

Success Story 2

Mariam Michelle Malak: A Changed Woman

“In the midst of our differences, there are always things that unite us.”

Mariam Michelle Malak is a 24 year old woman. Malak grew up with her family in Sohag where she also gained her Bachelor degree in Business administration and is currently working on her master’s degree in Accounting. Her giving nature led her to take a career path in charitable work and thus she became a supervisor of illiteracy eradication projects in Sohag governorate.



Having been sheltered her whole life, Malak was the perfect example of a women with stifled potential. Nonetheless, conditions changed upon her participation in CRISP CDS project - Simulating the Egyptian Transition (SET III) held in Sohag in 2015. The workshop highlighted the utilization of drawing as a therapeutic tool of self-expression. It also emphasized the importance of setting goals and honoring values.

Assuming the role of a Journalist, She quickly came into direct confrontation with “the other”. Initially, she felt estranged by the unprecedented nature of the experience. She was instructed to wear someone else’s skin; which was a new experience for Malak. However, a couple of hours into the workshop, she had successfully crawled under the character’s skin and walked around in it.

Malak’s success was derived from her ability to maximize the lessons learnt from her experience in the simulation gaming workshop. Having been encouraged to leave her comfort zone and interact with people from different socioeconomic, cultural and most importantly religious backgrounds, she became familiar with various identity formations.

She went further in her journey of self-discovery to the extent that she did something she never thought she would do. She persuaded her parents to allow her to travel to Cairo: first with a group of her fellow workshop participants and later with Salah, a Muslim man - who also took part in the workshops.

Malak truly shines as someone with the ability to grow and change. She walked away from the simulation gaming experience, a changed person. She grew to appreciate diversity and overcome her fear of change. At the same time, she developed a new lens to view the world; one that allows her to regard humanitarian interaction as stemming from acceptance, coexistence and respect of others. Malak concludes saying that “in the midst of our differences, there are always things that unite us”.