



PRESS RELEASE

A “TASTE” OF FAITH

The Purpose of Food in Spiritual Development

SINGAPORE, 6 April 2019 – Strengthening Singapore’s social fabric through food, Central Singapore CDC is back with its second interfaith dialogue. Titled *We Are What We Eat*, the dialogue will be held at Bishan Community Club on 6 April 2019.

Tapping on the theme of our sense of taste, *We Are What We Eat* will look at some faith-based diets and how they aid in spiritual development. Stories of such diets practised within the various communities and industries will also be shared. Participants will have a deeper understanding of various faith-based food choices. By exploring commonalities and meaning of food in spiritual development, the dialogue hopes for participants to better appreciate daily practices in each other’s faith.

‘**Common Senses for Common Spaces**’ (CSCS), is a nationwide interfaith dialogue series. The series aims to raise awareness and start conversations among residents about our country’s various faiths. (For more information on Common Senses for Common Spaces, please refer to **Annex C**.)

Said Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore District: “Food is one of the key elements in daily life that bring people together. It is thus a great opener to inter-faith conversations. When people have a better understanding of each other’s faiths and practices, we can appreciate and accept one another. We can then move towards a stronger and more resilient society for future generations.”

Four speakers of varying professions and faiths will be sharing on how food has an impact on their professional, social, psychological, and spiritual aspect of their lives. They include:

- a. Ustaz Ashraf Anwar, ARS Certified Cleric (Muslim);
- b. Mr Ashish Patangiya, Banker (Jain);
- c. Dr Ng Wai Chong, General Practitioner (Buddhist); and
- d. Ms Thilaga Govindasamy, Physiotherapist (Hindu)

The dialogue will reach out to about 300 participants from various religious backgrounds and will be moderated by Central Singapore District Councillor and 938NOW Producer-Presenter, Ms Susan Ng. Participants will have the chance to pose questions related to the topic and exchange their views with both the speakers, as well as each other.



Your journalist and photographer/videographer are warmly invited to join us for 'We Are What We Eat'. Details are as follows:

We Are What We Eat

Date: Saturday, 6 April 2019

Time: 3.40pm – 6.00pm

Venue: Bishan Community Club

51 Bishan Street 13

Singapore 579799

About Central Singapore Community Development Council

Lying at the heart of Singapore, the Central Singapore Community Development Council (CDC) serves close to one million residents living in Ang Mo Kio, Bishan-Toa Payoh, Jalan Besar and Tanjong Pagar Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs), and Radin Mas, Potong Pasir, and Sengkang West Single Member Constituencies (SMCs). The CDC envisions a self-reliant, vibrant and inclusive Central Singapore District. It works in close partnership with schools, voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs), grassroots organisations (GROs), government and commercial agencies to fulfil its mission of assisting the needy, bonding the people and connecting the community.

ANNEX A

MEDIA PROGRAMME

Time		Programme
3:40PM	-	Arrival of Media
3:50PM	-	Arrival of Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore District,
4:00PM	-	Opening video for <i>We Are What We Eat</i>
4:10PM	-	Welcome remarks by Mayor Denise Phua
4:20 PM	-	Panel Presentation with Guest Speakers - The Science and Spirituality of Food [Photo Opportunity] (Each speaker will be given 10 minutes)
5:00PM	-	Audience Q&A with Moderator, Guest Speakers and Resources Persons
5:50PM	-	Presentation of Tokens of Appreciation [Photo Opportunity]
6:00PM	-	End of Dialogue

ANNEX B

PROFILES OF GUEST SPEAKERS



***Ustaz Ashraf Anwar, ARS Certified Cleric
(Muslim)***

Ustaz Ashraf Anwar is a certified religious cleric under the Asatizah Recognition Scheme (ARS). He graduated from the Al-Azhar University, Egypt, in Islamic Theology and a second degree in Arabic Language from the American University, Cairo. Ustaz Ashraf has been involved in numerous interfaith initiatives and programmes here and even in Japan. In 2018, He received a MUIS scholarship to pursue a Masters programme at NTU. Currently, Ustaz Ashraf, he is a programme manager managing the community engagement department with OnePeople.Sg. He is also a senior docent at Harmony Centre under the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) and a board member of An-Nahdhah Mosque, an educator at Simply Islam and a member of the Inter Religious Organisation, Singapore (IRO).



***Ms Thilaga Govindasamy, Physiotherapist
(Hindu)***

Ms Thilaga has over 25 years of experience working as a physiotherapist. She has worked with numerous sports personalities such as Maria Sharapova, Roger Federer, just to name a few. Thila also conducts health talks and workshops for corporates, schools and government agencies. A grassroots leader with a passion for community work, Thilaga runs a private physiotherapy clinic – Virar’s Physiotherapy



***Dr Ng Wai Chong, General Practitioner
(Buddhist)***

Dr Ng Wai Chong graduated from the National University of Singapore (NUS) in 1993 and started as a home care physician, leading team of nurses and social workers in caring for severely disabled seniors living in Bukit Merah, Queenstown, Telok Blangah and Chinatown area. His main areas of interest include primary care for the frail seniors, elder abuse, dementia and care systems development. Besides his compassion at work, Dr Ng also teaches frequently on subjects related to community aged care. As a Buddhist, Dr Ng enjoys meditation every day.



***Mr Ashish Patangiya, Banker
(Jain)***

Ashish Patangiya was born in India but has been living in Singapore since 2001 with his wife and 2 children. He occasionally returns to India to visit his parents. Ashish has been working in the financial sector for most part of his career and currently he works at a multinational bank in Singapore. He has an interest in exploring spirituality and an avid reader on faith-based issues. He likes to interact with people of different religion to understand their world views. He looks forward to opportunities to engage with social causes as he feels he owes a lot to society and hence a duty to do whatever little possible. Ashish is a Management Committee Member of the Singapore Jain Religious Society (SJRS). He one of many prolific Speakers that goes out to share Jainism with the public.



ANNEX C

COMMON SENSES FOR COMMON SPACES / WE THE PEOPLE OF SINGAPORE PROGRAMME FACT SHEET

1. What is We the People of Singapore?

In support of the national SGSecure movement, Central Singapore Community Development Council (CS CDC) is embarking on *We the People of Singapore*. The programme aims to build upstream awareness, trust, and deepen understanding of various faiths in Singapore through meaningful conversations. This complements the effort of other key stakeholders to develop a cohesive society that will band together in time of crises and celebrate successes as one nation.

As part of *We the People of Singapore*, CS CDC organises various initiatives such as engagement on online platforms, and also supports the five CDCs nationwide initiative to organise the Common Senses for Common Spaces (CSCS) Interfaith Dialogue Series.

2. What is Common Senses for Common Spaces Interfaith Dialogue Series?

The Common Senses for Common Spaces (CSCS) Interfaith Dialogue Series are anchored to the five bodily senses (sense of smell, sight, touch, hearing and taste) and themed accordingly: Scent/Smoke, Colours, Pilgrimage to Sacred Places, Music, and Diet.

It consists of a panel sharing by 'common' people, followed by a Question & Answer session with the attendees. It is held periodically for various resident profiles, and the panel shares how the theme relates to their faiths and is manifested in daily living and interactions with friends and neighbours.