

# What do Singaporean youths dream of for the future?

**Growthbeans** have surveyed 170 youths (aged 17- 35) through our Find Your Ikigai SG (FYISG) Program to discover what Singaporean youths dream of for the future. The **top 5 dreams** are:

- 1 **Empathy**
- 2 **Good health & well-being**
- 3 **More compassionate & psychologically safe spaces**
- 4 **Combat climate change & its impact**
- 5 **Access to quality education**

It is interesting to note that wealth, popularity and material possessions were not considered by the youths in our survey.

Instead, the data seems to suggest that there is a need **to be heard and understood** when we consider the top three results: empathy, good health & well-being and more compassionate & psychologically safe spaces.



When we examine empathy in its totality, we can consider creating a safe space for others to **express themselves freely without judgement**. We understand how lonely it is when you are not supported by your friends.

Having a **safe space to be yourself** allows you to share exactly what is weighing you down, such as your fears and frustrations. The value of being supported despite your circumstances carries more weight than gold.

## Has COVID-19 unveiled a deeper need for mental health support?

Considering results from the survey and the current pandemic, suggests that **there is a need for mental health support** today. Research has shown that COVID-19 impacts mental health. In addition, the most commonly reported mental health symptoms are depression, mood swings, and anxiety [1].

The Straits Times [2] has reported that losing access to coping activities, social support, being stuck in an uncondusive environment and worry of retrenchment have caused much mental health to deteriorate. In addition, suicide rates in Singapore are the highest this year amid the COVID-19 pandemic [3].

Research shows that **possessing empathy is crucial for good mental health**, as connecting with others and sharing enough of yourself to feel connected in return adds immeasurably to relationship happiness [4].

Apart from empathy, studies have found that people can protect themselves against the negative effects of stress by **being kinder to themselves when they are feeling down** [5].

## How to remain resilient in tough times.

### 1 Take care of yourself



**Setting boundaries** to recharge is a sign that you care about yourself.

Though it might seem counterintuitive, setting boundaries is often an act of self-love.

### 2 Disconnect for a moment



It's definitely difficult to **disconnect for a moment**.

But for those of us who can make the time to put our phones away and practice mindfulness, it rewards us with a fresh perspective and more time to focus on what matters.

### 3 Build a support network



It's never too late in life to expand your circle of friends who can understand and care about you.

Although **building a support network** may test your patience, it is worth the wait, as expressing your feelings with like-minded individuals gives you the safe space to feel more engaged and have higher well-being.

Find out more about  
Find Your Ikigai SG!



[1] Salari, N., Hosseini-Far, A., Jalali, B. et al. Prevalence of stress, anxiety, depression among the general population during the COVID-19 pandemic: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Global Health* 16, 57 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-020-00589-w>

[2] <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/health/more-seek-help-for-mental-health-issues-amid-pandemic>

[3] <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/suicide-highest-record-elderly-mental-health-isolation-covid-19-1984716>

[4] <https://www.psych.com.net/what-is-empathy/>

[5] Lau, B.H.P., Chan, C.L.W. and Ng, S.M. (2020) Self-Compassion Buffers the Adverse Mental Health Impacts of COVID-19-Related Threats: Results From a Cross-Sectional Survey at the First Peak of Hong Kong's Outbreak. *Front. Psychiatry*, 11:585270. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2020.585270