

Family Council

“Family: A Hub to Cheer You Up” Family Education Videos – Outstanding Mother YAU Chun

Long journey of learning to speak

YAU Chun : I enrolled Chi-lun in the lowest class
at a daycare centre
After 16 lessons
the teacher told me
“I’ll write your son a referral letter for evaluation”
The teacher explained to me that
other kids liked playing in groups a lot after class
but Chi-lun just sat on the chair
as if he had been screwed to it
He was unwilling to leave his seat
and making him move was a definite no-no
or he would cry to make a scene
So I took him to
a maternal and child health centre
when he was only 2 years and 8 months old
In the morning, the doctor ran a number of tests on him
Finally, at noon, the doctor said to me that
Chi-lun would live with autism all his life (also being mildly retarded)
On the way to school during his childhood days
I would hold his little hand
teaching him pronunciation of words
It took me 2 years
to teach him how to pronounce “flower”
At that time, while school bus service could be a choice
I preferred him not to take it
so that I could have as much private time with him as possible
By the time he was 10, he uttered a line
“I buy supermarket.”
I corrected him to say
“I go buy food at a supermarket.”
I corrected him in such a pace, over and over again

Letting go Teaching my son self-care

YAU Chun : To teach Chi-lun more knowledge is my heart’s desire
Whether my efforts yield any result
I do as much as I can
for I don’t know what age I will live to
Just let go

After joining the Hong Kong Joint Council of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped (the Council)
I had to attend the parents' evening meeting once a month
so I started to ponder over
how I could attend the evening meetings
Well, self-learning!
I simply prepared the meal and told him
"Take dinner by yourself"
It turned out that he could do it
Sometimes I made no dinner on purpose
"Go buy takeaway"
He could do it too
I felt a great relief
Then he managed to get a job
I felt ever more relieved

Children are a mother's strongest buttress

YAU Chun : Their father ran away from home
leaving my mother-in-law behind
My eldest daughter saw me falling on such hard times
but was unable to help
Once when I knocked off from work
at already ten-ish in the evening
my eldest and youngest daughters came together to walk me home
The eldest said to me
"Mum, we're on your side"
So, I started to think about how to move on
Chi-lun had already moved into Pinehill
Pinehill is a training centre for intellectually disabled persons
I already solved an issue
I didn't have to focus on looking after him anymore
Then, my daughter got a job after graduation
I was relieved of my burden a little bit
During Chi-lun's 2-year training at Pinehill
he worked at the (polishing and machine tool) department
To my amazement, once I bought home a cabinet and
he said to me
"Mum, leave the heavy manual work to me"
That was comforting to me
When I had a condition, my daughters played my silent guardians
I had a surgery for my cancer 2 years ago
"Don't worry. Mum is fine," I told them
"Mum is as tough as nails"

Giving back to the community in joint hands

YAU Chun : Around 1997
I toiled very hard
One day, when this Centre
(Trailwalker Community Education Centre of the Council)
was just inaugurated and opened
I went past it with my son
and, at that moment, I saw many parents with their children around
I felt the same
Intellectual disability. So be it!
If one day all my troubles were solved
I thought to myself
I would definitely devote part of my efforts to the community
Why would I choose to be with the Council?
It was because I loved volunteering
There were also chances for me to accompany members for medical
appointments and visits to residential centres
and look after our intellectually disabled buddies
For that reason, I've also been to many residential centres
for visits
I got a first-hand understanding of
why they moved into those centres
After they had moved in
I found that some of their parents aged as time passed
and were unable to visit their children with intellectual disability
Those children got old too
and were too feeble to make a journey too far
The Council organises many volunteering activities called New
Milestones
through which I've maintained some connection
with the volunteer group
Sometimes, to the several intellectually disabled
whom I call my "sons and daughters"
and whose parents are gone
I would blurt out
"Never mind"
"Just call me Mum"
Then they looked somewhat happy and comforted