

TAKE CHARGE

MENTORSHIP

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME FOR
CATHOLIC YOUTH

Newsletter

January 2023

TC 5 - 03



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To The Reader

Now well into its sixth month Take Charge Mentorship TC 5 is moving from 'New Beginnings' to 'Sustaining Relationships' discussion and experience, sharing has facilitated bonding and created opportunities to connect and grow. Mentor mentee meet-ups have been happening across Mumbai, in various settings and online too. It has not always been smooth sailing but through the ups and downs we have developed and acknowledged each other as persons having their own unique style.

Making time to keep the relationship vibrant, finding new ways and places to meet and enhance the experience, consistently connecting every month, for some it has been more than once or twice, all signs that the interest and enthusiasm are alive. Well done, keep up the excellent work!

The interactive sessions 'Mentoring Conversations' for the mentors, Networking Essentials and PoSH, POCSSO along with Digital Safety and bystander intervention, both offline and online workshops for mentees were important trainings conducted. These have helped increase knowledge and interest in topics that are so important for all of us.

A mentor shares her buddy group experience and a mentee shares her success story, and that is so fulfilling. In addition, we have our talent zone which showcases poems, photography and artwork by the mentees. To keep our mentees engaged, an online competition on Halloween was conducted on Instagram. The winning entries were awarded, as also mentor-mentee pairs who have met a record number of times since the cohort began.

Our prize winners are showcased as well as Mentor Mentee pairs who have sent us their clicks. Our newsletter is all about you our mentors and mentees. The Take Charge team encourages you to contribute and see your creation come alive in our newsletter.

Would you like to go Clubbing.... yes of a different kind! Join our interactive endeavour to writing, drama, reading, greening the environment and a lot more.... Our Book, Drama, Speech, Writing and Good Earth Club are waiting for you. Make memories through fun and creative interactions!

Start 2023 with a bang!! On 14th Jan we had 'Design Your Life' a workshop by Ryan Barretto for our mentees which went very well. Our next big event, the much awaited 'Mentor Mentee Day' where we meet in person for a fun experience through a live connect that promises to keep you energised and bring out the best in everyone.

Share your feedback with us, and tell us what you would like to read and see.

Happy Reading!

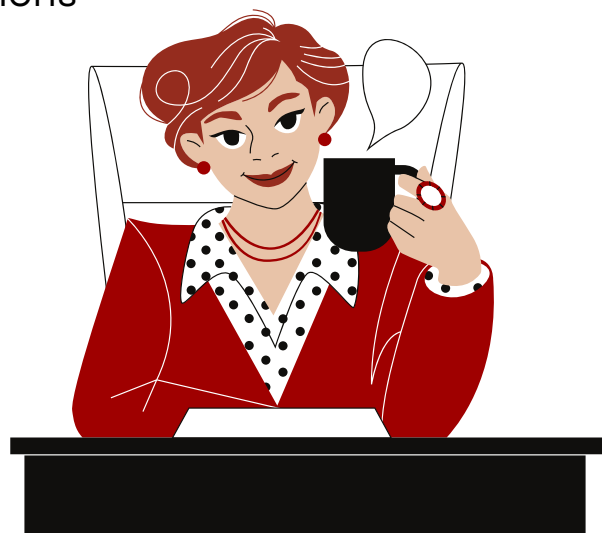


Sustaining Relationships

Just as “Old wine matures better”

So it is with relationships, more importantly in the case of the mentor mentee relationship. While the Take Charge cohort helped us embark on the journey of this mentoring relationship and also closed the cohort with a graduation, personally for me the initial 18 months only resulted in setting up a foundation to create an ongoing mutually nurturing voyage with each of my mentees.

One could totally relate to the initial discussions among the mentors regarding the slow starters, the non starters, since each of my relationships with my mentees could be termed as one of those, and the credit for that label, could be attributed to me, most of the time, if not all the time. But over the years what has emerged is a slow yet deeply rooted exchange of thoughts, resulting into being there, even if it was not in good times but definitely a shoulder away for the not so good times.



My mentoring journey started with an impetus from this verse in the Bible.

Mentoring is Passing on...

2 Timothy 2:2 “And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” In this verse, Paul is charging Timothy (his mentee) to pass on what he has learned from Paul to other faithful men, who will then teach others. This verse shows us the importance of passing on what we have learned from our mentors to others.

Advice from the veterans at Take Charge did serve well on how the initial days could be slow, nothing better than the example of the high flying kite and the string, right in this season of Kite flying, where a pull and a push and a nudge is required to get started and thereafter ‘a let go’ only to let it fly as high, and come back for a good rest and recoup whenever needed.

Just as a new initiative requires that little extra time the mentors and mentees need to patiently nudge each other, create the space and the environment to chalk out the right set of expectations in the relationship in the initial days. What worked for me is the expectation setting at the onset of the relationship in terms of what help and assistance or guidance can be sought from me as a mentor. Slow but steady was the key... Remote work due to covid, did create distances and discomforts but these helped us realise the need for the other.



TC 1 mentee
Venessa Rego



TC 4 mentee
Benita Monteiro



TC 5 mentee
Tanisha Gasper

Major Pratima's mentees

The relationships have now matured into a go to place for professional help, life skills, more importantly a personal sounding board, and the likes. I am lucky to say that in this whole give and take relationship I have received and taken equally from my mentees, new learnings, patience, understanding, new age digital skills, encouragement and even more.

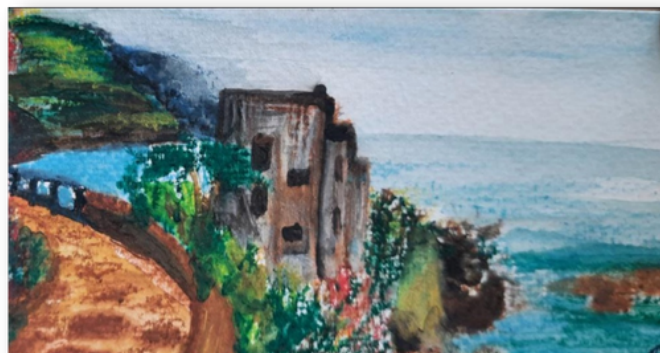
To my Mentees Ven, Ben, and Tan...
Love you all... Fly high...
To my mentors Thank You.

- Major Pratima Pinto Thomas

Art



Alisha Rodrigues
TC 5 Mentee



Rhea D'souza
TC 5 Mentee

Networking Essentials

The Networking Essentials workshop on 13th November 2022 by Luis Miranda, renowned banker, social activist and co-founder of Take Charge Mentorship was conducted at St. Stanislaus, Bandra. Take Charge provides several learning opportunities for its young mentees in different areas of interest and importance to engage and build their expertise. The session started off with the question ‘Why are you here and not somewhere else?’ to our 60 participants. Interesting reasons for attending were shared – from cultivating meaningful relationships, creating the right connections for career and life, building and strengthening networks etc. The larger group formed smaller networking units to aid better sharing.

Describing himself as ‘Forest Gump’, Luis shared his interesting story with all, through a powerful presentation in which he demonstrated how Networking created tremendous opportunities for him in every sphere of his life. Truly, your Network is your net worth. The participants were given a small networking exercise prior to the workshop, the sharing that resulted helped all to see the value of building, reviving and engaging in networking – the effective process that helps you stay connected with your world.



Luis let us in on his secret of **PHORCE** networking:

- **P**ositivity – Surround yourself with positive people and never negotiate with yourself
- **H**ardwork – there is no substitute, to receive you must give first
- **O**penness – Be open to a different point of view. Hang out with people who may not be like you. Five people to hang out with – the inspired, the motivated, the open-minded, the passionate and the grateful
- **R**eliance (Trust) – Vital to any relationship
- **C**uriosity – Assimilate information and be eager to know more
- **E**mpathy – Genuine care for people and their welfare.

Who does not want to be lucky? Luck by choice will ensure we all are. Richard Wiseman suggested that life is full of possibilities by:

- Maximising chance opportunities
- Listening to your gut instincts
- Expecting to be lucky – optimistic
- Finding the good in everything.

Luis also let the participants in on some of his secret mantras - Keep your focus on the important things in life, as it's easier to make decisions, stop blaming others and look at yourself first, the most important tip to a better conversation is 'Listening', every week learn something new and record it.

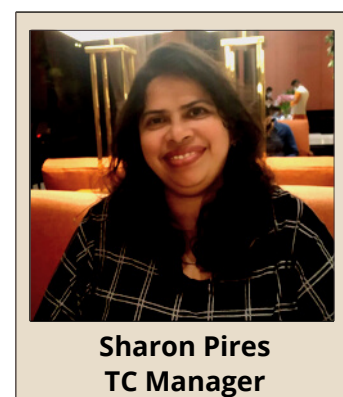
Luis is a dot connector – For him everything starts with a dot and it's important to connect the dots:

- Note the dots
- Work the dots
- Humour the dots
- Work the dots beyond work
- Make the dots long-dated
- Be grateful to the dots
- Reply to the dots
- It's all about the DOTS



During the interactive break everyone was fully engaged in making new connections while they enjoyed the delicious snacks. The session ended with a fun networking quiz – an activity to keep the networking ongoing. Prizes were distributed for all the competitions held so far and the deserving winners were happy to take home self-help books that would aid better networking.

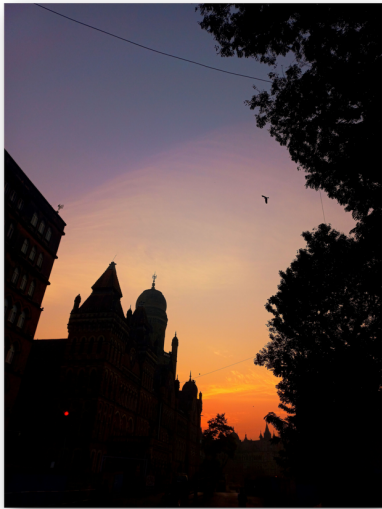
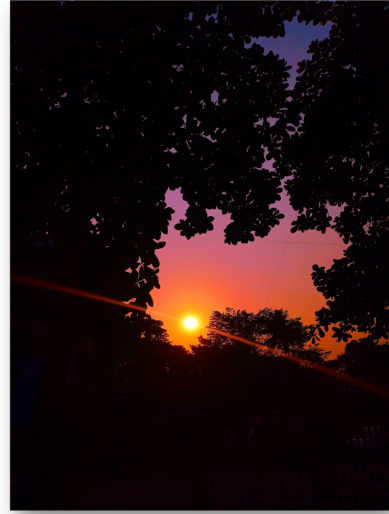
With many take aways and a lot of engagement to keep networking alive, everyone left with grateful thanks to Luis Miranda and the Take Charge Mentorship team for a time of fun, learning and meaningful interactions. A big thanks to Fr. Frazer for the Loyola hall.



Sharon Pires
TC Manager

May the PHORCE be with us!

Photography



Sanaika Ganesh - TC 5 Mentee



Lily Dsouza - TC 5 Mentee

Learnings from my fellow mentors

I was excited to sign-up as a Take Charge (TC) mentor because I felt it would not only give me the opportunity to bond with a new generation of youngsters but also learn cool and trendy things from my mentee as well as the amazing group of Mentors.

I still remember my first session with the other mentors, most of us eager to make an impact in the lives of youth. Numerous workshops, trainings, and mentee meetings later – when we caught up last month, we realized that we all had made quite a journey.

Our session was free flowing and super engaging with no elaborate presentation or guest speaker. It was just a few of us sharing our unique experiences with the youth and trying to absorb learnings from one other. That's the beauty of a buddy group.



Buddy group - Mighty Mavericks

They say knowledge is power, but it's much more powerful when it's shared. So, in true LinkedIn influencer style, I've listed five lessons from the session:

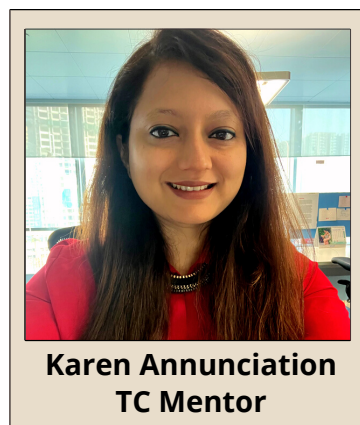
1. Be open to people: The best (and most creative) solutions to problems are found when you open up to people: Effective communication is a fundamental necessity (I'm not just saying this because it's what I do for a living). When we open up and share what we are feeling with a diverse group of people; we end up brainstorming and come up with innovative solutions.

2. Don't be afraid to ask for help: If we don't ask, people won't know what we need. And if people don't know what we need, they wouldn't be able to help us. Barack Obama said "Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. I do that daily. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength" If Barack can ask for help – why can't we?

3. Always be open to see things from a perspective other than your own: Often we face challenges that seem impossible, overwhelming, and impractical to solve. Sometimes all we need is a fresh perspective. Talking with others always helps provide insights and shed light on a problem that you may have not seen from your perspective.

4. Know your role and play it well: This is for us mentors. We are here in this program to play the role of a mentor to the mentee and not that of a parent or doctor or counselor. It's important to always understand what is expected from us, know our boundaries, and ensure we direct our mentees to the right person based on the situation.

5. Life is filled with continuous learnings: There are lessons that come from experience, yet there are some that come from others' experiences. One of the best things about building that shared knowledge base is that you can learn from your + others' successes and replicate them. You can also learn from their mistakes and make sure you don't repeat them. It's often said that strength lies in differences, not in similarities. I honestly felt that strength that Sunday where such a diverse set of mentors with different backgrounds, across age-groups shared their unique perspectives and learnings.



Here's wishing all of us many such engaging and fulfilling discussions in 2023 and beyond!

————— X —————



Don't Worry

Life is unfair sometimes,
Things don't happen our way,
But look at the brighter side,
And believe it's just a phase.

Troubles brings you the real treasure,
It brings the people who love you closer,
They will heal you with their love,
Til all the pain is over.

God loves those who praise him,
And he blesses those who are grateful,
Even in bad times,
He makes them healthy and fruitful.

I pray your burdens get lighter,
And happiness you find,
Don't worry about tomorrow,
Leave your fears behind.



Deandra Pinto
TC 5 Mentee

Life

Sometimes it's too fast
Sometimes too slow

You will grow
Or you will strive

Everything depends
On the frame of your mind

Inconsequential are trivial issues
Because life is a journey with different hues.



Samantha Miranda
TC 5 Mentee



My very own

I was standing there all alone,
So confused and so lost,
Lost in my very own thoughts.

But then I found something shining so brightly,
Twinkling like a star in the night sky,
And I'm ever so grateful it caught my eye.

As I flipped through the pages,
As the time passed by,
I realised, I found the most precious thing of all time.

Every page is so motivating,
For it always reminds me to never stop quitting,
Every chapter is so interesting,
Something I can never get bored of reading.

And now I know I'm not standing all alone,
For I found my very own,
The most precious book,
That I could ever own.

And all I want you to know is that
this book is a 'person',
Who will forever be in my heart for certain.



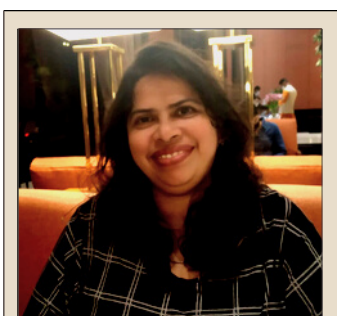
Kiele Dsouza
TC 5 Mentee

2023

A new opportunity
To live life fully
To engage meaningfully
To boost productivity
To enhance creativity
To be the best version of me.

365 days to make an impact
8760 hours to stay on track
525600 minutes to learn skills we lack
31536000 seconds to do and act

To a happy and successful 2023
Of learning, loving, giving, sharing freely
Discovering our potential - contributing passionately
To make 2023 - the best year it could ever be!



Sharon Pires
Program Manager

SAFETY en-ACT-ed

The Take Charge team organized a workshop on POSH, POCSO, Digital safety and Bystander Intervention on the 11th of December. The workshop was conducted by members of the Red Dot Foundation. The organization aims to make cities safer especially for women, by crowdsourced data and technology.

This workshop gave us great insights, making us aware of things that otherwise go unnoticed in our surroundings, and how we as individuals can protect ourselves as well as help others.

Some of the topics highlighted in the session were - the difference between gender and biological sex of a person, the unconscious biases that are created and challenging these. A short briefing on the procedures involved in 'Filing an FIR' offline as well as online and how to report a 'Cybercrime' case.

The nuances of 'Bystander Intervention' were showcased through short videos which helped us understand the action and response better. These included the following responses:

- Distract - divert attention from the victim by pretending to be their friend, causing a commotion, or striking up a conversation
- Delegate - Find someone who can help like a bus driver, policeman etc.
- Document - Take videos or photos of the incident, victim etc. which can be used as proof
- Delay - Keep the victim company by talking to them and provide them an outlet to express their feelings.
- Direct - Ask the victim if they are ok, or they need something from you.

There were games and polls during the workshop which made it interactive and interesting. It gave us an opportunity to understand sensitive situations from a different perspective.

Prerana and Jyoti explained the Acts and terms so well and Tania shared a few stories of people to understand the connection between reality and legality, and how people have received protection.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. The main window displays a presentation slide titled "Understanding Privilege" with logos for "safecity" and "Red Dot Foundation". The slide features a circular diagram with "Gender" and "Race" at the center. Surrounding these are segments for "Physical Abilities/Qualities", "Age", "Sexual Orientation/Identity", and "Ethnicity". The outer ring lists various factors: Creed, Education, Parental Status, Geographic Location, Thinking Styles, Socio-Economic Status, Religious Beliefs, Native Born/Non-Native, Job Classification, Military Experience, Functional Specialty, Marital Status, Political Ideology, Appearance, Communication Style/Skills, Work Background, and Creed.

On the right side of the Zoom window, there is a grid of participant video feeds. Visible participants include: Red Dot Foundation (Sa...), Soraya D'Souza, Take Charge Mentors..., Cheryl Pereira, Sharon Pires, Tania Fernandes Red..., Sherlyn Pereira, Red Dot Foundation (...), Keith Barnes, edna v, and Prerana Keshav (she/her).

At the bottom of the Zoom window, there is a toolbar with icons for Unmute, Stop Video, Participants (45), Chat, Share Screen, Reactions, Apps, Whiteboards, and a red "Leave" button.

Some of the things that I learnt during this workshop were... your safety is primary, while the Law is there to protect you it is important for you to understand the situation you are surrounded with and make sure that your safety is not at risk. Secondly, make an impactful move, being expressive is good but how you express yourself in any situation is what makes the difference. And lastly, be an effective bystander, intervene to make people feel safe and work towards building a 'Safe city' and environment.

A big thanks to Red Dot Foundation and the team for sharing their knowledge with us to make safety a priority in our lives.



Mentoring Conversations

To be a mentor can be a rewarding experience indeed, but it can also be a challenging one. A mentee may have issues for which they seek a quick fix but the journey could be a long and arduous one, are mentees ready to stick it out and reap the benefits eventually? Conversations between mentor and mentee are vital, as it helps build bonds and grow the relationship. Talking and listening, sharing your life experiences and being vulnerable is what makes difficult conversations seem not so hard. Mentors and mentees can create a beautiful relationship through meaningful interactions and consistent connect and engagement.

On Sunday 6th November 2022 an online session was conducted for mentors to share their journey and experiences on mentoring and also gain insights from their fellow mentors. Case studies were shared based on situations that have been communicated and topics the mentors wanted inputs on.

1. Time Constraints:

My mentee has his plate full, studying, working on weekends and is not able to find time for meetings. Mentees work and study hence the time constraint. How do we plan meetings and how do we get mentees to open up and take the lead to fix meetings?

- **Create the energy to meet:** Our message to them should not be one of compliance, having a meeting every month but more of interest and involvement.
- **Focus on the agenda of the mentee:** To make a success of the mentoring experience, the mentor needs to give importance to the mentee's needs, goals, plans etc.
- **Sometimes no agenda, no judgement:** Create a comfortable and safe space for the mentee. Let them know that you are not there to judge them and with no agenda but theirs, they will slowly open up and then there is no stopping them.
- **Persistence pays:** Find that time slot that works. If not Saturday, then Sunday, if not earlier then later in the day, if not one place, then another. Go for an early morning walk, breakfast or late evening dinner but keep the family in the know, a strange time but it could work for some. Find that one spot that works.
- **Finding novel ways to meet up:** Walking the dogs, taking a bicycle ride, a visit to the zoo, long walks by the seaside. a pottery workshop etc. These are things that mentors have done with their mentees, making for a different and enjoyable experience.

2. Change of priorities of mentees: Take Charge meetings may not be high on their list. Their priorities have changed.

- **Creating a mentoring agreement:** Everything is spelled out in the first meeting as this would make it easier to work around the difficulties that come up in scheduling and attending future meetings. What to expect? Communication, messages, calls, manage time constraints, good places to meet, kind of preparation, hot buttons, staying on track...
- **Adjust meetings according to your mentee's agenda:** Pick a time that is best suited to the mentee either in the morning or evening, taking into account work/ college schedules etc. Once a month this would work. Take turns alternatively in fixing the meeting between mentor and mentee. Do not always think it is the mentor's responsibility. Encourage your mentee to be proactive in this endeavour.
- **Plan meetings in advance:** At the previous meeting plan for the next meeting. This ensures that the following month's meeting is held as scheduled. If something else that's urgent should come up, reschedule a few days prior to the meet.
- **Connect and share in-between meetings:** Share interesting information, WhatsApp small messages to keep the connection alive and take interest in the mentee's life through an active engagement. This will keep the mentee enthused and energised. You could follow your mentee on Instagram and show interest in their posts.
- **Voluntary engagement:** This is voluntary for both mentor and mentee. We cannot be forceful or cohesive. Work on the relationship, it can be effective if expectations are set and met.
- **Proximity of the meeting venue:** If both mentor and mentee are in the vicinity, meet-ups become so much easier. Most of the pairing has been done keeping this criterion in mind.

3. My mentee is sorted:

Often a mentee who seems sorted may be an introvert and would need time to open up. A mentee who seems sorted may be anxious or not feel safe to share. Create an atmosphere of trust and safety.

How much of yourself have you shared with your mentee? Be human, be vulnerable, open up to them and they will open up to you.

4. Importance of listening: Sometimes all the mentee wants is a person who will listen to them without being judgemental, will be empathetic in understanding their problem and will help to work things out.

5. Involvement of parents: If parents are being involved always do so in the presence of the mentee and maintain transparency. Create a safe space for communication.

6. Number of sessions:

I find it difficult to stay connected with my mentee only through a monthly session. Can I have more than one session per month?

You are most welcome to have multiple sessions a month if this would help strengthen the relationship and build better connections. It is however vital that at least one session per month happens, if not in person then at least online, although in person sessions create better bonding and connection.

7. How do I know my mentoring sessions are going well? What are the criteria for evaluation?

Mentoring involves an investment in time and effort. Some mentees may take time to open up, even upto 6 months, while others may feel comfortable to share just after a session or two. The bonding and connection would help you understand how the relationship is shaping up.

The best indicator is 'if your mentee is chasing you', only after you have established a connection. It means they are finding value in mentoring. Don't set the bar too high, often mentors put pressure on themselves by doing this. Frequently, the mentee is happy with the way things are going but as a mentor you may feel differently.

Be someone to your mentee, who you needed when you were young. Put yourself in your mentee's shoes. Sometimes for 3 to 6 months you feel nothing is happening, then all of a sudden there is a breakthrough. Be patient. Often you will discover that the mentor gains as much from the relationship as the mentee.

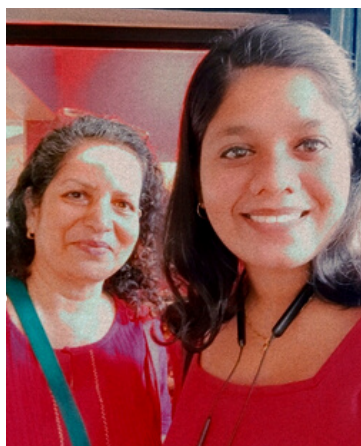
Thanking all our mentors who joined this session, for sharing their insights, being vulnerable and helping others in their mentoring journey.





Mentor Mentee

Meetings



Success Story

Take Charge has changed the course of my life !

Luis Miranda was and is still my mentor, and this bond is one of the best things that has ever happened to me.

We were paired as mentor-mentee by accident, as his assigned mentee and my assigned mentor did not turn up on the orientation day.



Before joining Take Charge I was shy and not so confident about myself and my decisions. Luis pushed me to get out of my comfort zone and take up new and different challenges which has molded me to become the strong and confident woman I am today.

He taught me to focus on the important things in life, to dream big and helped me achieve it, to simplify every complex decision in my head.

My mentor has not only helped me in my career choices but also life choices. Every meeting with my mentor is a reality check for me. I always walk out of the meeting feeling amazed at him and having so much to look forward to in life.

Take Charge has brought out the best in me, I've learnt to live life to the fullest and make each day count.

And guess what, my mentor, Luis, who started off with giving me life coaching, will also be raising the toast at my wedding next week!

Take Charge has had such a deep impact on my life. I'm forever grateful to the program for giving me this opportunity which has helped me grow personally and professionally.

- Leanne D'souza
TC 1 Alumni



'Design your life' workshop by
Ryan Barretto on
14th January 2023.



'Mentor-mentee' day on
29th January 2023.



1st prize for Self Love
challenge.



1st place for best Halloween
outfit and makeup



1st place for most number
of meetings till date.



2nd place for most number
of meetings till date.



Please do share your insights, learnings, feedback or suggestions with us. We are constantly looking to improve and to provide an enriching experience for all involved. Your contributions are welcome and appreciated. Help us make this experience more and more meaningful. Again, a sincere thanks to all our contributors and to the team for helping us make this issue a success.

You can reach us at:

takechargetorship@gmail.com

[Take Charge Mentorship]

Stay in touch...

Click on the icon to go directly to our social media page

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Take Charge

LinkedIn
Take Charge group

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@takechargeindia

You Tube
Take Charge Mentorship

Tell us...

- How I connected with my mentor/mentee?
- Were they what I imagined?
- What has been your learning so far?
- What would you like to know more of in our next newsletter?

Do share your creative work with us (poems, photographs, paintings, Writeups, etc.) we would love to showcase your talents.

Send your responses to the team and stand a chance to be featured in our next newsletter.



TAKE
CHARGE

THANK YOU

For Your
Contribution

Mentees

Lily Dsouza
Jason D'souza
Bianca D'souza
Abigail D'souza
Sherlyn Pereira
Alisha Rodrigues
Rhea D'souza
Tanisha Gasper
Sanaika Ganesh
Deandra Pinto
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