

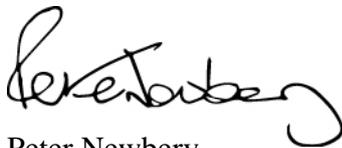
July 2015

My dear friend,

Ah Yeung has written a short account of his life which I attach below. It really is an understatement. If you read between the lines, you can easily see that he was in fact a hardcore triad member. If you meet him in person it is even clearer – he is heavily tattooed. But what is also clear from his story is how through his own determination and persistence he was able to turn his life around and start again. He is still working in City Challenge. The last time I met him he was instructing a group of expatriate youngsters and asking his colleagues to teach him the English words he needed. Here is the boy who hated school and learned nothing! We are very proud of him and the many other young people like him who pass through Youth Outreach and go out into life with renewed confidence.

I appeal to you make a generous gift so that we can continue to reach out to these young people who have begun life being labeled as failures but have such great potential.

Sincerely



Peter Newbery  
Executive Director



贊助人：梁唐青儀女士 Patron: Mrs. Regina Leung

My name is Ah-Yeung and I am 20 years old this year. I have been working in City Challenge as a Program Assistant for over a year now.

I grew up in a good family but I was the youngest child and the only boy. As a result, my mother tended to spoil me. When I went to Primary School I was not able to keep up with the lessons and so my results were not very good and I gradually lost interest in school. I had to go to school each day but I spent my time playing around or sleeping in class. The teachers gave up on me and left me alone. In the end I got through primary school pretty aimlessly and decided that I didn't want to go to school any more.

After I dropped out of school, I just hung around in the housing estate where I lived and gradually got to know a gang of friends who were not so good. Out of curiosity and pressure from my new friends I got into the habit of smoking. Their carefree attitude to life fascinated and so we eventually became "brothers" and they began to include me in all their activities and outings. Being with them gave me a feeling of being alive, very different from my feelings at school and I felt very happy to be with this group of "brothers" all the time.

Together with them I began experience things I had never thought about before and my character began to change. My behavior got worse and worse. Breaking rules became breaking the law. Smoking became drug taking. Living in this "black" culture I regularly took part in fights or throwing red paint on property as a threat. My home became like a hotel. I only went home to sleep and never spoke to my mother and father and so our relationship gradually got worse. In my way of thinking their care and worry was nagging. My only response was to ignore them. In the end I was arrested during a gang fight and sentenced to 18 months on probation. And that is how I came to Youth Outreach.



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In the beginning at Youth Outreach I passed every day without goals or any kind of direction in life. Fortunately, one of the social workers would stay behind after he finished his shift to chat with me and take an interest in what I was doing. If I wanted to talk he was always willing to stay behind and chat and stretch out a helping hand when needed. Eventually he helped me get a job in a godown. Although the work was hard my mother supported me and each day would prepare a lunch for me and bring it from Tai Wai to Shaukiwan so that I could have a good meal each day. Her unreserved care and support moved me very much and I was so grateful. Slowly I began to have some hope for my life and began to have confidence that I could get out this hopeless, dark world.

Almost by chance I was recommended to take part in one of the Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) programs at City Challenge. Originally, my aim was just to enjoy the program and have a good time but as we got further into the program I began to see the importance of setting goals and taking an interest in things. The practical part was very tough. We had to do each activity personally. Slowly, I could see my own value and fix my own goals. I decided that I wanted to be an ABC Instructor.

I felt so happy and greatly honored that after the end of the program I was offered the opportunity to join the staff of City Challenge. Although the work is tiring, each day, apart from learning theory and leading young people in learning skills, it is also necessary to do administration and paper work. We must also deal with emergencies and this is very challenging. When I joined City Challenge I fixed a goal for my self – within six months I would learn to lead a small group on my own. I have done this.

Although other young people who originally joined the program with me have already left I



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am very happy that I have found my own piece of the “sky.” Here I have the opportunity to get a professional certificate and prepare myself for the future. My experiences have enabled me to change my way of thinking. I don’t want to fall into the same old trap again. I hope that my new self can show people that I am capable. I once heard a saying that made a deep impression on me “Life is like a heart machine! It has high points and low points or even is flat but in life we can always make choices about our life.” I thank City Challenge for letting me choose to grow, enabling me to add color to my life.