23 May 2016

**Society for Community Organization (SoCO)**

**Press release: Confessions – A Community Project**

When thinking about prisoners and ex-offenders, we think of the crimes they have committed and the image of sinner immediately pops out. Even after they have paid the price for their acts, we continue a second round of judgement by reducing our perception of them to only being criminals rather than human beings who make mistakes, like you and me.

While the mistakes violating the laws are punished by imprisonment, there are wrong deeds that do not violate the laws but which we nevertheless regret, for they could be equally if not more hurting, both morally and emotionally.

As an act of seeking a more humane look at prisoners and ex-prisoners, the Society for Community Organization is organizing a community project titled ‘Confessions’ to seek an accommodative rather than a judgemental view of those who made mistakes.

Confession is a statement acknowledging wrong-doing common but not limited to religious practices. It is an introspective act, frequently loaded with regrets, in which one reflects on one’s past. Revealing one’s confession is an act of opening up. Therefore the slogan of the Project is “Confessions: This is me!” 「剖白！講你知！」

We all have done something wrong, carrying regrets from the past, such as:

*" Mom, I am sorry I didn't spend enough time taking care of you."*

*" When I was small I stole from my little brother's wallet.“*

*" I cheated on my husband."*

The Project collects anonymous statements of regrets from prisoners, ex-prisoners, as well as the general public ranging from children to adults. The confessions will be displayed in an intimately set up exhibition at the SoCO Gallery along with photos, letters and audio installations of interviews. Echoing the statement of 'He who is without sin can cast the first stone', the exhibition intends to seek the public’s understanding and acceptance of those who have made mistakes, so that ex-prisoners can move onto normal, positive living after receiving after their imprisonment.

SoCO is now calling for active participation from the public by contributing their confessions. The confessions can be collected via our website, email or by post.

Mary Jean Reimer 翁靜晶, Yip Wan Yee葉韻怡, Leung Yiu Chung 梁耀忠, Oscar Ho何慶基, and Andy Wong Ting-lam王廷琳 will join the press conference to talk about the Project and share their own confessions.

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**Collection of confessions:**

*Website/email at:*

[www.confessionsoco.com](https://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.confessionsoco.com&sa=D&ust=1463564929142000&usg=AFQjCNFmH_uFdS_90x7_LyH7acjxUM8Hcg)
[www.facebook.com/confessionsoco](https://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.facebook.com/confessionsoco&sa=D&ust=1463564929142000&usg=AFQjCNGh91kUsaEjnhuQc4mdpuS566vlgg)
confessionsoco@gmail.com

The public can also submit their confessions by emailing us a photo of holding a written confession with or without revealing their face on the photo. The photos might be added to our Facebook pages.

*By post to:*

Society for Community Organization
52, Princess Margaret Road 3/F
Kowloon, Hong Kong

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**Exhibition details:**

Dates: 3/9 – 27/11/16 (every Sat/Sun)

Time: 12-6.30 pm

Venue: SoCO Gallery

269, Yu Chau Street, 1/F, Shamshuipo

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