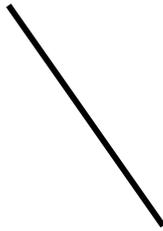


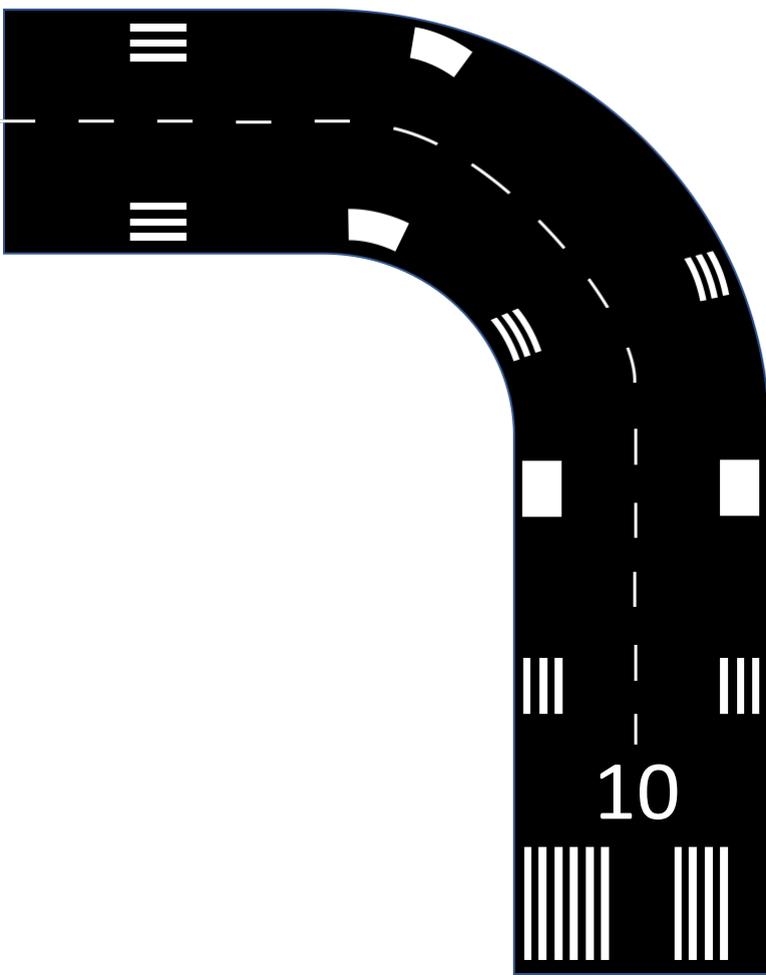
Yavin
Male, 18 years-old
Enhanced Step-Up (ESU)



Perhaps the first thing you would learn about Yavin is that he hates school. To Yavin, nobody in school cared for him or understood him: not his school counsellor who made him felt guilty about his poor academic performance; nor his classmates who irked him by spraying deodorant in class, even though they knew that it would trigger his migraine. Certainly also not his teachers, who hastily attributed his tiredness in class to late-night gaming. Yavin also didn't click well with his CCA mates. All of these made going to school a real chore for Yavin.

Back home, things weren't going well either. His mum struggled with depression, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). His parents were constantly fighting. All these amounted to feelings of loneliness and despair.

His poor school attendance prompted a referral to YGOS under the Enhanced Step-Up Programme (ESU). It made little difference to Yavin at that point as he thought that YGOS was yet another organization that won't be able to help him much.



“It’s just that...YGOS is not in the position to change the school’s style of doing things.”

That much is certainly true. YGOS can only work within its systemic boundaries after all. However, what was redeeming about Yavin’s time with YGOS was the consistent care and love he received from his caseworker, Jason.

Initially, when Jason visited him at his house, Yavin did not open the house door even though he saw Jason through the door’s peephole. Still, Jason waited with great hope.

For about half an hour.

Eventually, Yavin’s heart softened and he came out to meet Jason. What he appreciates most about Jason is the constancy of their relationship. Even though he understands that YGOS’s capacity to bring about a radical change in his life is highly improbable, he still values the interactions and memories with Jason. Even after the programme ended, Jason continued to make an effort to reconnect with him. Yavin was especially touched as Jason was the only one who wished him “Happy Birthday”.

Till this day, Yavin and Jason still keep in touch with each other. While waiting to enlist in National Service, he alternates between working at banquets and warehouses (though overstaffing at these workplaces often leaves him in boredom). For Yavin, finding purpose in life is a responsibility that he takes ownership of, not something that his parents spoon-feed him with. Although his attitude towards school did not change, Yavin has successfully completed his ‘N’ Levels, as he knew that it would boost his employment opportunities in the future.

“Our time in school is actually ‘borrowed time’. One day we will all step foot into the harsh reality called “society”. How would you spend your ‘borrowed time’ wisely?”