姊後，昨晨又因通宵達旦打機，被「勞氣」母親拔去電腦電源，兩母子爭執互毆，事後同被警方拘捕。有社工認為，家長不能完全禁止子女上網，但青少年亦要適可而止。

沉迷打機被阻止 雙失少年打阿媽

涉毆姊打母的少年姓鄭，十五歲，其母姓方四十四歲，姊姊十九歲。鄭的父母均沒有工作，一家居於秀茂坪邨秀康樓，依靠綜援生活。姓鄭少年雖然年紀最小，卻是家中小霸王，經常無視母親教誨，欺負年長姊姊。

鄭喜歡玩電腦遊戲，不時因為打機通宵達旦，無心向學下早前輟學，卻又

不肯出外工作。

昨晨八時四十分，鄭母起牀時，發現兒子仍在打機，估計又打通宵，一時激憤下出言責罵及拔去電腦電源，兒子即起腳踢向母親腹部，母子扭打起來。警方到場時兩人已停手，均稱受傷，事後同被警方送院治理及拘捕。

鄭的姊姊亦稱，上周六，為爭用電

腦與弟弟爭吵，其後發現部份檔案被人洗掉，懷疑是弟弟所為，曾經與師問罪，反被人揮拳打傷，故亦要求到醫院驗傷。

青少年上網成癮已成社會問題，一項調查顯示，三成受訪初中生上網趨於失控，需要援助；近半受訪父母曾以體罰及責罵方法，制止子女上網。

Double-loss youth hits mum after being prohibited from playing computer games (a Comic Version)

Teacher can present the below comic to students and ask them to create the dialogues

Location: A public housing estate unit. Open plan. No partition of rooms. Only a curtain to divide the beds and sitting room.

Characters: **Ah Sai** – 15 years old, male school dropout, no desire to work, interested in computer games and often indulges in it overnight
Ah Gill – 19 years old, Ah Sai's sister, once fought with Ah Sai over the use of computer and got punched by him
Mrs Cheng – 44 years old, Ah Sai's mother, both she and her husband are unemployed and rely on social security for living; they feel upset and frustrated by Ah Sai's obstinate behaviour

Time: 8am

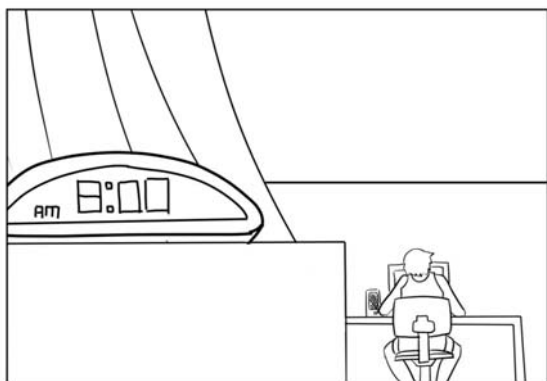


Figure 1



Figure2

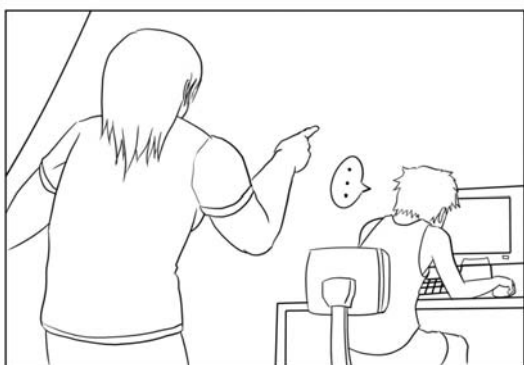


Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

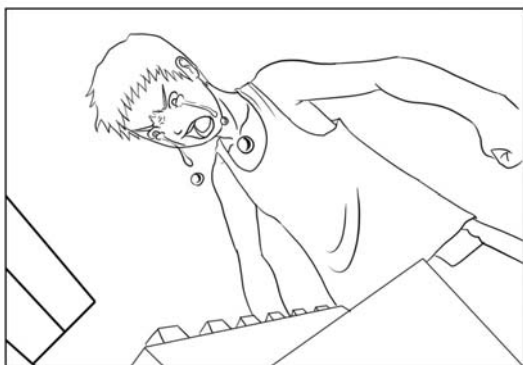


Figure 11



Figure 12

On Empathy by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence*

- Empathy builds on self-awareness; the more open we are to our own emotions, the more skilled we will be in reading feelings.
- That capacity, that ability to know how another feels, comes into play in a vast array of life's arenas, from sales and management to romance and parenting, to compassion and political action. The absence of empathy is also telling. Its lack is seen in criminal psychopaths, rapists and child molesters.
- People's emotions are rarely put into words; far more often they are expressed through other cues. The key to understanding another's feelings is in the ability to read nonverbal channels: tone of voice, gestures, facial expressions and the like.
- Recognising emotions in others: empathy, another ability that builds on emotional self-awareness, is the fundamental people skill. People who are emphatic are more attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want. This makes them better in such as the caring professions, teaching, sales and management.
- The word empathy was first used in the 1920s by E. B. Titchener, an American psychologist. Its origin was from the Greek word, *empathia*: feeling into, a term used initially by theoreticians of aesthetics for the ability to perceive the subjective experience of another person. Titchener's theory was that empathy stemmed from a sort of physical imitation of the distress of another, which then evokes the same feelings in oneself. He sought a word that would be distinct from sympathy: with no sharing of what a person is feeling.

Supplementary information for helping Socially Withdrawn Young People

Source: Oriental Daily News

Title of Article: Helping the Socially Withdrawn to come out of their Personal Prisons

Author: Selina Chow

Date: April 22, 2007

(Summary)

Voluntary organisations have pointed out that the problem of hidden youths is getting worse in Hong Kong. The problem is not a new phenomenon, just that in recent years it has aroused concern from the public. According to Japanese psychologist, Tamaki Saito who first coined the phrase, Otaku (the Japanese origin of hidden youth or socially withdrawn) in 1998; Otaku now accounting for about 10% of the total Japanese young population. In response to this worrying situation, the Japanese Government and non-government organisations render help to Otaku in two ways, by providing psychotherapy and counselling to individual Otaku and their parents; and by encouraging Otaku to go to group therapy, hoping that they will integrate into society again with the support from the public.

Compared to Japan, the support for hidden youths in Hong Kong is still at a take-off point. With resources provided through the Youth Sustainable Development and Engagement Fund, the Government of Hong Kong plans to engage outreach social workers to find proactively hidden youths and assist them to return to school or get employment.

Nevertheless, the important factor for hidden youths to return to society is the support of their parents. The Government should provide assistance to affected parents so that they have a clear understanding of the causes of socially withdrawn behaviour to help discontinue the vicious cycle: socially withdrawn → accusation → further socially withdrawal, as accusations only create more conflicts between parents and their children. At the same time the Government should also enhance public understanding of the social phenomenon of socially withdrawn young people.

Source:

http://www.districtcouncils.gov.hk/east_d/chinese/doc/CBSC_7th_minute_070201_c.doc

Title of Article: Meeting minutes of the 7th meeting of the Cultural, Leisure, Community Building and Services Committee of Eastern District Council

(Summary)

Ms Lee Pui-chun from the Social Welfare Department briefed the Committee on the approach adopted by the Department in handling the social problem of hidden youths. Since it is a new phenomenon in Hong Kong, the Department has yet to arrive at a clear and unified definition. The Department is keeping in close contact with schools and non-government organisations to try to identify these hidden youths so that counselling and other services can be offered to them. Due to the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, we need to have consensus from parents before we can refer young school dropouts to appropriate service agencies for follow-up. Therefore, to date no automated notification mechanism has been set up, nor is there a database on hidden youths.

Ms Luk Oi-yee from the then Education and Manpower Bureau responded that the Department has set up a notification mechanism for school dropouts with guidelines for counsellors and school social workers in the hope that they will help students to return to school, and recommended them to join some short-term courses or refer them to service units of the Social Welfare Department for further follow-up. Through curriculum reform, the Department is also trying to help students to cultivate a positive attitude and to develop their skills in communication, social integration and ability in facing adversities. Students are encouraged to participate in social services in the hope that they will obtain a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from the process of participation.

Ms Ho Sau-fun from the Labour Department informed the Committee that the Department provides pre-employment and on-the-job training for young school leavers aged between 15 and 24 through the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme and the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme. Social workers will be assigned to trainees as their case managers to offer them career counselling and support services. The Youth Pre-employment Training Programme helps to enhance the discipline, confidence and compliance of the trainees, and to strengthen their skills in job application and interpersonal communication, as well as their ability in problem solving and handling adversities. The Action S4 of the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme provides on-the-job training for young people with poor education and a lack of confidence. With self-esteem and self-confidence being strengthened, they are expected to be more able to stand on their own feet and reach their goals.

Source: Hong Kong Economic Times

Title of Article: From hidden youths to salespersons at Bauhaus.

Author: Ng Wing-sze

Date: May 30, 2006

(Summary)

The publicly listed company, Bauhaus, a fashion trend label for youngsters, has worked with the Hong Kong Christian Service over the past 10 years offering work opportunities for school dropouts and jobless young people with emotional and behavioural problems. In one case, a youth who was once explosive and rebellious, was later transformed into the most outstanding salesperson hitting a sales record of more than HK\$200,000 a month.

Mr Wong Yui Lam, the Founder and Chairman of Bauhaus said, "I'm not doing charity. I'm a businessman. I'm helping them in order to help myself." In 1996 when the retail market was at a peak, it was very hard to recruit staff. Then he was approached by some social workers who offered to refer some young people to his company. He agreed and found that these young people were actually of good quality. Many of them became top salespeople. Their personal sales volumes hit more than HK\$200,000 a month, raising a sales income of nearly 3 million for the company.

Before being referred to Bauhaus, these young people receive various training to improve their interpersonal skills, self-understanding and communication skills. Some basic skills on personal grooming and retail selling were also provided. Social workers followed up closely with the trainees during their probation period to relieve the burden on the employer. The referred trainees then underwent a selection process. Mr Wong said this arrangement had helped the company save a lot of time and trouble in conducting interviews. He also said that the referred trainees were actually full of potential. If the Commission on Poverty can promote similar co-operation between the commercial sector and social welfare agencies, young people who have been unemployed for a long time will definitely be able to return to the job market, or at least put an end to their dependence on social security.

Source: Sing Pao Daily News

Title of Article: Those asking for help earlier will be saved

Date: January 15, 2007

(Summary)

According to Counselling Psychologist, Chan Joy Kong, hidden youths do not behave very differently from other people. The only difference is that they are afraid of contact with the outside world. So, the sooner we can help them get out, the better. Young people do not turn into hidden youths overnight, nor are they born to have such tendencies. Many of them have developed some phobia towards interpersonal relationships over time. Although they prefer to live in their own world, they are not out of their minds, yet. However, if they are not provided with counselling and therapy in time, their situation would get worse. For example, a young man who has shut himself away for half a year needs only to be encouraged to join some group activities and will become sociable again. However, it is much harder to get a person who has been hidden for two or more years out of their situation.

Chan Kit-wah, a social worker from the Hong Kong Christian Service, came to know a young man who had been socially withdrawn for a year and a half. Although the young man paid no attention to his parents, he still yearned to communicate with others, hoping that someone would be able to understand him. During an initial 2-hour talk, Ms Chan acknowledged his situation and helped him explore his potential and interests. Then she gradually encouraged him to join some group activities and eventually he was able to integrate into society again. Experts around the world come up with various ways to help socially withdrawn young people. Japanese scholars suggest that the public wait quietly for the socially withdrawn youngsters to re-integrate into the society, whilst western scholars support active intervention, involving compulsory measures to bring socially withdrawn young people back into the community, by force if necessary.

Source: Ta Kung Po

Title of Article: Care for your Children and rescue the Socially Withdrawn Group

Author: Sheung-Koon Tai Fu

Date: January 26, 2007

(Summary)

If the term hidden youth is used to describe a group of young people who have a socially withdrawn tendency to shut themselves away at home and spend all their time on the Internet, then the use of the word confinement is even better to illustrate this socially withdrawn and anti-social group. The phenomenon has become not merely a family problem, but a social problem that is to be solved with joint co-operation from parents, teachers and social workers.

The phenomenon of hidden youths is doubtlessly tied up with the development of technological advances, computerisation and the changes in human relationships. In the 1950s and 1960s when there were no computers and human relationships were relatively simple, relationships between parents and children were close and the problem of hidden youths was unheard of. Changes began to take place when computers became popular and both parents went out to work, leaving very little time for their children, widening the gap between them. Greatly stressed by work, parents easily became upset and would scold their children for even slightly unsatisfactory school results. When criticised, children often preferred to stay away from their parents and hide themselves in their rooms with their computers. Many young people sought refuge on the Internet in order to escape from reality. They think that when online they are free from the bothering issues of parents, school refusal, unemployment and love affairs.

The solution of the social problem of hidden youths relies on the joint efforts from the Government, family, society and individuals. For example, the vocational training schools set up by the Government provide school dropouts with job training. However, if young people have given up on themselves and have not received sufficient encouragement from their parents, these kinds of job training will not help to solve the problem of hidden youths. So, parents play a major role and must care more for their children, looking into various aspects of their children's behaviour and assessing their various psychological states. Parents should try to spend more time to communicate with their children. When children make mistakes, parents should try to discuss the problem with them in a calm manner instead of scolding them. In the end, children will be able to leave self-imposed confinement and return to society.