

October 2017

My dear friend,

An exciting event! I was very pleased recently, when I heard that a group of our Hip Hop dancers had been chosen to go to Germany and Holland to take part in Hip Hop competitions. It was particularly pleasing because none of these young people had been out of Hong Kong before. The cost of their stay in Europe was to be met by the German Govt. But the cost of the plane tickets and their personal expenses would have to be found by themselves – quite a challenge! They set to with the enthusiasm of youth and eventually raised the money they needed by performing in pedestrian precincts on holidays and accepting donations for their performances from passers-by and other well-wishers. They have just got back and are still very excited about their new experiences. As you can see from the brief account written by Ah-Chek, the crew leader, the challenges they met and the new horizons that have been opened up for them have really helped them to grow both in terms of their self-confidence and social skills. It was certainly an experience they will never forget. Congratulations to them all.

Sincerely



Peter Newbery

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This is really beyond my wildest dream. We've got it made. Thank you everybody.

We are members of the School of Hip Hop dance team, called Perfusion Faith. Together with Ming and Shadow, the other two members also from the School of Hip Hop, there are six of us. We went to Wiesbaden, Germany, interacting with German youth for 2 weeks. Our main activities included dancing, graffiti, differences in culture, and self-challenge. Besides these activities, we would go Holland for 4 days to take part in an international dancing competition called IBE2017, in the hope that through competition and work, we could interact with world-class dancers and broaden our view.

I remember one year ago, when the social worker in School of Hip Hop told us that we might have a chance to go to Germany to interact and to take part in a world-class competition. At that moment we felt so excited and full of expectation that we had never dreamt of. But at the same time, we became nervous and worrying, because our school results were poor, and our standard of English was really bad. Having to communicate with foreigners worried us, and we became pessimistic. At the same time, since our dancing skill was not really good, we would be laughed at. This is exactly how I felt when we first learned to dance. That I would be laughed at worried me. I became pessimistic and shy, like an "otaku". Also people's glances worried me. I refused to do new things because I could not face failure. Or sometimes I would show off to cover my cowardice.

After joining the dance classes, I sometimes managed to do very difficult steps which really satisfied myself, and gave me confidence. I suddenly realized that I could be so good. At the same time, because the School of Hip Hop and Youth Outreach believed in "Positive Culture", the staff took an appreciative attitude and would give us a lot of praises and encouragement. So we dared to do more, and no longer feared failure or being ridiculed. Our social workers and teaching staff told us to have team spirit, and had to voice out whatever that was in our mind, learning how to communicate, to understand, to tolerate and to accept. It was difficult at the beginning, but we understood that things such as choreography and preparation for competition need voicing out. By and by we learned to change our attitude, a positive attitude that would face all problems. So, with this, we would solve our perplexity of having to face the trip to Germany. We would discuss together and prepare together. Now we can say good-bye to fear for failure, pessimism, and listlessness.

So now in Germany, we could use our limited vocabulary to converse with the German kids. When we failed to express ourselves, we used body language or found the right words from the dictionary. Although we had phobia for heights and water, we took part in tree climbing and boating. In Holland we entered the IBE competition. Even though we had to face world-class competitors, we pushed ourselves forward to join the "CYPHER", that is, to dance around the competitors. In the workshop hours, we initiated questions and learned as much as we could. This interaction really broadened our view on new things and in dancing. To Youth Outreach and to the German Consulate General, we have to say thank you!

Translated by Stephanie Choi