



## DONE Mission One 020 Report

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ZOOM, June 13, 2020

*By the ESGD Team*

**O**n Saturday, June 13th, we held our online Graduation and closing for all DONE Mission One staff and participants. With congratulatory remarks from the Balcombs and William Haines, and closing talks from the team leaders, we concluded our DONE Mission One programme for this year.

Due to the lockdown, this year's schedule had to be significantly adjusted. After just the first week of the programme in early March, all participants and staff had to return home. Soon after, we made the collective decision to offer an adjusted online programme, which was fittingly re-named to "DONE Mission Corona". DMC ran for 11 weeks, from the end of March until mid-June; the programme consisted of weekly team calls, sharings and activities, complemented with regular zoom lecture series and internal content from guest lecturers and staff, and weekly education packages with readings and lecture recordings.

Of course, this wasn't the original plan, and we were sad not to be able to be together in person for the intended 3 months. However, it was a lesson for the nature of life; that we always need to be

flexible and adjust to circumstances beyond our control. Many participants expressed how the unique nature of experiencing this education from home, gave the space to reflect and work more with the content, and then apply it directly to their daily life and family relationships. Certainly, the programme was a big blessing for all of us to be involved with during the lockdown; it provided structure, education and companions of faith.

We are very grateful for the collective effort that went into creating this unique and internally rich online educational experience. And we want to express our gratitude in particular to the team leaders, who took a lot of initiative for their team members, and the guest lecturers, William Haines, Armando Lozano and Frank Kaufmann.

To share an insight into the journey and growth that was experienced collectively, we have attached a poem, compiled by taking one to two sentences from the final reflections of each participant and team leader. We also include four written testimonies from this year's DONE participants.

Looking to next year, we can confirm that we are planning to run DONE 020 in person, starting in late October/early November. Applications are open, and more information can be found by visiting us [online](#).

**“My Gap Year Not Ruined”**  
DMC 020 poem, by participants and staff

When we started DMC,  
I didn't know what was coming.  
For some time, I was extremely bothered that my gap  
year got “ruined”.

I didn't really know how I want to grow  
or in what direction.  
I was scared to go deeper.

Taking responsibility for your own life is hard.

DMC was a really honest mirror for me.  
This wasn't a time of surviving.  
It was a time of learning and practicing.

I don't want to be a selfish bystander anymore.  
I don't want to live a passive life.  
I don't want to prioritise being liked by everyone  
anymore, even though it's nice.

I want to approach life differently.  
I want to doubt myself less.  
If I give away my responsibility,  
I give away my freedom.

My want to be better for others,  
overpowers my want to be comfortable.  
I want to make better decisions;  
Don't aim for average.

It takes commitment to grow,  
and a commitment to never give up.  
But I've realised I don't have to do everything alone.

I had a longing to call people my companions of faith.  
We need companions of faith.  
A lot of growth comes from talking with each other.  
It's the quality of my relationships  
that reflect the quality of my life.  
I can see more clearly the purpose of life –  
I just need to look at my sister. And my dad.

I can see that I'm going in the right direction.

The place I can grow is right now,  
whatever and wherever that is.  
That's life –  
taking responsibility and overcoming things.

It's my responsibility to never give up on pursuing  
goodness.  
My room will be full of post-its.

I had a great gap year.

I remember a lot of moments when I felt lighter  
because of a lecture, a prayer or just seeing  
everybody's faces.  
I'm still scared of finding my place in the world, but I  
know where to start now.  
Now is the time where we make major decisions in our  
life;  
We should be creative.

All I've ever wanted to do is be a good person and I  
didn't think that I needed a life of faith to do that.  
But a few weeks ago, I had this massive urge to get to  
know God.  
I have been educated and taught about God and his  
love for basically all my life.  
But I realised a connection and love for God is not  
something you can be taught.  
It's something you have to want.

Now, I want to do life together with God.  
My goal is sincerely to have God in my life,  
living with God and listening.  
I want to live a life that would make God happy.

There is so much to come;  
I feel my life will be much fuller than I realised up  
until now.  
We are all part of a big story,  
and now it is our turn.  
God needs our help to make the world a better place.  
Please be hopeful, not hopeless.  
Let's make families God is proud of.

For some time, I was extremely bothered that my gap  
year got “ruined”.  
But I had a great gap year.

Oh goodness, my heart.  
It's been so good, it hurts.

The quality of the environment may change, but the  
quality of my heart won't.

**I want to live a better life.**

## **DONE 019 and DMC 020 participants testimonies**

“DONE provided me with a kind of education that at the same time confronted me and brought me peace. The honesty from the staff and the extent to which they truly care about each participant is so evident from beginning to end and I couldn't be more grateful for that. DONE really provided me with a lot of support, but also with the tools to support myself and the people in my life as I move forward.

I gained a much more grounded sense of myself, spirituality, and the world. I really feel that I gained a clearer image of myself and of how to continuously distinguish within myself that which is from God from that which is not. Another big thing is a much firmer understanding of growth and the awareness that I have the potential and ability to grow, which is not an awareness that I've always had. I also gained some of the best friends I have ever had.

I would describe the education I received on DONE as realistic, applicable, inspiring, hopeful, and grounded. I honestly believe that the education I received there is the best I could have received and exactly what I needed, because it is confronting in exactly the right way without ever crushing hope or making growth seem impossible. The encouragement and push to grow and the honest portrayal of the challenges that may accompany that really pave the way for sustained growth. Going to DONE was probably the best decision I have ever made, and I am so grateful for the things I have learned there, for it will surely make my life a better one.”

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"Before going to DONE, I wasn't exactly sure what my future was going to look like. But now, DONE has given me the confidence to really take ownership of my spiritual life and develop that commitment to higher standards. I now have the understanding that I'm forever going to be on this journey of growth. I've realised that there's always some way I can improve or grow, emphasising the need for me to be attentive to what God is trying to tell me in my everyday life. Ultimately, I am responsible for choosing to grow to be the person I have the potential to become.

DONE truly has been the “down to earth” programme people have said it to be. The atmosphere the directors and lecturers create; one of welcoming challenging questions and encouraging us participants to take responsibility to challenge our own concepts and understandings has been an important part of my DONE experience.

Now as a DONE Graduate, I look forward to moving onto the next chapters of my life with the precious friendships and unforgettable memories I've made throughout the past year."

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“DONE's approach to spiritual education is something I've never experienced anywhere else. Their content is powerful, honest, supported by facts, not fanatical, confronting, meaningful, deep, and relatable. I love this quote from our HDH booklet: “Faith does not mean seeing the world as you would like it to be; it means seeing the world exactly as it is, yet never giving up the hope that we can make it better by the way we live.” I think that the content on DONE is very similar to this. You don't hear about fairy tales, but if you give your effort you can gain a lot of faith, strength, and hope from it. It always comes down to personal responsibility. DONE helped me realize my relationship with spirituality and I could build a strong foundation. I appreciate ESGD's healthy approach to education. They constantly made us think and asked us to think and figure out our own understanding, not just accept everything they say blindly. I felt a tremendous amount of love, support, and understanding from everyone during my year and it also contributed a lot to how I received the content.”

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“DONE brought me reality. Honestly, I was expecting some kind of wake-up call or dreamy experience, but instead I realized it's up to me to work with where I'm at and make it better. At the same time, it provided me with a nurturing environment to learn, to grow and to develop my relationship with God. I learnt that growth takes time, it's not linear, there are ups and downs and that I should appreciate and enjoy the process.”