

South London 2-Day HARP Workshop

South London, UK, 27. - 28. October 2014



We are very proud of our young people, Amy Brown, Dominic Gough and Samuel Raynbird who were the driving force behind this workshop. They all come back from STF this summer and have now started their studies. They took initiative and got organized. We trusted their deep concern for the HARPies and let them take charge.

One mother commented on how impressed she was to find everyone behaving very well, being calm and respectfully listening to what the leaders were saying, when she picked up her daughter the first evening.

We are truly grateful to our young people. They have a wonderful way of getting across to their younger siblings of faith. Thank you so much, for runner a well organized and great workshop!

Franklin and Cecilie Fortune

During the October half term of 2014, South London HARP held a 2 Day workshop for anyone in high school and sixth form. It was held at the South London community centre, the Peace Embassy, in Thornton Heath. We had a total of 30 participants from all over London, from ages 11 to 18, four of which took on the roles as team leaders.

The motto for this workshop was 'Voice my Choice'; It was inspired by the UK CARP Convention some of the young adults attended earlier this year. During this convention we were introduced to the ideas of the recently revamped CARP movement in the USA, which aims to spread Father's teaching not through traditional Divine Principle lectures but through

expressing the core values our movement stands for in a more socially relatable way; values such as integrity, leading purpose driven lives, having healthy relationships, improving spiritual health and realising inherent value. As young adults we felt like we could gain a lot from this convention and we wanted to bring the same spirit of fresh perspective on Principle and enthusiasm to share it to our younger brothers and sisters in HARP. So essentially the aim of this short workshop was to help the HARPies realise the amazing values, ideals and principles our movement has to share, and help them to develop the confidence to be able to express these with their friends and those around them, in other words, to put a voice on their beliefs and faith.

Our schedule began with a short talk on the culture of heart we try to share with each other as blessed children. We discussed what are the best aspects of being a blessed child? Some of the points the HARPies came up with was friendship, family atmosphere, support and faith. We concluded that this is the kind of culture we want to see and experience wherever we go, and we only have this kind of culture of heart because of what True Parents taught us. So in order for us to share this culture we should be able to share our values and principles.

We then heard a talk from Ollie Davies, a guest speaker we invited who also spoke at the CARP convention, who has done a lot of work with Youth UPF and also attended the original CARP Convention in the USA. He gave a talk on public speaking, essentially about confidently and fluently expressing oneself. He spoke on not only practical elements of effective public speaking but also on the importance of our internal attitude with which we speak. We then did a short improve activity with the HARPies in their teams, where they had to make a short speech on a question they were given on the spot in front of their team. For some it took them a bit out of their comfort zone but everyone participated and supported each other, and all in all it went well and they enjoyed and challenged themselves.

Of course a Harp workshop isn't complete without games and sports, so throughout the workshop there were many games, creative activities and sports. Everyone was fully involved, making effort to include each person and showed lots of enthusiasm. As always, you really can't beat the HARP team spirit.

On the second day we had another guest speaker, an older second generation brother, Michael Schroder, who also went to the CARP Convention in the US. He gave a talk on what it means to be a good role model. He spoke about purifying the attitude of those around you through living a pure lifestyle, and even

though it's important to be able to express your faith, it's even more so to be able to live it and lead by example.

Our main activity was a public speaking competition we held at the end of the workshop. Everyone prepared and gave a short talk on something important and inspiring to them, first to their teams, then the team chose two speakers to speak in front of the whole workshop. As staff we thought it might be a bit risky because even for many adults public speaking can be terrifying, and we were a little afraid it would be a bit too challenging for some, however, fortunately I believe we underestimated them; every participant partook and shared something meaningful. The teams did so well in supporting, encouraging and appreciating each other, and I think that because of this the HARPies could feel free to share more openly and deeply. So many of the talks were quite heartfelt and deep, even coming from those as young as 11. I was not only impressed but actually really inspired by what they had to share. There were a variety of topics such as never giving up, friendships, becoming a mature person, their passions, what it means for them to be a second generation, giving it the best you got, respect for their parents and many more. For many of them it was quite challenging, but because of the supportive environment they successfully embraced their challenge and stepped out of their comfort zones. For the competition there were 2 age groups, 11 – 14, and 15+. There were 7 HARPies who gave their talk in front of the entire workshop, and all of them did really well, in content, heart and delivery. Giving a speech in front of 30 people is difficult! For some it was definitely a case of facing and overcoming a fear, and it was especially for those that it was a rewarding and growing experience.

Personally I felt that the best thing from this workshop was that not only could they challenge themselves and grow in confidence through the experience, but it was the fact that they could challenge themselves to be more open and go deeper with each other, and in doing so it became obvious that the HARPies were inspiring and teaching each other.

For many of us second generation, it is a challenge to be open and freely express our faith and what's in our hearts, but of course this shouldn't be the case. From this short but meaningful workshop, I was really impressed by my younger brothers and sisters. Given the opportunity there's so much that the HARP generation can give. There's definitely a lot of talent there, but more importantly a deep level of heart and a shy determination to express it.