It's a matter of circumstance. I didn't think people made friends or choose people because they are from certain types of schools.

“I don't think people who live in the same environment will have a lot in common. They may have the same interests but it's not necessarily the case. People who are similar in age and environment may not have the same interests or similar personalities. I think people need to be open to new experiences and not just stick to their comfort zones. I don't think there are clear boundaries between public school and private school students. People who are in different environments will have different experiences and opportunities. It's important to be open to new experiences and not just stick to your comfort zone.”

“Many people are put off when they find out that you have a big house and judge you based on your house. If I were to throw a house party, I would find it easier to invite my immediate neighbors.”

Study method: It's all in a name

“One thing people assume is that if you go to a good school, you are good. But it's not necessarily the case. It depends on the school and the environment. People need to be open to new experiences and not just stick to their comfort zones.”

“People need to be open to new experiences and not just stick to their comfort zones.”

“For example, if you go to a good school, you are good. But it's not necessarily the case. It depends on the school and the environment.”

“People need to be open to new experiences and not just stick to their comfort zones.”

“People need to be open to new experiences and not just stick to their comfort zones.”
When a company director meets an ex-convict

Anelia Teng
Education Correspondent

As a 24-year-old, Mr Shaun Lim's social circle was limited to friends from his training at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and his military service, where he was posted to a barracks in the south of the island.

"It was quite a different experience from basic military training and Special Forces training School. There were the Hokkien-speaking guys, it was almost like (living in) a separate world. After that, life was not the same. You had a lot more freedom," Mr Lim, 36, says. But beyond the army, hardly any opportunity arose for Mr Lim - whose father is between jobs and mother is a bank manager - to make friends with people from other types of work.

Mr Lim took part in a few inter-school camps as part of the National Boatswain's Mate Corps when he was at NUS. "We were put in groups of people from different schools from our geographical area, but there was still a sense of distance with friends from your own school," he says. But in the army, he made friends from other national service units as well as other soldiers who were just as strong as those you form from studying together for a year or more. "At NUS, you were in a bubble, but in the army you understand people form stronger connections with others then they are in their future schooling years. Educators; policy expert John Tan says the army's training helps in enrolling people in the right direction. 'With the kind of people who join the army, you can't always guide them, but you can point them in the right direction.'

REACHING OUT BEYOND FRIEND CIRCLE

Mr Joel Lee and Madam Lorinne Kon, 52, are close friends who enjoy each other's company, often reminiscing about their past. They first met at the age of 24 in 1990. Mr Lee is married to two children, lives in a three-bedroom condominium in Balestier, and Madam Kon is privileged. She was chauffeured to school as a child in the 1980s, received an allowance of $180 from her parents to cover weekly bowling sessions and stayed with friends when her father was posted to another town.

But Mr Lim - an only child who was brought up by his grandparents and is the only person in his family to complete a degree - had no such opportunities.

Indeed, Mr Lim's first extended experience of people from other backgrounds came when he undertook a stint at Singapore Prison Service (SPS) as a prison visiting officer in 2014.

"We never put in groups of people from different schools from our geographical area, but there was still a sense of distance with friends from your own school," he says. But in the army, he made friends from other national service units as well as other soldiers who were just as strong as those you form from studying together for a year or more." At NUS, you were in a bubble, but in the army you understand people form stronger connections with others then they are in their future schooling years. Educators; policy expert John Tan says the army's training helps in enrolling people in the right direction. 'With the kind of people who join the army, you can't always guide them, but you can point them in the right direction.'

Mr Joel Lee and Madam Lorinne Kon, 52, are close friends who enjoy each other's company, often reminiscing about their past. They first met at the age of 24 in 1990. Mr Lee is married to two children, lives in a three-bedroom condominium in Balestier, and Madam Kon is privileged. She was chauffeured to school as a child in the 1980s, received an allowance of $180 from her parents to cover weekly bowling sessions and stayed with friends when her father was posted to another town.

But Mr Lim - an only child who was brought up by his grandparents and is the only person in his family to complete a degree - had no such opportunities.

Indeed, Mr Lim's first extended experience of people from other backgrounds came when he undertook a stint at Singapore Prison Service (SPS) as a prison visiting officer in 2014.

"We never put in groups of people from different schools from our geographical area, but there was still a sense of distance with friends from your own school," he says. But in the army, he made friends from other national service units as well as other soldiers who were just as strong as those you form from studying together for a year or more. "At NUS, you were in a bubble, but in the army you understand people form stronger connections with others then they are in their future schooling years. Educators; policy expert John Tan says the army's training helps in enrolling people in the right direction. 'With the kind of people who join the army, you can't always guide them, but you can point them in the right direction.'