



友誼跨越界限 「最佳老友」結伴闖美

在很多人眼中，智障人士往往難於表達自己，所以難以與健全人士建立友誼。「香港最佳老友」運動藉著舉辦不同活動，為傷健人士建立「一對一」的友誼，希望智障人士可以找到他們的「固定朋友」，香港教育大學生歐芷芊就透過「最佳老友」活動認識了她的「固定朋友」—才俊學校老友大使劉思思，兩人一見如故，不但合力設計校內的聖誕攤位，更一同到美國參加「最佳老友」的活動，為彼此增添難忘回憶。

初次接觸 投契成「最佳老友」

歐芷芊憶述在一次機緣下參加了「香港最佳老友」運動，「那時大學剛巧有宣傳，推廣與智障人士做朋友，想想之前沒有接觸過智障人士，所以就透過這個機會，看看有什麼義工活動可以參與。」雖然「香港最佳老友」運動主張一對一的友誼配對，但芷芊與思思事前並沒有經過刻意配對，「因為我們比較年輕，所以能否成為朋友，真的要看性格『夾唔夾』，所以我們在探訪時都是自由選擇朋友的。經過了幾次探訪後，交談多了，接觸多了，不經不覺就成為了朋友。」

「最佳拍檔」迎接不同挑戰

思思雖然是一位輕度智障人士，但芷芊說她的性格比自己還要冷靜，「思思性格並不像一個小朋友，她很會照顧身邊的人，我很喜歡和她相處，因為她很喜歡笑。」的確，在訪問中，思思每每談不上三句話，臉上便出現笑容。當被問到和芷芊相處的感覺時，思思有點難為情地說，「開心囉！」兩人去年拍檔為「老友鬼鬼」第三屆共融故事演繹比賽決賽擔任司儀，芷芊笑言思思的表現比她更淡定，「我很怕比賽中的『過場』時間太長，不知道要講些什麼，但思思卻總不會詞窮，有她在，我就會覺得很安心。」



香港「最佳老友」闖花旗國

除了擔任活動司儀外，她們去年更不約而同被選成為「香港最佳老友」的代表，遠赴美國出席 2018「國際最佳老友」領袖會議。當芷芊知道和思思一同出席這個會議時，她感到非常高興，「很捧！感覺就是和一個很熟的朋友去旅行一樣。」除了跟世界各地的代表交流外，思思更要在會議分享她參與「最佳老友」的感想，「事前有點緊張，但練習後就對自己有信心了，分享完畢後更收到來自其他地方代表所寫的鼓勵卡，令我感到非常鼓舞。」芷芊和思思倆都認為參與「香港最佳老友」計劃，不但令她們成長不少，同時亦結識了一位要好的朋友。



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Friendship beyond the Boundaries - “Best Buddies” Enjoy US Trip Together

Many people think that it is difficult to be friends with persons with intellectual disabilities because they have difficulty in expressing themselves to ordinary people. The “Best Buddies Hong Kong” Movement hopes that persons with intellectual disabilities can make “regular friendships” with ordinary people through organized “one-on-one” friendship activities. Through such activities, Au Chi Qian from the Education University of Hong Kong met Lau Si Si, the Best Buddies ambassador of Choi Jun School. They soon became acquainted with each other and not only designed the Christmas booth on Chi Qian’s campus together, but they also went to the United States to participate in “Best Buddies” activities there, giving each other unforgettable memories.

Became “Best Buddies” on First Meeting

Au Chi Qian recalled that it was by chance, she participated in the “Best Buddies Hong Kong” Movement. “The university just happened to have a campaign to promote making friends with persons with intellectual disabilities, and I had never been in contact with such persons before, so I took the opportunity to volunteer for the activities.” Although the “Hong Kong Best Buddies” Movement advocates one-on-one friendships, there was no deliberate matchmaking between Chi Qian and Si Si. “Because we are young, whether we become friends or not, really depends on our characters and whether we have a common language. We were free to choose who to approach during the visits and we imperceptibly drew closer over several visits.”

“Best Buddies” Meet Different Challenges

Although Si Si is a person with mild intellectual disabilities, she is calmer in temperament than Chi Qian. “Her character is not like a child. She will take care of the people around her. I like to be with her because she is always laughing.” Indeed, during the interview, a smile was never far from Si Si’s face. When we asked how she felt about getting along with her new friend, Si Si said, a little embarrassed, “I am happy!” The two served as joint Masters of Ceremonies for the “3rd Story Telling Competition” last year. Chi Qian said that Si Si’s performance was better because of her equanimity. “I’m afraid that the interlude was too long and I didn’t know what to say, but Si Si kept on going eloquently. I feel at ease when she is there.”

Hong Kong “Best Buddies” Advanced to US

In addition to serving as joint Masters of Ceremonies at that event, they were also selected as representatives of “Best Buddies Hong Kong” to attend the “Best Buddies International” Leadership Conference 2018 held in the United States. Chi Qian felt very happy when she knew she would attend the conference with Si Si. “I feel great, just like traveling with a familiar friend.” Besides exchanging experiences with representatives from all over the world, Si Si had to share her impressions of joining “Best Buddies Hong Kong” at the conference. “I was a little nervous at first but I gained confidence after some practice. I even received cards with encouraging words from representatives of other places after the speech, which made me happy.” Both Chi Qian and Si Si agreed that “Best Buddies Hong Kong” Movement not only made them grow up and become more mature, but also gave them each a good friend.