

## Executive Pathways II

# Gaining skills to help others

BY CHRISTINA CHING

**A**S A full-time student in secondary school and Institute of Technical Education (ITE) days, Ms Mandy Tan always shunned studying.

“Socialising and playing were my forte. I literally returned everything I’d learnt from school the moment I graduated,” says the 31-year-old half in jest.

She never thought she would return to her studies again, until a panic attack in 2012 changed her life.

She says: “It took a toll on my life and health. I began to read up on the topic, and recovered with the support of family and friends.

“I am no longer fearful of the sensations haunting me again. I am proud that I have been standing tall ever since and in the future, if given the opportunity, I hope to join an organisation that deals with individuals’ well-being and helps the needy.”

### Achieving her dreams

To reach her goal, she signed up for a Diploma in Psychology programme awarded by the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS).

Ms Tan is doing the course part-time while working full-time as a supervisor at

a company dealing in luxury goods. She will complete the 14-month course in February next year.

Established since 1956, MDIS has a long tradition in education. The institute was awarded a four-year EduTrust Certification by the Council for Private Education in 2010, which was renewed for four more years in 2014.

The diploma course consists of eight modules and a graduation project. It covers modules such as applied business and marketing psychology, employee assessment and leadership development.

It also involves case studies of clinical health and organisational psychology, as well as conflict resolution.

The psychology of group dynamics is another interesting module that Ms Tan finds relevant and useful for her current job as it guides her on managing her staff.

She adds: “Studying psychology helps me to interact well with people and handle situations tactfully. Conflicts or disagreement may arise at the workplace.

“By applying the knowledge of psychology, I am better able to analyse situations thoughtfully as a supervisor.”

The benefits of the course extend to her personal life. With many close family members, friends and colleagues going to her for emotional advice, her knowledge of psychology has given her the confidence to help them effectively.



Ms Tan is studying psychology to help the needy in society. PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG



PHOTO: MDIS

She says: “Psychology is simply intriguing. The best thing about this course is that I get to understand myself and my surroundings better.

“Human beings are complex creatures. I’m learning to understand why people behave the way they do, and how cultural factors affect a person’s upbringing.

“Now, I also know how I was evaluated and analysed before being hired.”

Past community service stints with needy children in East Timor and Cambodia have given her a taste of what it is like to work in the social service sector — her ultimate goal in pursuing her education in psychology. She intends to go beyond a diploma as she knows she needs to attain further qualifications.

“I am married and planning for kids, but that is not going to stop me from pursuing courses related to psychology till it leads me to where I will be content.

“Before that happens, I will continue to work towards my goal,” she says.