

FFWPU UK: Hear Testimonies from our Empower Heavenly Top Gun Team

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March 19, 2025



Catch Up With What the EMPOWER HG Team has been doing in Swindon these past couple months...

'My name is Heayun Cypion Y. I am a second-generation member, the eldest daughter of a Haitian father and a Brazilian mother. I was born and raised in Brazil. In 2020, I received the Blessing with a Swiss husband of Russian and Ukrainian descent, Daniel Y.

Since receiving the Blessing, I thought I wouldn't have many opportunities to experience public life anymore. During my teenage years, I didn't have many experiences with material restoration and witnessing, partly because my city and community were small and partly because my family didn't have the financial means to support me in those experiences.

When I heard about EMPOWER through my sister-in-law, Manon M., I was going through a phase where I had high expectations for myself but couldn't seem to reach them. It was frustrating, and I found myself complaining and thinking negatively - I felt like opportunities always came to others but never to me. I thought I was the exception.

At that time, I had just moved to a new country, didn't speak the language, needed to integrate, had a bachelor's degree that wasn't recognised where I lived, I had been away from my family for a year, and when I finally managed to buy a plane ticket to visit them, the flight didn't work out, and we lost money because of it. Everything felt like a reason to complain and blame the world around me.

That's when, after hearing about EMPOWER, I thought: "Why not give it a chance? Why not take a break from this chaotic and confusing daily life and focus on developing my faith?"

That's how I decided to volunteer as Kitchen Staff. Normally, this isn't the first choice in a program like this, but I wanted to challenge myself. Instead of complaining, I decided to serve others, show them love, and set my own and problems aside for a while. My idea was that once I felt calmer, I could start looking for solutions in my life.

And actually, volunteering in the kitchen inspired me even more. When the teams went out for material restoration, I started going with them. Little by little, I began creating the experiences I once thought I would never have - the ones that helped me develop my life of faith.

This year, I decided to join the team coming to England to live my witnessing experience.

Of course, the ideal would be to participate in the full one-year program to experience everything more intensely and further develop faith in our Heavenly Parents. But given my reality, I wouldn't have been able to complete the entire program.

Even so, I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to experience and accompany the young people on this

journey of faith. I also appreciate the flexibility, because, in the end, I believe the most important thing is one's determination to grow. When we have that determination, opportunities adjust to support us in this growth process.

I feel like I've grown a lot - not only as a person for others but also for myself. That's why I highly recommend this program to any young person who wants to deepen their faith and grow on their spiritual journey! "

-Haeyun



'The past few months have been challenging but through all that I've went through so far I could learn a lot. A lot about myself, things I hadn't realised before and what I should work on. By relating with different kind of people I learned to be more open minded and love all, even though it's not always easy. It's valuable to me to learn how to share the principle for the sake of my future family and the people I have around. Almost everyday we engage in interesting conversations that feed my curiosity. Frankly speaking it's not easy to stay committed at all times. Doubts arise which is normal but what's important to me is to trust in God's plan. It's what keeps me grounded. I'm really grateful to Heavenly Parent for providing me the opportunity to be here.'

-Katerina



'Before coming to Empower, Witnessing seemed to be something scary. Although I wanted it, I could not

force myself to it. However, basically since the beginning of our time here in the UK it has been in general a great experience for me. Very quickly I could get into the once scary thing of approaching people on the street. Also, my horizons are broadening - I gave many lectures to our youth on workshops, but now I got to chance to adapt, giving lectures to e.g. atheists or people from a Muslim background. I get challenged by questions that require me to put effort into connecting the Principle with the reality of this world.

As for the place where we are: The first thing is that I feel guided to be doing this right here - 45 years ago, my mother did Home Church in Wales, and often came to Stanton Fitzwarren for workshops. I feel this is no coincidence. Apart from that, I am amazed how multicultural Swindon is, it's a great experience and also gives a lot of opportunities. And finally, practically speaking, a very convenient thing is the language

All in all, I am very happy and grateful about doing this Witnessing mission here <3'

-Lawrence



'I had some nice experiences already and one of them with this homeless man to whom we started teaching the DP... at first I couldn't really see how could we, by teaching him the DP, help him. But once we started to invite him to come to our house and by keeping on investing lots of love we could actually see that he just wanted to keep on coming to our gatherings and meetings and being around us. As if there was kind of a spiritual magnet pulling him.

After some time, he was given a house by the government and right away (on the same morning that he received the good news) he shared it with us!! In that moment I truly understood how much impact we could have in such a short period of time in someone's life. To a point that it even felt like family and he felt this urge to share this special and somehow personal information.

I feel that all of this was possible through love. For the fact that we invested so much love, coming from our Heavenly Parents, we could then establish this genuine and beautiful connection with this man, Peter.

So through this past months I've been learning a lot about how to actually love different, regardless of their background or their situation. Each person that we approach has an immense potential, given by Heavenly Parents, and once I started realising that then it only makes sense that I invest and love each one of them as much as possible.'

-Erica

'Witnessing in Swindon has been my first time experiencing witnessing. I feel that I can grow my heart by meeting people from different backgrounds - for example atheists, Muslims or Christians - and learn how to see and most importantly love them from Heavenly Parent's point of view. It has also been a great opportunity to learn and practice how to live for the sake of others within our team through carrying out the household chores and supporting one another.

I can also see the Divine Principle more in action, after fundraising, this is the Foundation of substance, which is not only about me and Heavenly Parent, but about expanding horizontally through relationships with other people. And also it is a great experience that is connecting me to my parents and their generation, experiencing what they went through.'

-Bogi

'Witnessing in Swindon, UK has been a very dynamic and challenging time that has confronted me with many of my own limitations and the true meaning of witnessing and caring for other people. In many ways I have seen how limited I am in my capacity to love and care for people and my team. How hard it is sometimes to let go of myself but when I am able to do so, the beauty of what we're able to do as a team and how much we're able to truly bring hope and love into people's lives and to see that love reciprocated is something truly special.'

-Kristian