

**PAN PACIFIC SOUTH EAST ASIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (PPSEAWA)
For CoNGO Regional Committee in Asia Pacific (RCAP) 2020**

PPSEAWA has launched two pilot projects to pretest the outcomes of the communities. Both projects were very successful and well accepted. We planned to organize these projects in different communities but due to the COVID-19, the plans have to be postponed till possible time.

1). The 1st project was the Training Workshops on “ Water Wise: Water for Sustainable Living”. Organized by the UN/ ESCAP Representative of PPSEAWA International and her Committee, in collaboration with UN/ ESCAP Sustainable Ocean Ambassador , Food and Agriculture Marketing Association (FAMA), Ban Pathum Subdistrict Administration, teachers , communities in Ban Pathum and 150 young students from 3 Primary and Secondary level schools , on November 20, 2019, from 9:00 am. to 4:00 pm.

We are aware that Thailand and other Asia and the Pacific countries have been labeled as within the 10 ocean polluters in the world. This does not only affect the blue economy but also millions of people that rely on affordable sources of protein from the ocean, and the prosperity of every country as a whole. Emergency actions are required to bring sustainability back to the oceans and the food system.

Objectives of the Workshop:

- To create awareness for future generations in keeping the rivers and oceans clean and clear from waste and plastics.
- To bring more engagement to the young generations to be the frontier of transforming knowledge into action.
- To create future leaders for sustainability and showcase the modalities on responsible consumption and production.

The venue of the workshop was by the Chao Phraya River, which is the major river of Thailand and considered to be the heart and blood of the country. The students were raised awareness of the importance to keep the river clean and clear from the waste dump and the dangers of plastics with more toxic and micro plastics which danger river life.

The river will flow down to the sea and will danger sea life with all dumps , especially plastics , as well. The students were encouraged to take actions and shared their learnings to their schoolmates and families .

The students were also advised on food consumption awareness, to learn of food -nutrient- intake requirement, organize farming and healthy meal.

Conclusion: The first launching event of PPSEAWA International and the UN/ ESCAP Representative and Committee went well with flying colors. These activities can be replicated as many as possible.

2). The 2nd Project was “ Adaptive Yoga for Vulnerabilities “ Workshop is organized by the UN/ ESCAP Representative of PPSEAWA International and her Committee, in collaboration with Sri Sangwal School, under the Foundation for the Welfares of the Crippled under the Patronage of HRH the

Princess Mother, on February 17-19, 2020, from 10 am.- 11.30 am. , each day.

Background:

This program of adaptive yoga takes deep considerations to strengthen the bonds of peace by aiming for the continued improvement and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. By providing equal opportunities to improve their situations, people with disabilities can build their capacity to address their needs and face the problems of today in their environment, livelihoods, as well as their health and well-being on their own.

The promotion and initiation of programs where people with disabilities and special needs can participate and become leaders, aligns with a number of actions outlined in the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda.

Many individuals with physical disabilities have a limited range of movement and pain in the lower back is not uncommon. Additionally, many of those physical disabilities cause individuals to lead mostly sedentary lifestyles resulting in poor circulation and premature aging. Since body and mind are connected, periodic depression is also often common among many individuals with physical disabilities.

The three day workshop was initiated to enable all participants, particularly the individuals with special needs and physical disabilities, to become more self-reliant by providing them with knowledge and skills useful to their daily lives and livelihoods.

The following five points of yoga were shared and implemented:

1. Proper exercise acts
2. Proper breathing
3. Proper relaxation
4. Proper diet
5. Positive thinking and meditation

Workshop attendees

The workshop was attended by a total of eighty-four individuals. Of that eighty-four, there were sixty-one students of the Srisangwan School, ages twelve to eighteen, (30 males, 31 females), thirteen teachers/caretakers, (2 males, 11 females), and ten of the students' mothers.

The organizers running the workshop collaborated with one yoga specialist trained in the Srivananda style, and four facilitators who had experienced training as yoga teachers in the Srivananda style as well.

Lessons Learned:

During the workshop , the five points of yoga were taught through various teaching-learning techniques

1. Proper exercise

Proper exercise acts as a lubricating mechanism for the joints, muscle ligaments, tendons, and other parts of the body by increasing circulation as well as flexibility.

The fundamental difference between yogic exercises and ordinary physical exercises is that the latter emphasizes extreme muscle movement, while

yogic exercises tend to promote slow and conscious movements of the body. Thus, avoiding the buildup of lactic acid which causes muscle fatigue. The main purpose of exercise is to increase circulation and the intake of oxygen. This can be achieved by simple movements of the spine and various joints in the body, deep breathing, and without any violent muscle movements.

Correct postures are performed with awareness and concentration, accompanied by breathing and relaxation. Thus, yogic exercises affect not only the physical body but also the energy of the body and mind. Additionally, in this process, the body and mind come into closer alignment. Yogic asanas prepare the body and mind to become stronger which will aid in further training of concentration and meditation.

2. Proper breathing :

The participants substantially increased their intake of oxygen through deep inhalation exercises and were able to release some of the toxins stored in the body through deep exhalation.

At the beginning, it was observed that most participants were using only a fraction of their potential lung capacity while breathing. They tended to breathe shallowly, barely expanding their rib cages. Their shoulders were often hunched and many had painful tension in their upper backs and necks. It seemed likely that they were not getting enough oxygen. Through deep exhalation, however, they could start to inhale more. Carbon dioxide is found best to be eliminated through deep exhalation exercises.

Breathing exercises need to be practiced by all serious yoga practitioners. Advanced practices should only be done under supervision. For example, in the workshop, kapalaphathi breathing exercises were skipped in order to allow more time to master basic breathing.

3. Proper relaxation

Relaxation techniques can cool the body in a way that is somewhat similar to a car ventilation system. When the mind is constantly overwhelmed, its efficiency diminishes. Relaxing is nature's way of recharging the mind. The state of mind and state of body are so intimately linked, so if the muscles are relaxed, the mind also relaxes. If the mind is anxious, the the body suffers too. The students were trained to relax on three levels; physical, mental, and spiritual.

The students seemed to follow these points very well. They ended their final relaxation in the proper manner.

4. Proper diet

While the recommended diet is a vegetarian diet, the facilitator didn't stress this point during the workshop due to time constraints and respect for Thai culture.

In the future, the hope is to introduce pure, simple, natural foods, which can be easily digested and assimilated into the body. Most nutritionists suggest that humans need a balance of protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, fats, and fiber. It's recommended to eat natural organic foods which are free from harmful chemicals and pesticides. Such foods are better suited to meeting human nutritional needs.

5. Positive thinking and meditation

During the workshop, the trainers familiarized students with the basics of meditation.

All participants listened to spiritual chants to help focus their minds.

The positive thinking and meditation helped many participants get in control.

Their intellect was purified. The lower nature was brought into conscious control through steadiness and a concentrated mind.

Conclusion:

Attendees and participants gained skills that would help them to cope and build an active future. Yoga can be a tool for basic education and future success because it strengthens the three key aspects of a human; body, mind, and spirit.

Recommendations:

1. Review and reassess the survey handed out for evaluation at the end of the workshop by the Srisangwan School.
2. The co-organizers and team of yoga instructors had a meeting to review the positive feedback and plan to start a yoga club at Srisangwan School to help students and strengthen the notion that students in wheelchairs can do yoga as well.
3. In regards to future plans, after the success of this workshop there is interest in developing a pilot project to improve the well-being of more special needs learners.

For more information:

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