

Vision Help

INTERNATIONAL CARE FOUNDATION

EVERY CHILD IS WANTED

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A YEAR FOR GOD
and for People
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UPDATES FROM THE PHILIPPINES
July to December 2024

ABOUT US

We are Vision Help, a non-profit foundation that has been working in the Philippines for over 10 years. We help people in need and rescue children from poverty, forced prostitution and human trafficking.

The protection of children and the improvement of their living conditions are central goals of our work in the Philippines, where every third child lives below the poverty line and is affected by exploitation and violence or forced prostitution.

Carsten Aust, a pastor and paramedic who has been doing humanitarian work in the Philippines since 1996, founded the foundation in 2011. Ten years after its founding, in 2021, the Philippine government awarded Vision Help as the best non-profit organization in the field of child and family assistance.



OUR VISION

A true home for every child.

OUR MISSION

To protect and promote the well-being of children in their communities by effective actions

WHAT WE DO

We help people in need to become healthy and independent. Our areas of work:

- Medical Outreach
- Disaster Relief Operations
- Education & Training for Children & Adults
- Mercy Ministry
- Residential Child-Care Center
- Secure Adoption Processing
- Church Ministry



OUR PROJECTS

EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIP

Educational Sponsorships provided to indigenous children in Apayao

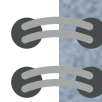
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MERCY MINISTRY

Day-care center, pre-school and soup kitchen in the slums of Tondo, Manila.

2



HOUSE OF HOPE CHILDREN'S HOME

in Antipolo, Rizal

3



VILLAGE OF HOPE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE & SCHOOL

in Morong, Rizal

4



CITYLIGHT CHURCH & SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Church ministries and educational sponsorships in Cebu

5





Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past months, we are moved by the lives touched and the positive changes that, together, we have been able to create. Your unwavering support has provided relief, education, and hope to children and families who might otherwise face uncertain futures.

At Vision Help, our mission is deeply rooted in Christian values of love, compassion, and justice. All that we do is motivated by the love of Jesus Christ, the love He showed on the cross for a hurting world filled with injustice and suffering. We are grateful to connect with people from all walks of life, united by a common desire to build a better, kinder world. Whether you join us out of faith, compassion, or simply a commitment to protect and nurture those in need, your support means the world to us and to those we serve.

In this issue, you'll read about children finding new opportunities, families reunited, and communities strengthened—all made possible through your generosity. Each story reflects your heart in action which brought hope to vulnerable children and families.

As we move into the Christmas season, we are especially reminded of the profound love and hope that this time of year brings. Christmas, a time when we celebrate the coming of Christ, is filled with reminders of generosity, kindness, and the beauty of giving. Just as His birth brought a message of peace and salvation, your support brings a similar message of hope to the children and families we work with. Through your acts of kindness, you are a part of this season's spirit, helping to bring light to lives that need it most. Each story in this issue, from children finding new opportunities to families reunited, is a testament to the impact of that love in action.

On a personal note, as the year 2024 comes to a close, I find myself reflecting with awe on our journey in missions here in Manila. Looking back over the past 28 years, I am deeply grateful for the countless experiences and the remarkable people I've had the privilege to meet along the way. This journey has not been without its challenges, but witnessing God's faithful hand guiding us through it all fills me with profound amazement. I am humbled by His goodness, even in the face of our shortcomings and the struggles we encounter in life.

Recently, a documentary highlighting various aspects of my life and ministry was released, and I warmly invite all who are interested to watch it.

As you read through this magazine, may you be blessed and encouraged, knowing that the work we do together is making a lasting impact.

Thank you for standing with us, for believing in our mission, and for helping us bring Jesus' light to so many darkened lives. We are honored to share this journey with you and are deeply grateful for all that you have made possible.

May this Christmas season bring you and your loved ones peace, joy, and blessings.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Carsten Aust

Director of Vision Help International Care Foundation



BACK TO THE *Family*

Many abandoned children secretly dream of being picked up by their parents one day. A dream that rarely comes true—except in a few exceptional cases.

For most of the children under our custody, it's undoubtedly a blessing to grow up in our care rather than with their relatives. However, in rare instances, we witness a happy ending with their families, such as when remorseful parents or loving relatives come forward.



ILLEGAL ADOPTION PREVENTED

Rhiana's birth was unplanned. Her mother, just 19 years old, was completely overwhelmed by the unexpected pregnancy. Out of fear of her father's reaction, she handed the newborn over to an unknown couple—just one day after the birth. When this couple tried to register the baby girl as their own, the social welfare authorities suspected an illegal adoption and took custody of the newborn baby girl. On December 21, 2023, she was brought to our House of Hope. Rhiana's mother regretted her rash decision and, together with the child's father, fought to have their daughter back with them legally. After a thorough evaluation of their suitability, the parents were allowed to take their nearly one-year-old daughter home on August 11.

DEPORTED AS A BABY

Shamsa was born in Dubai in 2017. Her mother abandoned the infant near a shop. The police found the baby girl, determined her nationality, but could not identify her mother. Consequently, the baby was deported and arrived at the House of Hope on June 30, 2018. Presently, Shamsa's mother is already back in the Philippines but does not want her child. However, the child's uncle and auntie did. When they learned about Shamsa, they fought for the custody of their niece and during the decision-making process, they did not miss a visitation schedule for her and successfully built a close bond. Finally, last August 24, the seven-year-old was able to move in with her uncle and aunt with great excitement and happiness.



What is most important, is the happiness of each child and their well-being so we are happy to be the temporary family to some of them and we definitely love reuniting families back. **Every child deserves loving families.**

LITTLE FIGHTER

Angelika is just nine years old and faces numerous disabilities. Yet, she serves as an inspiring example of how love and care can positively transform a life.

Around the age of four, children at our House of Hope typically move to the Village of Hope. By then, they are usually quite independent and require less individual support. Angelika, however, moved in 2023 at the age of eight. Lovingly called "Angel," she needed significantly more assistance than our other children initially due to her mobility and vision impairments.

NEGLECT WITH SEVERE CONSEQUENCES

Angel's life story is similar to that of many children in the Philippines but with more severe consequences. Her mother had an unplanned pregnancy, and the father disappeared before Angel's birth. In despair, the mother turned to drugs and began selling them to maintain her addiction.

The newborn little girl was then left alone in a tiny makeshift shack. When she was just over two years old, her mother was arrested for dealing and because of this Angel was consequently rescued then brought to use by the social services.

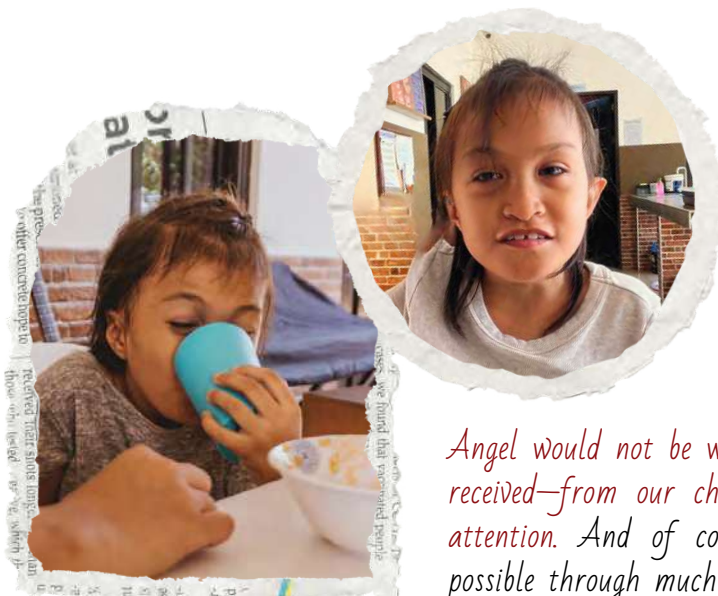
Angel had deformed limbs and couldn't straighten her arms. Doctors also diagnosed her with a vision impairment. Whether these conditions were caused by her mother's drug use, malnutrition, or neglect, we could not determine.



MOTIVATING LOVE

Despite her inability to walk and her need for extensive care, it quickly became clear that Angel was a fighter. Against all odds, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a great miracle that she learned to walk and eat independently. And her progress continues. Surrounded by our dedicated team at the Village of Hope, Angel has grown increasingly independent this year!

Angel would not be where she is today without the extensive support she received—from our children, staff, and volunteers who gave her special attention. And of course, heartfelt thank you to all who made this possible through much prayers and support!



EVERY CHILD IS **WANTED**

In August and September, we welcomed four newborns into our care. We believe every person on this earth is created by God, and we rejoice in those wonderful additions! There is so much love to give.

An unplanned pregnancy is often a shock to the mother and can be devastating for the child. Regardless of how you view it, the distress in those situations is deeply troubling but we aim to alleviate such pain.



ABUSED BY OWN FATHER

Zairie Ezra's mother, Karylle, was just 14 years old when she gave birth to him. The teenager was herself a victim. During the COVID-19 pandemic, her father lost his job and began abusing her. When Karylle's mother discovered the pregnancy, she turned to social services for help. After the baby's birth, he was taken into our care on August 27.

DISCARDED IN A PLASTIC BAG

A baby boy was found wrapped in a plastic bag on an empty lot by local residents. His umbilical cord and birth blood had attracted ants, which tormented him for who knows how long he was there. Followed by several days of stay in the hospital, we took Ezra in on September 16 and gave him his name: "Ezra Amias" which signifies that he is loved and that God helped him.

Then and now



HOMELESS AND ADDICTED

Just two days after Ezra, Jessica joined us. Her parents were scavengers, homeless, and addicted to drugs. When her mother exhibited severe mental health issues after the birth, the assigned social worker decided to place the three-day-old baby in our care.

SEARCHING FOR A SAFE HOME

Five days later, Miguel's mother entrusted us with our most recent baby resident. The 26-year-old mother revealed little about herself or the seven-day-old boy. She had become pregnant unexpectedly with her boyfriend, who did not want the child.

Feeling unstable and unable to provide for him, she searched online for a place where her child would be cared for—and so, she found Vision Help.

As heartbreaking as these stories are, we focus on the positive that we can do.

All these children will grow up loved in our care.

And for that, we are grateful!

We are always seeking sponsors for our children. Would you like to support us in this way? You can find all the information here

vhicf.org/partner-with-us/be-a-sponsor/





UNDER CONSTRUCTION

In the Philippines, child trafficking, domestic violence, and child labor are widespread. We work diligently to rescue more children from this suffering.

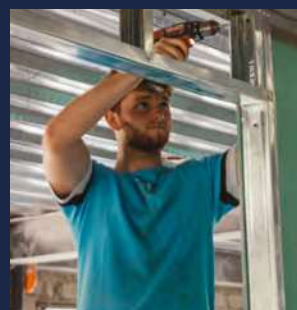
We look at the children in our care with both joy and sorrow. While we are grateful to offer a happy home to 107 children under our protection, we see the plight of so many others on the streets of Manila.

ROOM FOR MORE BABIES

For this reason, construction is once again underway at the Village of Hope. Since April, a new House of Hope has been under construction to accommodate an additional 50 abused babies and toddlers up to the age of four. Expanding our capacity is urgently needed. In the past few months alone, we have taken in four newborns and have reached the limits of our current House of Hope.

DILIGENT HELPERS

We are especially thankful for the many helpers from Germany and Canada who have supported us financially and through hard work on the construction site in recent months. Despite challenging conditions due to typhoons and heavy rainfall, the roof is now complete, and interior work is underway.



Donors and volunteers with skills in craftsmanship are always welcome! Are you interested? Feel free to contact us!



A YEAR FOR GOD AND FOR PEOPLE

Germany encourages young people to engage in a year of voluntary service after finishing school. Many Christian youth take this opportunity to dedicate their time to serving God and others and this year, seven German volunteers came to help with our work.

We regularly host volunteers sent by our partner organization APCM from Germany. Since September, two young people have been contributing at the House of Hope, two more at our Mercy Ministry project branch, and three others at the Village of Hope. Their help is invaluable!

LETTING GOD USE THEM

Irina, one of the APCM volunteers, is helping at the Village of Hope. The 19-year-old says the introductory week showed her how much investment is given to children under our care. "I'm looking forward to the coming months and am curious to see how God will use me at the Village of Hope while also working in my heart."



MOVED BY THE NEED

Eleni works in our daycare center in the slums of Tondo. The 18-year-old shares enthusiastically: "We've only been here for about three weeks, but the children already hold a special place in our hearts." When Eleni visited some of the children in their homes, she was deeply moved by the conditions: "It's heavy to know that we can just return to our apartment, take a shower, change into fresh clothes, and sleep in a dry bed, while these people don't even have that."

Despite this, she felt awe of God and realized his greatness when she heard these people share how Jesus transformed their lives. She was really excited about the months ahead.



These helpers are a tremendous support to us! They not only assist our staff with daily tasks but also bring fresh ideas and energy to our projects through their unique gifts and skills.

Thank you for that!

Would you also like to volunteer with us?

Reach out to us via email at

volunteers@vhicf.org

HEAD OVER HEELS IN LOVE

Anyone who has ever been in love knows you're willing to give everything for the one you love. Our volunteer, Agnes Kriwolapow, feels the same way about our children. That's why she has decided to stay!



What was originally planned as a ten-day mission trip in April 2023 turned into a calling for Agnes in the Philippines. The 27-year-old recalls her first encounter at the Village of Hope:

"I got to know the children a little and was immediately impressed by the work being done here. I had an instant desire to return for a longer period."



TEACHER, MENTOR AND SISTER

Over the past months, God's spirit encouraged Agnes to stay indefinitely.

"I get to be a mentor and an Ate (older sister) to the children here in the village."

As a German who grew up in Canada, she speaks excellent English, which she now teaches at the Christian school in the Village of Hope, along with music and art.

The young woman is head over heels in love—with our children and the mission. She says enthusiastically:

"It's truly beautiful to witness the spiritual and emotional growth of the children. But my time here isn't just enriching for the children—it's also helping me grow."

Agnes is certain God has led her to us and is eager to see what He has in store for her next.

We are grateful to have Agnes as a long-term member of our team!

FROM TEN DAYS TO FOURTEEN MONTHS

Three months later, the assistant branch manager of an insurance company returned with friends for a one-month stay. That one month eventually turned into 14 months!

Agnes admits it was the familiar faces of the children she loved and the staff that led her to take this step.



Are you considering being part of one of our projects for a certain period or have questions about it? Feel free to email us at volunteers@vhcf.org

WALKING AGAIN

For almost six months, Jake eagerly awaited the day of his surgery. It was his ticket to a life without a mobility impairment and a step out of poverty. Throughout the journey, he placed his trust in God.

On August 13, the big day finally arrived. The long-anticipated surgery was scheduled. Before the six-hour procedure, a team of various specialists thoroughly examined him to ensure he was strong enough. Once everything was confirmed, Jake was taken into the operating room.

A GIFT FROM GOD

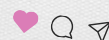
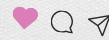
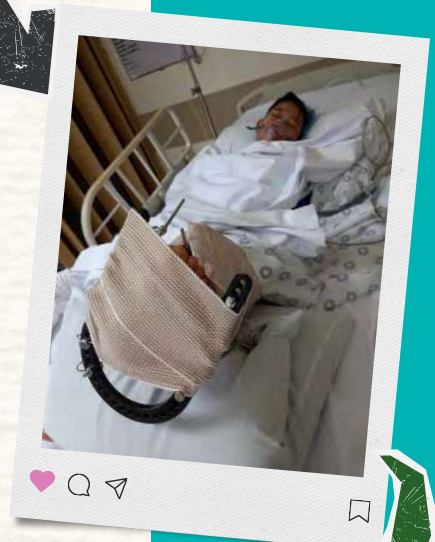
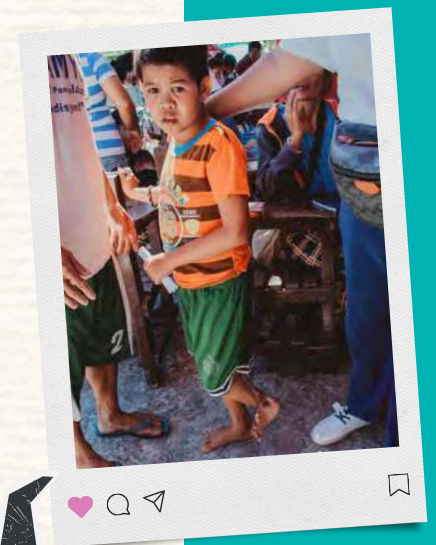
The 14-year-old endured a lot leading up to that pivotal moment, including almost six months of separation from his parents. Our team first met Jake and his family during a medical outreach mission in late February in the Bansud region of Mindoro Island. After suffering a severe burn injury as a baby, Jake was only able to move with difficulty using crutches, as his left leg was completely deformed. We welcomed Jake into the Village of Hope to facilitate his treatment in Manila right after that outreach. For Jake and his impoverished yet deeply faithful family, this opportunity felt like a gift from God.

PLACING THE SURGERY IN GOD'S HANDS

Both Jake and his parents, who traveled especially to be with him, entrusted the outcome of the surgery to God. The operation went well! Since mid-September, the brave boy has been in rehabilitation, diligently working on his recovery. As of December, he can slowly put weight on his newly operated leg.

SEIZING THE CHANCE FOR A NEW LIFE

Jake firmly believes that God has given him a chance at a new life through this surgery, and he's determined to make the most of it. The teenager is ambitious and dreams of overcoming poverty. We are committed to supporting him on this journey and while he is on recovery, Jake remains with us at the Village of Hope to pursue a quality education, paving the way for a future college degree and beyond.



READY, SET, LEARN!

On July 29 after summer break, loud laughter and the stomping of children's feet marked the first day of school.

Both teachers and students could hardly wait for classes to begin! What a good sign, isn't it?

Every student at our Christian school on the Village of Hope is motivated and likes to learn. We strive to make education as accessible and enjoyable as possible to help each child reach their full potential.

To achieve this, we've implemented a new teaching model. Each class now has a dedicated teacher responsible for all subjects, and we've also given students more responsibility for maintaining order in their classrooms.

The plan worked: we've observed improved focus and more active participation in lessons! This motivates us to continue with this approach.



A SPECIAL CLASS FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN

However, not every child thrives in a traditional classroom setting. Some require more attention and support in their learning journey. We currently enrolled four such students in SPED classes (Special Education). One of them is Jerueh, who has been with us since he was just three months old after his mother sold him for a mere €80.

Earlier this year, a doctor diagnosed the six-year-old with developmental delays in speech, motor skills, cognition, and social and emotional abilities. Our goal is not only to provide Jerueh with a loving home but also to support his development. The SPED class makes this possible, and we're already seeing progress. Jerueh eagerly participates in activities like painting and drawing, which help improve his motor and cognitive skills. We look forward to continuing to walk alongside him as he grows.



*We are deeply grateful to everyone who helps us operate this school.
You play a vital role in ensuring our children receive
the best possible education!*

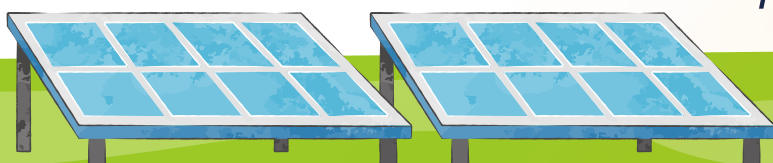


THERE'S STILL MORE WORK TO DO

Although our school is up and running, thanks to generous donors and helpers, we still have a few goals to achieve. For our computer lab, we've received 15 donated laptops from Canada and Germany but need 10 more to function optimally. Additionally, we'd like to provide school uniforms for our children.

The largest remaining project involves the roof. We plan to install a solar power system to reduce future operating costs and mitigate power outages. To make this happen, we need €50,000.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US COMPLETE OUR SCHOOL? FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO US VIA EMAIL!





GROWING AND THRIVING

For plants to grow and bear fruit, they need the right conditions. And the same is true for people—especially for the residents of slums in Manila who we are dedicated to helping.

Ivan is a remarkable example of this growth, now beginning to bear fruit. Since September, the 21-year-old has been studying mechanical engineering. While Ivan is incredibly hardworking, he could not have achieved this milestone on his own. A math enthusiast, he has been one of our sponsored children since 2015.

Ivan has never met his father, and his mother left him. Raised by his grandparents, who struggle to make ends meet selling street food, Ivan has faced many challenges. To support the household, he would work little part-time jobs while attending school, yet he never neglected his studies or his involvement with his church's youth group. His dream is to create a better life for himself and his grandparents. We're excited to see what other fruits Ivan's life will bear.

NURTURING BODY AND SOUL

Ivan is just one of many lives we've been able to uplift in Tondo—thanks to the generosity of many donors and sponsors! Our efforts include weekly children's feeding programs, operating a preschool, and providing spiritual opportunities such as Bible studies for the parents of sponsored children, church services, and youth activities.

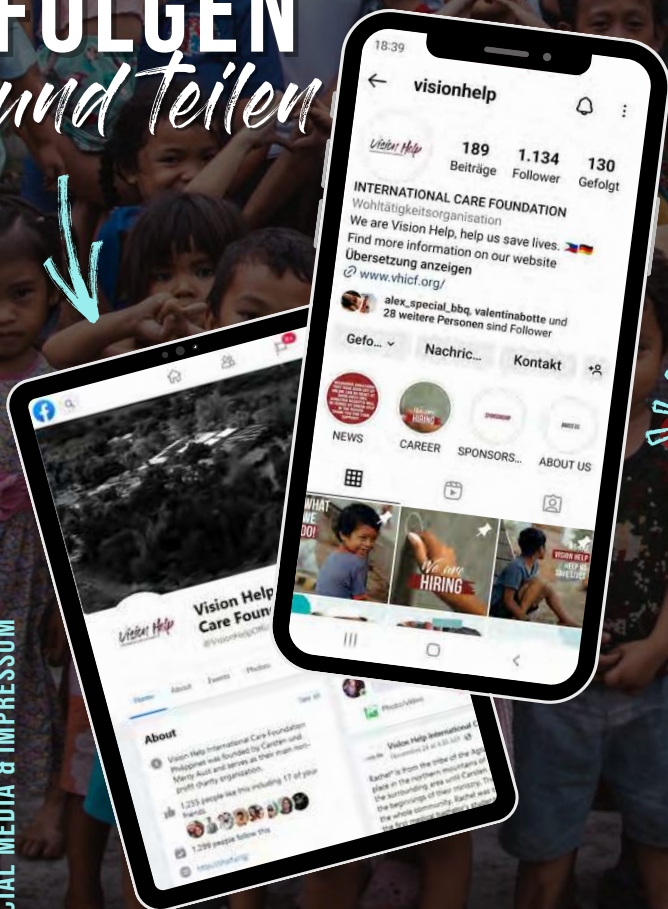
Recently, we have expanded our outreach with a new initiative: a soup kitchen operating four days a week for children and adults in need. Initially, there are already 25 to 30 people who regularly come to have their meal daily!

We are deeply grateful to every sponsor and we want to emphasize how crucial your support is.

***Would you like to make a lasting difference in someone's life?
Become a sponsor! Feel free to reach out to us to learn more.***

BITTE FOLGEN und teilen

SOCIAL MEDIA & IMPRESSUM



TEILE UNSER MAGAZIN

Erhalte kostenfrei Magazine in gewünschter Anzahl von uns zum Weitergeben. Ob bei Nachbarn, Freunden, einer Kirche oder beim Bäcker nebenan. Nur gemeinsam können wir uns den Herausforderungen von Armut stellen, Leben retten und diese nachhaltig verändern. Bestellungen mit Anzahl und Lieferadresse unter: mail@vhicf.org

SPENDEN ALS UNTERNEHMEN

Als Unternehmen soziale Verantwortung übernehmen, dem Corporate-Social-Responsibility-Gedanken gerecht werden und Gutes tun? Wir helfen, Menschen in Not nachhaltig zu helfen und dies Kunden, Partnern und Mitarbeitern zu zeigen. Als gemeinnützige Organisation stellen wir steuermindernde Spendenbescheinigungen aus und unterstützen dabei, soziales Engagement, bekannt zu machen. Kontakt: mail@vhicf.org

ACHTUNG: UNSER NEUES SPENDENKONTO!

Wir freuen uns, dass seit einiger Zeit direkt auf unser Vision Help Spendenkonto in Deutschland gespendet werden kann. Wir bitten daher alle Spender und Paten, die für unsere Arbeit noch an unseren ehemaligen Partner Mastering Your Life e.V. spenden, zu unserem Konto zu wechseln oder Spenden auf www.VHICF.org neu einzurichten. Lastschriften und Kreditkartenspenden müssen per E-Mail an office@mastering-your-life.de oder per Post (Mastering Your Life, Renoirstr. 32, 04157 Leipzig) gekündigt werden. Vielen Dank!

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