



EMPOWERING SENIOR CITIZENS BY FRIENDS TO MANKIND



Friends to Mankind Malaysia is a non-profit corporation that works with individuals, corporations and humanitarian organisations for the betterment of humanity. Friends to Mankind has its head office in Malaysia and an international presence through representatives and offices in Canada, USA, Sweden, the Netherlands, Australia and Singapore. The work of Friends to Mankind is carried on by its network of members internationally.

In a recent interview with its founder, Mr. Dhyan Vimal, we had the opportunity to find out about him and his unique movement. Dhyan is a renowned speaker, a businessman and a writer on philosophical and business subjects. He makes conscious effort, through his businesses and writings, to educate and create awareness on the importance of businesses, individuals and society to engage humanity in being a friend to mankind.

Dhyan explains that senior citizens are not a spent force, but a treasure trove of knowledge and wisdom. They are not to be sidelined, but

to be mainstreamed. We need to recognize their contribution and be grateful.

Friends to Mankind is in the midst of creating a retreat home of around 400 acres in Tanjung Malim for senior citizens. This will be a place of rest, relaxation and education. Friends to Mankind – through the Dhyan Vimal School of Mastery, Canada - is also chalking out details to develop the University for Life, where 90 percent of the lecturers will be senior citizens comprising retired academicians and others with needed skills.

Dhyan points out that in Asia, we show great respect for the seniors as we realise the value of wisdom they possess. This is also true of the Malays, Chinese, Indians and other ethnic communities living in Malaysia. However, today, this trend is diminishing among the younger generation, who do not quite appreciate the wisdom of the older people. This perception has to change. He says that at Friends to Mankind, it is a sworn duty of the members to care for the old, and the spiritual need

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for the younger generation to care for the old is also insisted. He says, “We give them dignity; we do not make them charitable. We look upon senior citizens as our greatest asset without taking away their dignity by charitable contributions.”

Friends to Mankind believes that the rejection of the older wisdom and knowledge by the younger generation has resulted in the decay and deterioration of society today. Seniors need to be recognized as survivors of time and be given due respect for their resilience, wisdom and knowledge. Dhyan explains that if you look at history, eastern countries and societies in particular were completely developed by the older generation. We derive wisdom from our ancestors and it is time to revitalize this idea again. Friends to Mankind is fully committed to this idea.

The problem with the younger generation is that they perceive human values as computers and gadgets that can go obsolete by the development of new technology. Human values can never go obsolete. The duty of the younger generation's duty is to take the values prescribed by the older generation and adapt them to suit the current needs. Completely ignoring the values followed by the older generation and creating new ones will be like reinventing the wheel again and again.

The younger generation is the bridge or conduit connecting past wisdom to the future truth. In order

for this to happen, it is necessary for the young to see through the eyes of the old and understand their perception. We might not necessarily agree with them in toto, but at least we have their perspective of things. The old can give us experiences that have been tested and proven, and have survived the tides of time; in contrast, the experiences of young are being tested but not yet proven.

Dhyan gives an analogy from his personal life, where his two teenage daughters' knowledge of computers is so advanced that it baffles him. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily make him obsolete. He explains that while he may be obsolete to the current bend of knowledge, he is the base in which his two daughters recognise that current bend of knowledge. The older member establishes the base value in which the young members operate, and the latter cannot function or exist without the former.

Hence acts of kindness to senior citizens are actually an indignity when in reality they are taking care of us. Their contributions have created this future for us. Dhyan asserts that when we need to make critical decisions be it in business, family or other aspects of our life, we always seek an elder for advice or direction and rarely someone younger. This is because we recognize that wisdom is a treasure trove of the older, and not the younger. This is where golden citizens play a pivotal role in the society.



Friends to Mankind totally rejoices and celebrates senior citizens. Our official stand is to empower them, embrace them, integrate them and, more than anything else, learn from them. We should not undermine senior citizens by offering them charity, but we should appeal to them to be charitable to us, the younger generation, by guiding us with their wisdom.

As testament and recognition of gratitude to senior citizens, Friends to Mankind would like to invite 50 senior citizens (tickets are



complimentary) to participate and attend the Gathering of Great Minds 2011 which is co-organized with Live & Inspire. This three series conference which saw its successful launch in 2010 is scheduled for its second edition on the third quarter of 2011. The Gathering of Great Minds 2011 saw the likes of renowned senior citizens in the likes of Dr. Patch Adams & Tan Sri Razali Ismail share their experience and wisdom with the public. The contribution to society has been immeasurable.

As an immediate effort, Friends to Mankind is also inviting senior citizens to participate in The New Entrepreneur Program which is scheduled for March 4th & 5th 2011 (Business Strategy Workshop). It is commonly appreciated and accepted that the whole idea of setting up a successful business revolves around the right strategy. However the right strategy in business will not crystallize if one has not first figured out their life strategy. Dhyan Vimal in this two-part workshop explains and illustrates how your life strategy is the root that forms the base of your triumphant business strategy. We hope that this exercise will attract our calling for senior citizens to play a part and assist our cause to propagate personal growth within individuals to find their business in this world and integrate their work with greater humanity. ●

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