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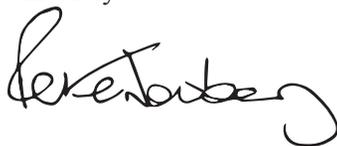
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March 2019

My dear friend

I would like to introduce you to one of our “superstars.” His street name is Cha-cha. He first came to us shortly after we opened the original “Hangout” in Kwun Tong in 2002. We had met several Hip Hop crews dancing on the street who were constantly being moved on by police because of complaints about the noise from nearby residents. We told them they could come to the Hangout and that is when we first met Cha-cha. He was a school drop-out and had been moving from one dead-end job to another, experimenting with drugs with his friends. But he loved to dance. After we started the “School of Hip Hop.” We employed him as an instructor. He has been with us ever since! He is now “the Man” – Senior Instructor. He has won innumerable international prizes for competitions around the Asia-Pacific region. From time to time he has taken no-paid leave to go to the United States, taking part in competitions and touring around. Whenever he meets me now at Youth Outreach, he always gives me a big smile and, chats with me in English - some school drop-out! I have asked him to write his own story and assume that he will be somewhat modest about his achievements. But don’t forget where he began!

Sincerely



Peter Newbery

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Hello, my name is Kong Mun Chai, nicknamed Cha Cha. In 2018, I was fortunate and honoured to receive the “5th Youth Dream Makers Award”, given to me by The Youth Dreamers Association. I thank those who nominated me and the society that gave me this recognition. The following is the story of my life in the past umpteen years. I thank Youth Outreach for the training and encouragement with which I become what I am. I believe in dream. With effort to strive, my dream would come true.

While I was in secondary school, I was considered an athlete. I took part in track and field, football, basketball, lion dance, and others. I represented my school in these competitions and won many medals. But these games did not satisfy me. In the end I lost my effort in school work and at Form 4, I dropped out from school.

I had gone astray. I was recruited by the triad. To pursuit excitement, I started taking drugs. One day, by chance I came across people doing break dance in front of the Space Museum. I found the dance very smart and challenging and fell in love with it at first sight. And then I went every weekend with friends to watch them dancing and eventually I gathered all my courage to ask the leader, ‘Could you teach me how to do breakdance?’ So, my breakdance career began which changed my life forever.

I was poorly educated, but I was really in need of a job with higher pay. I had tried many different jobs such as casual labourers at building site, decoration workers, street sweepers, transportation workers and other similar jobs. I did these jobs so that I had an income. At that time, no matter how tired I was after work. I would go to practice dancing, because it was the only thing I liked. I was the happiest in those days because dancing helped to relieve the pressure, and with it I found myself.

In July 2002, a 24-hour youth centre, called The Hangout opened at Youth Outreach. I knew some of the staff in the centre. They were all interested in street dancing. So I was attracted by the centre. After practicing there for half a year, I learned that the Hangout was recruiting Programme Assistant. I tried to get recruited hoping to get more time to practice, and after three interviews, I got the job.

Because of my love for breakdance I worked part-time as Youth Ambassador. I tried very hard to show my prowess. Soon I was promoted to full-time assistant. In 2004, I became a dancer in the Hip-Hop School that was founded in the centre of Youth Outreach. Later on I became a full time dancer.

Of course the way I chased after dancing was never easy because I only received a third of what I had earned before, with which I could only keep myself without being able to give some to my parents. They felt unhappy and they could not understand my passion to chase my dream. So our relationship became very tense for a while.

To show that I had not chosen wrongly, I worked very hard, hoping step by step. I could fulfil my ideal that dancing will be my career. From 2004, I started from being a dancer to be promoted to Assistant Instructor, and then Instructor and finally Senior Instructor. From 2016, I became the Assistant Center-In-Charge, and in 2017, I took part in training the Youth Olympic Game, Breaking Dance Team, hopefully to give them a future.

During these fourteen years, I represented Hong Kong to take part in World Competitions of street dancing. Luckily, I won prizes in Hong Kong and in world competitions. To broaden my understanding of dancing, to make myself more professional and more diverse, and with the help of scholarship, I went to the United State to study a "3 months International Student Visa Program" from the Broadway Dance Centre. I also studied at the Open University for Professional Certificate in Stage Performance. Now I am studying for a bachelor degree Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing in the Open U.

In these umpteen years, the road was not easy. I learned perseverance which gave me the strength to upgrade myself, to teach how to react with people, to give me the skill to communicate with them and to enhance my pupils' potential and how to lead a team to go further. These are the things that I had never thought I could do. At last, I want to take this opportunity to share with your my motto, that is "I rather be a piece of grass in bitter wind than a spirit in a greenhouse". You only have to dream and act, you can become a legend of your own.

Written by Kong Mun Chai



Translated by Choi Poon Yeuk Tong