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VALUES IN CONFLICT:

TEENS in
transition



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FOREWORD

BY CEO OF CLSA

CLSA and the CLSA Chairman's Trust have been involved with The Women's Foundation since 2009. CLSA's history is deeply rooted in Hong Kong and we are proud to contribute directly to the community where our company was founded, has prospered over the past 31 years, and where so many of our staff work and live.

For the past seven years, over 60 CLSA staff members, including myself, have been actively involved with the CLSA Chairman's Trust supported T.E.E.N.¹ Programme. This Programme enables CLSA to have a direct and immediate impact on individuals and communities in Hong Kong by providing leadership development opportunities to teenagers from challenged backgrounds and equipping them with skills and experiences to help them make brave life choices as they approach adulthood.

The CLSA Chairman's Trust provides grants to those in need, in the communities in which we operate. Through our unique staff sponsorship programme, we encourage CLSA staff to become actively involved in all initiatives supported. This is at the heart of the Trust's mandate, and is critical to our success. It also drives a culture of social engagement and greater awareness for those less fortunate.

Change does not come easily. It requires long-term dedication from a wide range of stakeholders. Five years has passed since TWF published their initial report on the T.E.E.N Programme. Its success is evident and I encourage you to read this report to raise awareness of the values required to help drive positive transformation in the lives of some of this city's most vulnerable youth.

CLSA is proud to support the T.E.E.N. Programme, a vital programme that empowers young adults in Hong Kong.

Jonathan Slone
CEO, CLSA

¹ T.E.E.N. represents Talent Empowerment, Equality and Networking

FOREWORD

BY TWF BOARD MEMBER
CUM T.E.E.N. PROGRAMME
STEERING COMMITTEE
MEMBER

Since 2010, T.E.E.N. (Talent, Empowerment, Equality and Networking) has been a keystone programme of The Women's Foundation enriching the lives of teenage schoolchildren from underprivileged backgrounds. The Programme's success is attributable in large part in the close relationships it engenders between the T.E.E.N. participants and the TWF staff members who run the Programme as well as the undergraduate Big Brothers and Sisters who serve as the TEENs' mentors. The Programme is also highly structured with a well-established year long calendar of workshops, activities and initiatives which provide participants with leadership development, gender-sensitivity training and inspirational experiences they wouldn't otherwise be exposed to.

An exemplary tradition of The Women's Foundation is an insistence on rigorous independent evaluation of its initiatives. Writer and former editor and journalist, Winnie So served as an independent observer of the first year of the Programme and published her first report on T.E.E.N. in 2012. She has now followed up with a report which explores how the TEENs have fared in the wider world five years after that initial breakthrough experience and also includes her conversations with participants from later intakes. Her approach is qualitative: a mixture of case studies, interviews and commentary, and the result is captivatingly easy to read and yet deeply thought provoking. As Winnie herself says, compared with her reactions to the Programme five years ago, her optimism is now "more tempered." The earliest T.E.E.N. participants who have now matured into young adults have proven not to be immune to the doubts and negativity that are currently affecting many parts of Hong Kong.

"It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." This well known proverb is considered by some to originate from China. In the same vein, Dorothy Day, who was among other things, a pioneering advocate of women's suffrage, bravely said "No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do."

What we can be certain of is that in the years ahead, The Women's Foundation, with loyal supporters like CLSA who have sponsored the T.E.E.N. Programme from its beginning, will go on working and lighting those candles for the good of Hong Kong society and our under-served young people.

Rachel Cartland

*Board Member of The Women's Foundation & Steering Committee
Member of the T.E.E.N. Programme*

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INTRODUCTION

A QUESTION OF VALUES

When I authored the first case studies on The Women's Foundation T.E.E.N. Programme in 2011, I was filled with hope and excitement based on the wonderful transformations I had observed. I wrote: "Witnessing the programme participants' transformation renewed my belief that people in Hong Kong can take control of and shape their own destinies."

Five years later, having spoken to participants from four different intakes of the T.E.E.N. Programme and tracked the development of the first cohort to the year after their graduation from secondary school, my optimism is more tempered.

While there is much to celebrate, it is clear that positive transformation is not about flipping an on/off switch. Achieving sustained change requires continuous attention and effort. It is a fluid process that requires much more than individual determination. Helping TEENS develop their potential and ability to "take control of and shape their own destinies" is not unlike growing a plant. Healthy seeds are needed, together with nutrient-rich soil, the right environment and people who are committed to tend to it. Likewise, for any person, not just a teen, to be able to discover and develop his or her potential, that person needs:

- » Seeds of Excellence -- skills, knowledge and resources accrued through education, experiences and family background
- » Emotionally-positive Soil -- a strong sense of gratitude and hope (which is not only the belief that one has a locus of control over the direction of one's life, but also the ability to act) which lead to an open mindset rather than frustration, anxiety and despair which lead to a closed mindset
- » Life-Supporting Environment – time, energy, space and fresh air are just the basics for physical and psychological health. What is also needed is a society that provides ample opportunities for experimentation and growth, values a broad range of abilities and allows for a broad spectrum of definitions of success

- » Nurturing and Enabling Relationships – Communication is key especially for the forging of relationships where difficult emotions are recognised, expressed and affirmed

Society today tends to be overly focused on the seeds of excellence as evidenced by superior academic performance at the expense of the other three elements mentioned above. Yet the other three are just as vital to the developmental process. Perhaps more so. Like seeds planted in toxic soil without sufficient sunlight, water, and fertiliser, in these conditions, a child's development can be stunted, and he or she may never achieve their full potential.

Unfortunately, as a society, we tend to focus our energy on how to make the seeds perform better, to learn faster and work harder. It's easier to blame a poor harvest on bad seeds because it requires more soul-searching, imagination, and persistence to recognise, challenge and change broader systemic failure. Time and energy are essential but everyone -- from students to parents, from teachers and school administrators to the staff of the NGOs who recognise the current overemphasis on short term academic performance is unhealthy and will lead to longer term problems – are short on time, energy and resources to challenge the status quo. As a result, pressures build as expectations of Hong Kong teens climb to unsustainable levels leading many teens to become withdrawn, abandon hope and even consider suicide, as evidenced by the recent tragic spate of Hong Kong students taking their own lives.

If these stories of the T.E.E.N. participants can trigger just one change, let it be this: we must acknowledge that time and health (which translates into energy and vitality), both physical and psychological, are our most precious resources. Nothing will change until we learn to invest our time, energy and attention more wisely. As adults, we cannot replenish or expand our capacity to properly care for others if we ourselves are stretched to our limits. We must model self-care and set a positive example for the next generation. When adults claim, "But I have no choice, I have to make a living", the message children hear is that growing up means having to relinquish the freedom to prioritise worthier pursuits for a life



of powerlessness and compromise in respect of one's goals and values.

The experiences of the T.E.E.N. participants highlight three main issues that hinder the long-term sustainability of any positive transformative impact from the Programme. Ultimately, these insights link to larger issues that hurt Hong Kong's social and economic prospects: a workforce of individuals starved of time and energy will miss out on opportunities to create and experience a rich and meaningful life based on continuous growth. We must guard against:

- » A socio-cultural-economic traditional mindset that emphasises results-based cognitive skills over non-cognitive skills like creativity, risk-taking, and collaboration and limits the horizons of Hong Kong youth
- » A distorted value system. For example, Hong Kong's materialistic culture equates money and material possessions with fulfillment and success. Linked to this, the work women in particular perform when it comes to family care is expected of them and under-valued
- » A lack of positive and inspiring role models who are able to reverse the pull for youth towards rumination and negativity



It is beyond the scope of The Women's Foundation and our T.E.E.N. Programme to find solutions to all of these issues. But we remain committed to being part of a collaborative effort to learn from our experiences and others', to discuss and share our findings and to seek solutions that do not shy away from complexity. The aim of presenting the stories in this report is to offer up a starting point for the broader community to reflect on these important questions: What do we really value? Are these values aligned with the kind of future we seek for future generations? If not, what values are needed and how do we begin to live those values?

T.E.E.N. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW: EMPOWERING TEENS TO TAKE CHARGE

“T.E.E.N. GIVES STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INTERACT WITH STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOLS AND BROADEN THEIR SOCIAL CIRCLE. THIS PROGRAMME ISN'T ABOUT FINDING PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE ALL ALREADY DOING WELL AND HELPING THEM BECOME BETTER; IT'S ABOUT BRINGING TOGETHER STUDENTS WHO AREN'T OUTSTANDING WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE SO THAT THEY CAN HELP EACH OTHER GROW.”

– JACK, BIG BROTHER '11-'12

The T.E.E.N. Programme has evolved over the years. For the past six years, every year, around 40 girls and boys between the ages of 13 and 15 are selected for the year-long programme based on their leadership potential. Successful applicants are chosen because they show sparks of potential despite any personal trauma and coming from under-served communities. The aim of the Programme has always been to cultivate participants' leadership skills and a consciousness of gender bias. These aims are pursued through a structured programme combining skills workshops, a community project and talks by inspirational community and business leaders. Underpinning the Programme are the nurturing relationships between the T.E.E.N. participants and the Big Brothers and Big Sisters who have been selected and trained by TWF, as well as with TWF staff and other mentors. After running the Programme for so many years, we know that open communication based on mutual respect is key to building strong bonds. From day one, T.E.E.N. participants join a Programme where hierarchy is devalued and differences of opinion are valued. Power is shared and respect is cultivated as students from schools of different bands are treated as equal members of a big family.

Establishing long-term relationships requires a commitment from everyone. Responsibility shifts but is always present. It takes someone to initiate the conversation and others to then respond. Roles may change over the course of a day, month or year but everyone eventually learns how to lead and how to follow.

From the start, participants are expected to take personal ownership for a certain level of participation and development. In place of the hand-holding, spoon-feeding and nagging, the typical practice of the educational experience of many Hong Kong students, the TEENs are exposed to experiences that encourage them to embrace independent decision-making and self-motivation. The atmosphere is one where the TEENs are given opportunities to develop their own agency. The Programme represents a safe space where they can make mistakes and learn from their mistakes. The capstone of the Programme is a community project, through which the TEENs develop the skills needed to work effectively in a team, to give public presentations and to advocate for societal change.

But the T.E.E.N. Programme does not end after a year. The concept of “paying it forward” is built into the Programme. On graduating from the Programme, T.E.E.N. participants become active T.E.E.N. alumni,

before being selected to return as Big Brothers and Big Sisters once they enter university. Ultimately, the Programme hopes they will take their relationship-building skills and the capability to set stretch goals and drive change into their adult lives, where they will continue to positively impact their families, organisations and communities.

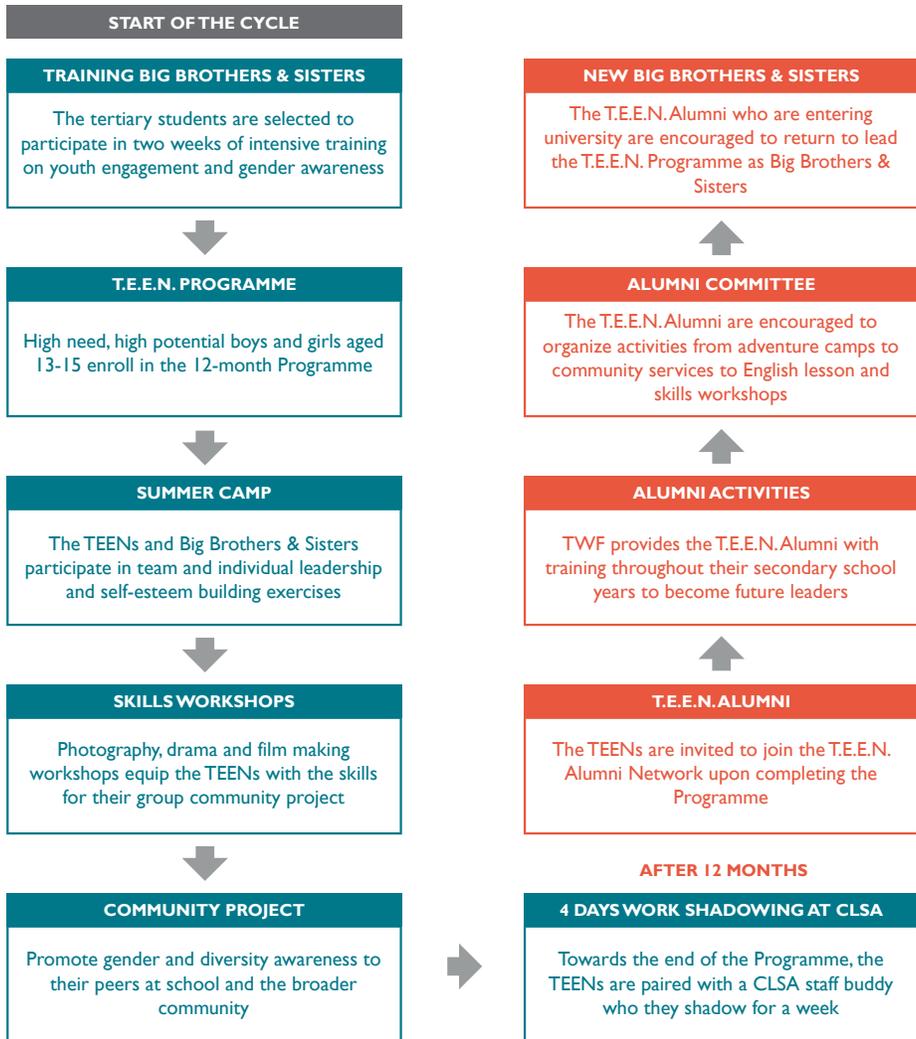


Figure 1: The T.E.E.N. Programme Cycle

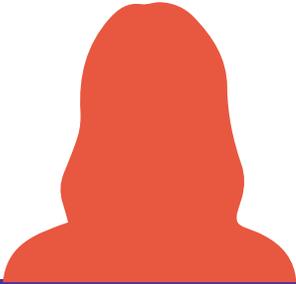
GROWING UP WITH T.E.E.N



The first T.E.E.N. cohort have now been with the Programme for a total of four years, from Form 2 to Form 6. Many of the cohort were active T.E.E.N. Alumni while they were still at school and four participants returned as Big Brothers and Sisters on entering college. This report captures their views in 2014 after finishing school. Some follow-up comments from 2015 are included as well.

We tend to expect youth to be brimming with optimism, to be buoyed up with excitement that their whole life is ahead of them. Yet what was most striking in the conversations reflected below was the sense of resignation to the harsh realities of life on the part of the TEENs. While the T.E.E.N. Programme encouraged them to dream, in the four years that intervened since the Programme, their daily lives had compelled them to face certain realities. For instance, they had come to realise that many opportunities are closed to them. Vincent, who had been so passionate and confident about Taekwondo four years ago is now much more jaded. Likewise, Chloe is disillusioned with Hong Kong society. Elizabeth, who seemed to be coping well with the tragic loss of both her parents four years ago, is now burdened by stress over her future and feels the need to keep secrets from her family. Bucking this trend, Frank, on the other hand, who had been extremely shy and had struggled to realise his own self-worth during the Programme, is now much happier and doing well in his studies in filmmaking and photography.

Their words reflect the complex experience of growing up in Hong Kong, their struggle to reconcile competing and contradicting values, and the fear that they will be forced to pursue lives devoid of genuine choice and to lower their aspirations for themselves and for society.



“IT SEEMS NAÏVE AND UNREALISTIC TO WANT A FAIR AND JUST SOCIETY THAT’S FREE FROM CORRUPTION.”

– CHLOE

“My DSE (Diploma of Secondary Studies) results were mediocre. I only realised how important the DSE is too late. By the time I realised this, it was too late to catch up.

I’m now studying computer science and business administration at a university in Taiwan while working part-time as a waitress. My grades are so-so. It’s not as much fun as I imagined.

I wanted to get away from my family. It really makes me miserable when my dad yells at me and my mother for no reason, especially when he gets the facts wrong. In Hong Kong, I feel like I’m constantly being monitored and they want to know and control everything. I feel like I have no freedom. I can’t do what I want to do. I have more freedom in Taiwan because I don’t have the pressure of having my family around. I have zero communication with my father. I have a good relationship with my mother. I call her regularly to chat. I haven’t decided whether to live in Hong Kong or Taiwan. Taiwan suits me better. It’s harder to make a living in Hong Kong.

I understand that there will always be a gap between my ideals and reality. While my ideal society may be difficult to achieve, I want society to at least be fair, just and free from corruption. Sadly, even this seems unachievable. It seems naïve and unrealistic to want a fair and just society that’s free from corruption. Both Taiwan and Hong Kong are equally bad in this sense. Now that I’m older, I see the darker side of things. In Taiwan, I’ve seen how restaurants evade tax.

I learned several concepts through T.E.E.N.. One of them is gender stereotyping. I think the programme was successful in raising our awareness about gender stereotyping, which affects the way I think. When I talk to people about gender stereotypes, they’ll say that’s the way things are (men and women should be a certain way), that life is unfair. They won’t accept that it’s the other way around, that things are unfair because of gender stereotyping. When I have a family, if our financial situation allows it, I want to be a full-time, stay-at-home mother. I think taking care of the family is very important. I like to keep things clean and tidy so my husband will come home to a comfortable home.

The person I admire most is Rita. A lot of other adults always act like they know better than us but Rita’s not like that. She’s more like someone in her 20’s. She gets along with people no matter how old they are. She’s willing to listen and help.”

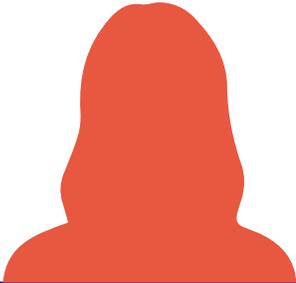
Rita Ching, Deputy CEO of The Women's Foundation, has stayed in contact with Chloe (pseudonym) since she moved to Taiwan. Rita is struck by Chloe's sense of powerlessness: "I want to give her more support because I can sense she feels powerless and helpless about her own life. She has to struggle almost every day to make ends meet. She has to earn her own living and to pay her school fees so she works really hard during the school terms as well as the holidays. She's always anxious. She doesn't eat much and she is very thin. Apart from lacking money, another reason she feels powerless and helpless is because she comes from a family with a dominant male figure without a powerful or nurturing female role model. If something isn't right within her family, there's no one who can help or try to improve the situation."

Sadly, Rita's description of Chloe's sense of powerlessness isn't an isolated case. This is a sentiment felt by many Hong Kong people, especially the younger generation. Many youth today have lost a degree of respect for the older generation since they should be capable of driving change but too often model powerlessness instead. The consequences of this are real and far-reaching. As Rita remarked about Chloe, "The future is always uncertain and she doesn't see the point of looking too far ahead."





But perspective is important and behaviour can change. One of the aims of the T.E.E.N. Programme is to encourage cross-generational mentoring and raise awareness of the negative impact of gender stereotyping. Chloe's comments demonstrate that while a programme such as T.E.E.N. can educate people about what gender stereotyping is, knowledge alone is not enough to change attitudes and behaviour. Chloe's aspirations are still framed in traditional gender roles. This is probably because she is falling back on her lived experiences of what is "normal" rather than being open to the range of possible choices. Courageous role models and balanced and empathetic mentors are required to encourage youth to consider alternative paths and possibilities.



“I’M ALWAYS VERY TIRED”

– ELIZABETH

When Elizabeth (pseudonym) was still preparing for her DSEs, she complained of a chronic lack of sleep which affected her ability live a normal life.

“I’m always very tired. I tend to go to sleep around 1-2am and wake up at 6:30am. Sometimes I go to sleep at 10pm and wake up at 3 or 4am to study. I’m not really happy about anything right now. My whole life revolves around studying. I’m grateful for the fact that my family’s finances are OK now and they can afford to pay for my tutorial classes. My biggest worries are money and my exam results. My results are mediocre. I don’t know if I’m studying the right way. My teacher tells me to go over past papers. It takes me two and a half hours to finish a paper but my attention span is only two hours. I get sleepy after that and I can’t focus.”

Like other TEENS, family members are not the people she turns to for solace :

“I keep a lot of secrets from my family (my aunt and older brother). My family doesn’t know I have a boyfriend. They don’t want me to date anyone. Rita is like a mother to me. The things she tells me are similar to what my family tells me but with family, there seems to be a barrier. I don’t know why but I just can’t tell my family what I really feel. But I can tell Rita, because she understands how teens think. My family’s very strict. I really envy my friends who say they can talk to their older brothers and sisters. My brother is busy with work. I’m busy with school. So we don’t get to talk much.”

But a year out of school, with more maturity, her relationship with her family has improved:

“We communicate more now. We’re more tolerant of each other. I have more freedom now. So my relationship with my aunt is better.”

Initially, Elizabeth wanted to pursue a career in business. However, many of the people around her advised her against it.

Now, she is studying while working 2 part-time jobs. But still, exam results remain a constant worry.

“I worry about whether I can get my degree and also about money.”

Rita also noted that Elizabeth, like Chloe, struggles to manage part-time work to earn a living and her studies. However, Rita finds Elizabeth more positive and optimistic, pointing out that “church is her main support and where she spends most of her time.”



“LIFE FORCES YOU TO COMPROMISE”

–VINCENT

Upon graduating from school, Vincent seemed pretty cynical about his prospects:

“Life forces you to compromise. If you can’t make a living, how can you be happy? I can’t make a living teaching Taekwondo and it’s not something you can do after 30. I’d have to sacrifice a lot in order to pursue my dream of competing in the Olympics; I’d have to sacrifice my career and family. And even if I managed to get into the Olympics, nobody would care. Even if I win the Olympics, I might be famous but I won’t make a lot of money. I’ve been doing this for seven or eight years. There isn’t enough support for Hong Kong athletes. I won the Asia championships but nobody in Hong Kong appreciated that.

I really admire Wong Kam-po, the award-winning cyclist, for being able to drop everything else in his life to pursue his dream. He never admitted defeat or compromised. I can’t be like him. I have to consider so many things like my own livelihood, my family, my future. My worries keep me from doing what I want to do.

I want to become a firefighter. What else can I do? The police are just licensed thugs. As for customs officers, if all your colleagues head up to Shenzhen for fun, how can you not go too? If they all go up there to do immoral things, how can you not join them? If your boss asks you to do something against your principles, how can you not do it? To get ahead, you have to flatter the people above you and socialise with them. Otherwise, they won't be on your side. I'm worried that life will force me to make compromises."

A year on from graduation, Vincent had completed the Diploma Yi Jin Programme, and is now a camp leader with Po Leung Kuk:

"When I see the change in my students, I feel a huge sense of satisfaction. It's like what I got out of the T.E.E.N. Programme. I'd like to try living abroad, maybe to study, but I'm worried about my family. My aim is to have financial stability. I'd like to become a fireman, policeman or postman. If the opportunity arises, I'd like to emigrate. People can really live life in other countries; whereas in Hong Kong, it's about surviving. Hong Kong people don't make much money and it costs a lot to live here. The education system is all about spoon-feeding and doesn't prepare students for life."

Vincent was an active T.E.E.N. alumnus. He credits his experience on the Alumni Committee for making him more mature. Rita also noticed this. "Vincent is much less impulsive, more mature, calm, more humble and appreciative now." Yet she also noticed that his maturity has come at the expense of his trademark "big, innocent smiles. His current outlook is more cynical and negative, focused solely on the practical matter of making a living. He's a lot less driven even though he's dissatisfied with the hand that fate has dealt him."





“EVERYONE HAS THEIR PROBLEMS BUT WE CAN ALL DO SOMETHING TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE.”

– FRANK

Among the interviewees from the first cohort, Frank (pseudonym) has probably undergone the biggest transformation with his resilient and optimistic outlook. He was extremely unhappy in Form 5, but found solace in church.

“I was pretty unhappy in Form 5 - I didn't have any friends and my dad got shingles. I was always at home depressed. Then on my birthday that June, I was really lonely, really down; I had nothing to do, nobody to hang out with. I ran into a guy I knew who lives in my building and asked him where he was going. He said he was going to church and I asked if I could go too. So that's how I got started and from July to September, I went to church a lot. Church made me more grateful. I didn't always want to go, but every time I went, it just so happened that what they talked about was connected to with what I was struggling with. I can't even remember what my problems were then. Everyone at church was very warm, nice and sincere. I was much happier in Form 6. I was invited to be a prefect. I had a good running coach and I made a few friends who also liked music. My dad's health also improved. (His father has since passed away.)”

These days, Frank is too busy to go to church. He wants to help other TEENS who struggled like he did by being a Big Brother to them:

“I became more mature as a Big Brother. My own transformation started with T.E.E.N. where I got to meet a lot more people, have amazing and fun experiences, and be a part of the Alumni Committee. Before T.E.E.N., I wouldn't speak up. I thought not speaking up was cool. I didn't have much confidence. T.E.E.N. really broadened my horizons with all the different activities laid on as part of the programme which didn't cost anything. When I was a T.E.E.N. participant, I encountered a lot of personal difficulties I didn't know how to handle. I now want to help other TEENS who feel like I did. Everyone has their own problems but we can all do something to bring about change.”

Rita recounts how moved the team was during Frank's interview to become a Big Brother. "Jill, Manager of TWF's T.E.E.N. Programme who remembered Frank from when he was a young TEEN, was almost touched to tears by how well Frank can now express himself. After he had been selected, he joined the training camp for our Big Brothers & Sisters and performed well although his dad was seriously ill. Unfortunately his dad passed away but that hasn't affected his contribution to the Programme. He is very helpful, very committed and is one of the most popular Big Brothers among the TEENs. He took really good care of the TEENs, which was a big contrast from the old days when he was one of the most passive participants on the Programme."

Frank feels very motivated by his creative studies at the Hong Kong Design Institute:

" I feel very motivated and determined when I'm studying creative subjects. But I feel even more motivated when I'm working. When I'm editing videos, I'm very focused and diligent. In life, it's important to have direction. When I meet difficulties, I try to find solutions."

Frank seems to be one of the few TEENs who has been able to find a sense of direction which gives him a sense of hope. He has been through loss and other struggles and found his own way out, becoming more self-confident and optimistic in the process. For Frank, having the support of the T.E.E.N. Programme and the church when he was at his lowest ebb seems to have fostered in him a real sense of gratitude that allows him to face challenges with hope rather than the cynicism that comes from a sense of powerlessness.

As the stories of these four T.E.E.N. participants show, the T.E.E.N. Programme has had a real impact on them during turbulent times and periods of self-development. They all gained something from having been in the Programme. How they and their lives will continue to evolve as they join the workforce remains to be seen. But the economic and life pressures they face are real, and as mentioned above, today's TEENs are living in a society where negative influences dominate such as a lack of trust and communication within families, a paucity of accessible positive role models, and a warped value system.



LEARNING FROM T.E.E.N. STORIES #1:

DESPAIR & POWERLESSNESS



Despite experiencing transformation and growth in the T.E.E.N. Programme, an over-riding theme in the stories told by T.E.E.N. participants is the sense of hopelessness and helplessness they feel about their future and the environment in which they live. Underlining this, while growing up, they lacked positive role models and emotional support from their family or other caregivers. While the T.E.E.N. Programme offered them an alternative environment and supportive relationships and role models, the Programme alone isn't enough to counteract the negative mindset and emotions affecting them.

Ultimately, when the TEENs finish secondary school (or even earlier in some cases), they are confronted with real-world demands. As seen in Chloe's and Vincent's stories in particular, their disappointment and disillusionment with a society that values materialistic ends over fairness, justice, freedom and equality is palpable. They feel they have no choice but to relinquish their dreams - and even their values - to make ends meet. This is a sentiment that more recent T.E.E.N. participants also share as Hong Kong youth increasingly feel the pressure to conform and the demands on them to "make a living".

ANNIE, T.E.E.N. '12-'13: "I CAN'T BE A HERO."

Annie is a very thoughtful teenager. A Form 4 student at the time of the interview, she already felt conflicted about her ideals and the day-to-day choices she made in order to fit into her environment. Reflecting on what it takes to be a hero, Annie commented:

"In my life, I have never been a hero. For example, when the teacher makes a mistake and tells off the wrong person during class, I don't say anything because I don't want to create trouble. I think it has to do with the environment too. When everyone's like that, you don't want to be the only one who's different. Otherwise, people will think you're weird. I used to want to be different from other people, but then I realised it's difficult to survive like this. I had nothing to talk to other people about, they got the impression I was aloof and I felt really lonely. So I decided not to stand out. The best thing to do is find people online who share the same views to talk to, but you don't get to see them. That's why I choose not to do anything anymore. That's why I can't be a hero."

KELVIN, T.E.E.N. '13-'14: "BUT THIS IS JUST A HOBBY."

Kelvin, a Form 3 student at the time, started our interview saying he had no hobbies or interests but 15 minutes later, he was talking about how much he enjoyed editing videos and creative writing. He mentioned this while we were discussing his lack of motivation to improve his grades in English, despite knowing it was important. I acknowledged that learning a language through textbooks could be boring and suggested that he might be more motivated if he looked for things to read or watch in English on topics that interested him. After a brief pause, he admitted he liked playing around with different video editing techniques and observed that many online tutorials are in English. When I encouraged him to spend more time on this, as it could represent another career option in addition to his stated career ambition of becoming a policeman, he responded, "**But this is just a hobby**; it's just for fun." I can only imagine that as an under-performing male student, he had been told that joining the police was his most realistic option for a reasonably high-status, financially stable career. And because he has no exposure to people who are employed in the creative industries and make a living from editing videos, he conflated what he enjoys doing with it simply being a hobby that's just for fun rather than seeing it as a possible career option.

Encouraging students like Kelvin to develop their own potential takes not only new experiences but conversations with people who can offer a different or broader perspective from their own. These are just two important aspects of what T.E.E.N. offers.

Growing up with a myopic world view contributes to feelings of despair and powerlessness because the TEENs and the people around them fail to see the true range of opportunities available to them. When everyone believes there is only one path to success, doors are closed and potential remains unfulfilled. This can have destructive and tragic consequences.

In March 2016, seven Hong Kong students committed suicide over the course of nine days. In the prior six months from September 2015 to March 2016, 22 students committed suicide, with four taking their own lives in a span of five days². Depression, anxiety and suicides are at alarming levels among Hong Kong's students. The deaths led other students



²Elizabeth Cheung and Peace Chiu, "Students at breaking point: Hong Kong announces emergency measures after 22 suicides since the start of the academic year", South China Morning Post, updated 14 March 2016, 12:05pm. <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1923465/students-breaking-point-hong-kong-announces>

to express their frustration and despair. Comments such as the one below, posted anonymously on the “Leading Schools’ Secrets” page on Facebook, are not uncommon:

“These days, after leaving school, aside from carrying on studying, there’s really nothing else you can do. If you don’t carry on studying, you’ll have no future. But even if you manage to do well in your further studies, it still doesn’t necessarily lead to the future you want. University graduates are supposed to join a profession. If you can’t join a profession, you can join the government. If you can’t join the government, you’re relegated to being working-class. Life is just about making it past these checkpoints: getting married, making mortgage payments on a flat, having children. The end point is death. Basically, when you realise this, you feel turned off, that it’s no fun and you don’t want to play along. Playing along is just a waste of time and leads to more suffering. I don’t understand why, even now, newspapers are pushing the blame on the students who died, saying they “didn’t like studying”. It’s like the victims had a character flaw. It’s time society reflects on the real reasons behind student suicides: Why would students not love life or the future?”

Generational difference and the despair that accompanies a lack of opportunity and choice are hardly new. There is nothing as constant as change. But the pace of change is accelerating in ways that we cannot anticipate. We know, of course, that what the future holds will be different from today. We only need to look back a decade to see how the pace of change has quickened. A decade ago, social networking and sharing platforms were still in their infancy. Today Facebook and Airbnb are massively successful businesses. A decade ago, the only way to take a class at Harvard was to gain admission and pay the high tuition. Today, anyone can take an online class taught by a Harvard or Stanford or HKU professor through edx.org or one of the other MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) platforms. We can see old industries being phased out, existing industries being transformed, and new industries and technologies emerging. All of this will change the way we live and work.

And yet...

We still cling to old paradigms out of ignorance, fear, and a lack of imagination. Adults project their fears on their children. When children show imagination, adults often scoff at and belittle their creativity, dismissing it as being naïve or youthful fantasy. We forget that change and transformation are always driven by youthful fantasy. For example, Mark Zuckerberg

³Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2016: <http://www.forbes.com/30-under-30-asia-2016>

founded Facebook when he was only 19. Granted, very few people in the world can become a Zuckerberg, but there are still plenty of young people around the world doing exciting new things. Just look at the Forbes 30 under 30 Asia list for 2016³. While our society will continue to need doctors, engineers, teachers and policemen, many other vocational possibilities exist and they need not be limited to the confines of Hong Kong's borders. At the same time, new opportunities are waiting to be created.

Is Hong Kong preparing today's youth for the future or are we simply preparing them for a present that will soon be the past? How do we do this when our familiar is fast becoming obsolete? And when today's students have their own ideas about the future, are we willing to listen and, more importantly, give them the time and resources to experiment? Or are we going to continue to push our youth and society to the brink of insanity, perhaps without realising that that is exactly what we are doing? As the saying goes, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

LEARNING FROM T.E.E.N. STORIES #2:

LACK OF TRUST & COMMUNICATION IN FAMILIES



For many of the TEENs interviewed, the sense of despair and powerlessness to change society and pursue their own visions for a better future are tied to pressures imposed by their families and as well as from their schools. Many of the TEENs feel misunderstood and unsupported by their parents and teachers who relentlessly remind them what is important is getting good grades, getting into university and getting a well-paid job. This leads to a breakdown in communications which can spiral into a lack of trust between parents and their children.

A common complaint of parents about their teenage children is, "My kids don't tell me anything." In my experience, TEENs have a lot to say and are willing to speak their mind to people who they feel are genuinely interested in hearing and understanding their views. There is no great secret to this. It simply requires the listener to resist the urge to lecture, criticise and insist on the "correctness" of their own worldview. It also requires patience and an understanding that teens are still discovering their own identity and learning to articulate their myriad and sometimes confusing thoughts, emotions and desires so their views may not always be well-formed or consistent.

AMAZING, T.E.E.N. '11-'12: "I HAVE A HUGE GENERATION GAP WITH MY MOM."

When Amazing was finishing secondary school, his greatest frustrations were with school and family:

*"My mom and sister are always fighting. My dad doesn't live with us but I'm closer to him. **I have a huge generation gap with my mom.** When I hurt myself, she yelled at me for not going to see a doctor. She just yells at me all the time. She may care, but I just can't communicate with her. My mom blames everything I do wrong on the fact that I'm dating (but he did not have any girlfriend). Sometimes I come home late because I've been studying. When I get home, she'll accuse me of having been out with a girl. I have no idea how to respond. When I tell her I was studying, she'll say things like, 'Is the library open this late' or 'Do you have that much to study?' I tell her that the study room closes at 10pm but the next day she'll ask the same thing."*

Fortunately, for Amazing, he had a teacher who helped him to think through and improve his relationship with his family. A year after graduating from secondary school, Amazing is pursuing an associate degree in social work at City University, something he has always wanted to do. It's probably because of his reduced uncertainty and fear regarding his future, coupled with his teacher's guidance, that his relationship with his family has improved:

"During puberty, I was a lot more self-centered. I would talk back more and I felt there was a generation gap between me and my parents. Then one of my teachers helped me understand that I should value my relationship with my parents. If I want my parents to change, I should take the first step and do something that will make them happy. I've learned to see things from my mom's perspective so I'm more understanding. We communicate more now. I let her know what's going on in my life like how I'm doing in school and whom I'm dating. Mom is less suspicious of me and is a lot more caring now. There's still a generation gap, like our views on Occupy Central but we've learnt to avoid arguing about the things we disagree on."



GAZELLE, T.E.E.N. '11-'12: "MY FAMILY'S A BIT COMPLICATED. I DON'T REALLY LIKE MY DAD."

When Gazelle (pseudonym) was still in school, she struggled with her family:

"My family's a bit complicated. I talk to my mom and sometimes my brother but I don't really like my dad (he gambles and has a bad temper). When I get home, I just go to my room. My mom will ask me things directly, like whether I've been out on a date. She'll tell me not to waste time and study more."

A year after graduating, her father passed away:

"After Dad passed away, I remembered a lot of happy times from my childhood. That made me feel like I should have been nicer to him. My relationship with my mother is sometimes good, sometimes bad. We have a big generation gap (42 years). Before Dad passed away, we talked more but we would always fight over her giving Dad money to gamble on horse-racing. After Dad passed away, Mom was emotionally unstable. When she was upset, she'd yell at me for no reason and blame me for not earning money or not studying hard enough. Now we're both busy so we don't talk much. I've tried to put myself in my mother's shoes, especially since Dad died but it's also hard on me and she doesn't understand. So all I can do is try to avoid fighting with her. I'm close to my brother. We talk a lot. After Dad passed away, he moved back home."

From Gazelle's story, we can see how parents can hold their children back. There is a lot of pressure in Chinese culture for children to show respect to their parents. But sometimes it is unreasonable to expect children to do so. In Gazelle's case, she has to bear the burden of a dysfunctional family and stand on her own feet financially, while still being labelled a bad child.

YAN, T.E.E.N. '13-'14: "I DON'T CRY IN FRONT OF MY FAMILY. I ONLY CRY IN BED."

When Yan was in Form 3 at a top tier school, she was struggling with an overly busy schedule. This led to her having an emotional breakdown:

"When a social worker started talking about dreams, I started crying. It made me reflect on what I'm doing with my life. I'm so busy every day. I don't get enough rest. In front of my friends, I'm



happy and cheerful, but inside I'm so tired. A couple months ago, I had a falling out with my group of four friends. It was because I was so busy and I didn't have time to eat lunch with them anymore. I very rarely talk to people about what I'm unhappy about; I just keep it inside. So finally, after hearing the social worker, that night, I let it out and cried all night. My eyes were really swollen. If people see I have this weak side, I don't know what they'll think of me. I felt better after I cried. **I don't cry in front of my family. I only cry in bed.** My parents give me a lot of pressure to excel in school so I can get a good job later. My older sister and older brother didn't do well in school so all the pressure is on me. I'm the kind of daughter who's a bit giggly in front of my dad so if I started crying in front of them, I don't know how they would handle it and I'd be afraid of what they'd think. I think they would assume that something terrible had happened."

It's a common complaint that parents and teenagers find it difficult to communicate with each other. Parents think their children are hiding things from them. Children think the less they tell the less they'll get yelled at and their parents don't listen to them anyway.

This lack of communication is not new and can be remedied. It is not just about poor communication skills, but a gap in understanding the unique experiences, circumstances, pressures and challenges that teens face today. On the other hand, teens also lack an understanding of their parents' struggles and the experiences behind their perspective. Oftentimes, parents haven't reflected on their own life experiences and how it has shaped their worldview. Therefore, instead of sharing their experiences and wisdom in a reflective way, they tend to issue abrupt commands to their children. Particularly when these fall into the "Do as I say, not as I do" category, this reinforces the impression that parents are autocratic and hypocritical even though they are acting out of their best intentions and what they perceive to be in the best interests of their children.

LEARNING FROM T.E.E.N. STORIES #3:

LACK OF POSITIVE & COURAGEOUS ROLE MODELS



Teens look to their parents and other adults around them to set an example, but what they see often contradicts with the values they've been taught. Some of the most common complaints by teens about adults are that we don't 'walk the talk', and we are selfish, and overly focused on money and status rather than the greater good. Here are just a few examples:

“我好怕成個腦淨係諗住點樣做先對自己有利的大人，好恐怖！佢地好可憐！只係知道錢，忘記自己個心係餓緊。*(I'm scared for grown-ups whose only thoughts are about how to maximise their own gains, it's so scary! I feel sorry for them! They only hanker after money without realising their hearts are empty.)*”

“社會給青少年甚至大人，都有一種錢就是萬能的感覺。*(Society gives youth, even adults, the impression that money makes everything possible.)*”

“D大人成日問你咁樣做有咩用？其實有D野唔一定係物質上可量度價值先叫有用，好似快樂，係情感上既價值係無辦法量度，但唔代表無用。*(Adults are always asking what's the point of doing something. Actually, things don't have to have a material value to be useful. For example, I can't measure the value of happiness but that doesn't mean it's useless.)*”

On the other hand, many adults look at teens and see a generation of spoiled brats. After all, much of the comforts and prosperity which the teens now take for granted, were built with the tears, sweat and sacrifices of previous generations who endured the hardship of a less developed economy and the trauma of social unrest in Hong Kong. Through no shortage of personal sacrifices including their own dreams and aspirations, the older generation succeeded in building Hong Kong into the shining cosmopolitan financial centre that it is today. But are the same opportunities available to our youth?

In 1999, the average monthly wage in Hong Kong was HK\$11,839⁴. As of the fourth quarter of 2016, the average monthly wage in Hong Kong was HK\$15,451. If you compare the rate of wage growth - 30.5% over 17 years - with the 29.6% growth rate in average monthly per capita expenditure in just five years between 2009/10 (HK\$7,137) and 2014/15 (HK\$9,253)⁵, then we can see how inflation has contributed to the pressure on the average wage-earner in Hong Kong to survive.

As individuals and societies develop and change, so too do needs and values. As underscored by Abraham Maslow's

⁴Wage figures taken from: <http://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B10500092016QQ04B0100.pdf>

⁵Average monthly per capita expenditure figures taken from: <http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/so290.jsp>

hierarchy of needs, teens today are yearning to have their higher third-level needs for love and belonging met. This applies even to teens from less privileged backgrounds where their families are struggling to make ends meet. Today's generation of middle aged parents, on the other hand, came of age at a time when Hong Kong society was still struggling to address first and second-level needs of survival and safety. Parents are conscious of the fragility of the security that they toiled to create while their children grew up taking it for granted. This is one of the main root causes of the perception and communication gap between generations.

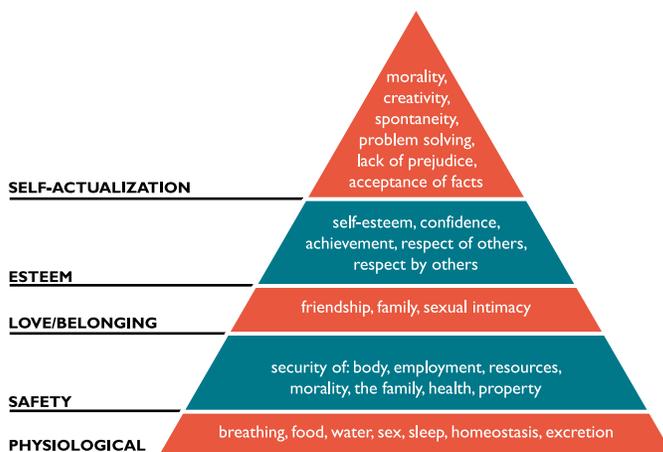


Figure 2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Source: Maslow, A.H. (1943). "A theory of human motivation". *Psychological Review*. 50 (4): 370–96.

Whereas previous generations saw creating financial security for themselves and their families as life's main purpose, that financial security has afforded their children and grandchildren the luxury of pursuing higher level needs. In other words, having grown up in an environment where they can take for granted that their survival and security needs will be met, younger generations coming of age now are more interested in focusing their energies on fulfilling their need to belong, being accepted by others, and exploring and actualising their inner calling. In essence, the generational changes in life purpose, moving from the drive to accumulate money and status to a desire to discover and realise one's individual potential, are a natural consequence of Hong Kong's economic development.

However, conflicts and crises have arisen because Hong Kong's increased prosperity has not come with greater economic security for all. 14.3%⁶ of the Hong Kong population continues to live at the poverty line. And now, Hong Kong is facing a narrowing of opportunities for youth and what they perceive to be a lowered quality of life. It will take a real paradigm shift for Hong Kong to regain its former positive momentum and social cohesion.

⁶Poverty rate in 2015 taken from: http://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/pdf/poverty_report_2015_c.pdf

THE T.E.E.N. ANTIDOTE:

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST & COMMUNICATION, PROVIDING POSITIVE & COURAGEOUS ROLE MODELS, AND NURTURING HOPE

There are two paradigms of relationships. One paradigm enables someone to be the best they can be by helping them to discover and fulfill their potential. The other is disabling and brings the person's weaknesses to the fore. Unfortunately, teens often feel that their relationships with parents, teachers and even peers are more disabling than enabling.

Speaking to Programme participants across previous years, one person is repeatedly mentioned: Rita Ching, Deputy CEO of The Women's Foundation. For many of the former TEENs, Rita is their much-loved "other mother" who constantly reminds them of their better selves and continues to have faith in them when they've lost faith in themselves. The TEENs from the first three years of the Programme see her as a role model, as a much-loved coach cheering on one student to quit his bad habits for example, and as someone to WhatsApp when they are feeling miserable about their grades, their family or relationships. Rita is a reminder of the importance of engaged individuals who are willing to commit the time and energy to help students achieve their dreams. These are just a few comments from past participants highlighting the importance of a supportive relationship in their growth and development.

"Rita really understands young people. Usually, when we're around adults, we act differently but Rita is like a good friend. In the beginning, I wanted to quit T.E.E.N., but she wouldn't let me. She kept calling me. I had been given an opportunity but I didn't treasure it. Instead of giving up on me, she kept encouraging me to take advantage of this opportunity. Without Rita, I wouldn't have stayed in T.E.E.N." – Amazing, T.E.E.N. '11-'12

"Rita really loves us. When we want to do an activity but don't have the money, like the trip to Taiwan, she'll find sponsors for us. I was having problems with schoolwork and she helped me find a tutorial centre. TWF really do a lot for us." – Dory, T.E.E.N. '11-'12

"I changed in ways I thought I would never change. I used to be directionless and immature. But Rita always helps us find our sense of direction; she's always giving us advice. At least now I know what I can do in the future with the subjects I'm studying. Before, I just knew I had to study but I didn't really know what for... Rita is really special. It's hard to find someone who's like my mother. She treats me like her daughter. She knows I have allergies. She'll send me messages on WhatsApp and Facebook to see how I'm doing." Gazelle, T.E.E.N. '11-'12

“The main things that bother me are my family’s health and the fact that I don’t have a close group of friends. Sometimes, I feel like nobody cares about me. T.E.E.N. gives me a feeling of belonging. And I’m always asking Rita and Jill for advice. I know I can talk to them when I’m unhappy.” - Helen, T.E.E.N. ‘11-‘12

“I learned to be more tolerant as a result of T.E.E.N.. And I came to develop a service mindset from Rita. She helps people without asking for anything in return. There are some previous participants who have gone down the wrong path since the Programme, but Rita hasn’t given up on them. She doesn’t only help us when we’re in the Programme, she still cares about us afterwards. Whenever she sees an unhappy post from me on Facebook, she immediately messages me and asks me how I’ve been and what’s making me unhappy. And she doesn’t just help young people; she also helps the elderly. After meeting her, I’ve become a happier person. I’ve become more accepting of people and things I didn’t use to like, like students with bad grades. In the past, I didn’t want to be friends with them because I was afraid that they would pull my grades down. I was becoming someone who only wanted to be with people if I could benefit from them. But just as I was becoming this kind of person, T.E.E.N. and Rita pulled me back and taught me how to embrace and enjoy life by accepting a lot of different things. I used to judge people based on whether they were of the same level or status as me but now I feel like I can accept and get along with all kinds of people.” - Annie, T.E.E.N. ‘12-‘13

There is no doubt that Rita’s highly personalised and genuine interactions with the T.E.E.N. participants particularly from the Programme’s early years really helped set the tone for the Programme. But in the long run, a programme of this kind cannot be sustained by the commitment of one individual, no matter how strong that commitment is. Recognising the need for the Programme to develop beyond its dependency on her, Rita has been much more hands off with recent cycles. While today’s TEENs are less likely to mention Rita, they still speak enthusiastically of the friendships they form with each other and their respect and affection for Programme Manager Jill Chung and Programme Officer Davy Mak.

The Programme has also shifted much of the responsibility for caring and mentoring the TEENs to the Big Brothers and Sisters, allowing the TEENs to develop closer relationships with them in their first year. At the same time, the Big Brothers and Sisters are even more committed, to the point of developing their own support network.



As Angela, a participant from T.E.E.N. '11-'12, commented:

“In the beginning, it’s easier to bond with the Big Brothers and Sisters than with other TEENs. The Big Brothers and Sisters ask us lots of questions to make us talk. Our group still keeps in touch with our Big Brothers and Sisters. We have a WhatsApp group where we ask them about things like relationships and schoolwork. They really care about us.”

In the pilot year, what was particularly special about T.E.E.N. was the relationship many of the participants developed with Rita. Now in its sixth year, what is so special about T.E.E.N. is everyone’s commitment to pressing ahead with something that is akin to planting seeds in parched, nutrient-deprived soil. The Programme continues to be unique in Hong Kong in its emphasis on offering a myriad of experiences and opportunities in a secure judgment-free environment so that the TEENs feel comfortable breaking out of their comfort zones and forging new friendships while learning more about themselves. The Programme espouses the belief that even deserts have oases. The T.E.E.N. family of participants, TVF staff and volunteers are doing their part to apply this tenet to help Hong Kong’s most disaffected youth.

What can you do to make a difference?



WITHOUT TIME THERE IS NO HOPE THE VALUE OF TIME IN NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS & POTENTIAL

Hong Kong is a fast-past, time-starved city - people are often kept busy fighting fires and looking for quick fix solutions to keep things going. We are quick to judge people by appearances and most people are overly focused on getting a leg up (贏在起跑線). Because we are so time-starved, we tend to focus on short-term goals and short-term solutions.

Given this, it is rare to find people and organisations that are passionate about investing the time, resources and energy required to enable real and sustainable transformation in Hong Kong. Given that short-term ad-hoc workshops and programmes are more the norm for initiatives designed to help disadvantaged teens, it was extraordinary that The Women's Foundation was able to launch T.E.E.N. in 2009 with an eight-year commitment from CLSA. Both CLSA and The Women's Foundation understand the importance of time and commitment in building sustained relationships that can help guide teens through a critical developmental period.

With CLSA's support, T.E.E.N. has been able to track a number of participants throughout their involvement in the T.E.E.N. and T.E.E.N. Alumni Programme. This exercise has afforded TWF a rare intimate longitudinal view of a group of some 200 TEENs. While far from representative, these TEENs give voice to their particular experiences as adolescents growing up in Hong Kong, their unique needs, and how they see the world around them.

In the pilot year of TWF's T.E.E.N. Programme, silent and uncooperative TEENs who had been reluctant to participate and speak up blossomed into confident, engaged team players. Everyone involved in the Programme from the TWF staff to the participants' teachers were taken by surprise. All of us were riding a wave of optimism. The key takeaway from T.E.E.N.'s first year was that our at-risk youth, like all youth, just needed to be in supportive relationships to feel secure enough to take risks and develop their motivation, confidence and communication skills. But a few years on, we can now see more clearly that change isn't predictable and doesn't always occur in a linear way, especially through the turbulent years of puberty. For some TEENs who took part in the Alumni

Programme or moved onto other experiences, realisations of change - and expressions of gratitude - came later.

Holly (T.E.E.N., '11-'12) has been an inactive Alumni participant over the last two years while preparing for her DSE. She rejoined the Programme after her DSE and wrote to Rita after a tough wilderness camp training for T.E.E.N. Alumni:

“Dear Rita Mommy, I’m very grateful that you saw how hard I tried and how much I changed. I realised during this camp that I had changed a lot and particularly since the first T.E.E.N. training camp four years ago. I used to act like a princess. Now I finally know how to take care of others. I feel like I have matured and become a better person, the kind of person I’ve always wanted to be, someone who is persistent and determined to achieve their goals. I saw a new me. I finally found my own shining light - I’ve always only known my weaknesses and wondered what my strengths are.”
(Holly has been selected as one of the Big Sisters for next year’s T.E.E.N. Programme, '16-'17)

Cat (T.E.E.N., '11-'12) had been relatively inactive in the Alumni Programme. Yet she unexpectedly wrote to Rita after taking her DSE expressing her gratitude for all the friendship, mentoring and experiences that she had gained from participating in T.E.E.N. and TWF’s other youth programmes:

“I am really grateful for all the chances given to me by TWF. Without them, I wouldn’t have such great memories, experiences, friendships and mentors. Thank you to all the staff of TWF who helped to organise the activities so well. This is all I want to say. Thank you for everything.”

It’s undeniable that the T.E.E.N. Programme has had an impact on the TEENs. But over the years, TWF has developed a much more grounded and realistic understanding of the interactions and influences of other factors in each TEEN’s personal, socio-economic and cultural environment.

With six years of experience to mine, the key nugget is that potential for individual growth is bounded by factors beyond the individual’s control and making sense of, or peace with, these factors takes time. Time and patience is even more important during the critical teenage years when students are undergoing social and biological changes that wreak havoc on their neurochemistry and moods.

Patience is needed to see positive changes take root. A quick transformation may be short-lived while someone who is



slow to show signs of change may actually be more able to sustain that change. Some T.E.E.N. participants who leave the Programme have later come back to contribute to the Programme. For TWF, it has been key to have a place for them to return to.

So far, nine former T.E.E.N. participants have returned as Big Brothers and Sisters, underscoring a virtuous cycle of change. They have become positive role models for others who are struggling just as they did only a few years ago. Their personal testimonies and mentoring are powerfully encouraging for struggling TEENS who come to realise that with time and perseverance, and by being open to new mindsets and experiences, their struggles today can become their future strengths.

VALUES FOR A FUTURE OF PROMISE

So what are the values that will best inform solutions to the problems students face?

The antidote to despair and hopelessness is to give students more time and freedom to explore, and to make - and learn from - their mistakes. There is no substitute for the time needed to positively educate and shape our children so they become happy, productive adults. Advocating for a slower paced more expansive childhood may seem counterintuitive given today's world where we are all running to keep up with the rapid pace of change and full of anxiety about our future. But think about it, perhaps what we really need, rather than speeding up, is to be more patient, optimistic and unafraid of slowing down. This is likely to free us to be a healthier and happier society – and to discover anew the virtues of patience and resilience.

The antidote to a lack of trust and communication in families is also time - time spent listening, time spent conversing, time spent building bonds through shared positive experiences, time spent appreciating rather than giving orders, criticising or blaming.

And finally, the antidote to a lack of positive and courageous role models is just that – courage. What does it take to be courageous in society today? Helping to define new markers of success would be one way of showing courage. Rather than measuring success by grades, job titles, money and



possessions, we should be measuring the success of our youth by the risks they take, the weaknesses and challenges they persist in overcoming, the kindness and generosity they show others, and how joyful and hopeful they are. Adults must model and mentor positive value-based character traits including courage in the face of uncertainty, willingness to embrace change, openness to innovative ideas and new ways of thinking, emotional intelligence, compassion, tolerance, humility, integrity and respect for others.

Ultimately, we hope that this report will stimulate discussion and encourage different attitudes and behaviours on the part of TEENS, their parents and teachers, and the rest of society. It will take courage, commitment and concerted efforts if we want to reverse the current trend towards higher levels of suicide and attempted suicide, self-harm and other mental health problems affecting our youth, and to re-define a healthier, happier society for all of Hong Kong.

KEY OBSERVATIONS FROM THE PROGRAMME

RESOURCES FOR BUILDING POSITIVE COMMUNICATION AND RESILIENCE

In order to help TEENS develop a hopeful, growth mindset, adults need to model this mindset and be willing to suspend the belief that we are the “experts in life”. Here are some useful resources tried and tested through TWF’s T.E.E.N. and Life Skills Programmes.

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

Notes:

Module: Positive Communication Active Constructive Responding.
Website: https://www2.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/scds/images/content/activities/Positive_Psychology_Training_App/PPTTrainingApp_PositiveCommunication.pdf

BUCKET THEORY

Book:

Rath & Clifton (2004), How full is your Bucket?, New York: Gallup Press

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2. Dan Siegel: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain

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- Why Teens Turn From Parents to Peers:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thxIUme7Pc8>
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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGcFqzZYjxQ>
- The Purpose of the Teenage Brain:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gw9GrgNcYcg>

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INDIVIDUALS

Adrienne Yu
Alan Li
Alice Li
Andy Lau
Arielle Stambler
Arthur Hui
Belinda Hoi
Billy Yau
Cecillia Chen
Charlie Wong
Chelsea Borchers
Cheryl Chu
Chia-huei Tseng
Danielle A. Guerrero
Dory Yu
Eric Lik-sang Ma
Erica Wong
Fiona Lai
Francesca Sin
Jason Ho
Jasmine To
Jeffrey Andrews
Jennie Newberry
Jess Shek
Joan Low
Joyce Cheung

INDIVIDUALS

Kate Scott
Karen Seymour
Kristie Fung
Kristina Grogan
Lee-Ann Ford
Levina Poon
Linda Wu
Liz Arnott
Marcus Chan
Mark Shuper
Mary Barbara Hanna
Melisa Baldwick
Michael Winch
Michaela Forte
Pauline Wong
Phyllis Lau
Rachel Jacqueline
Rossana Sum
Sara Li
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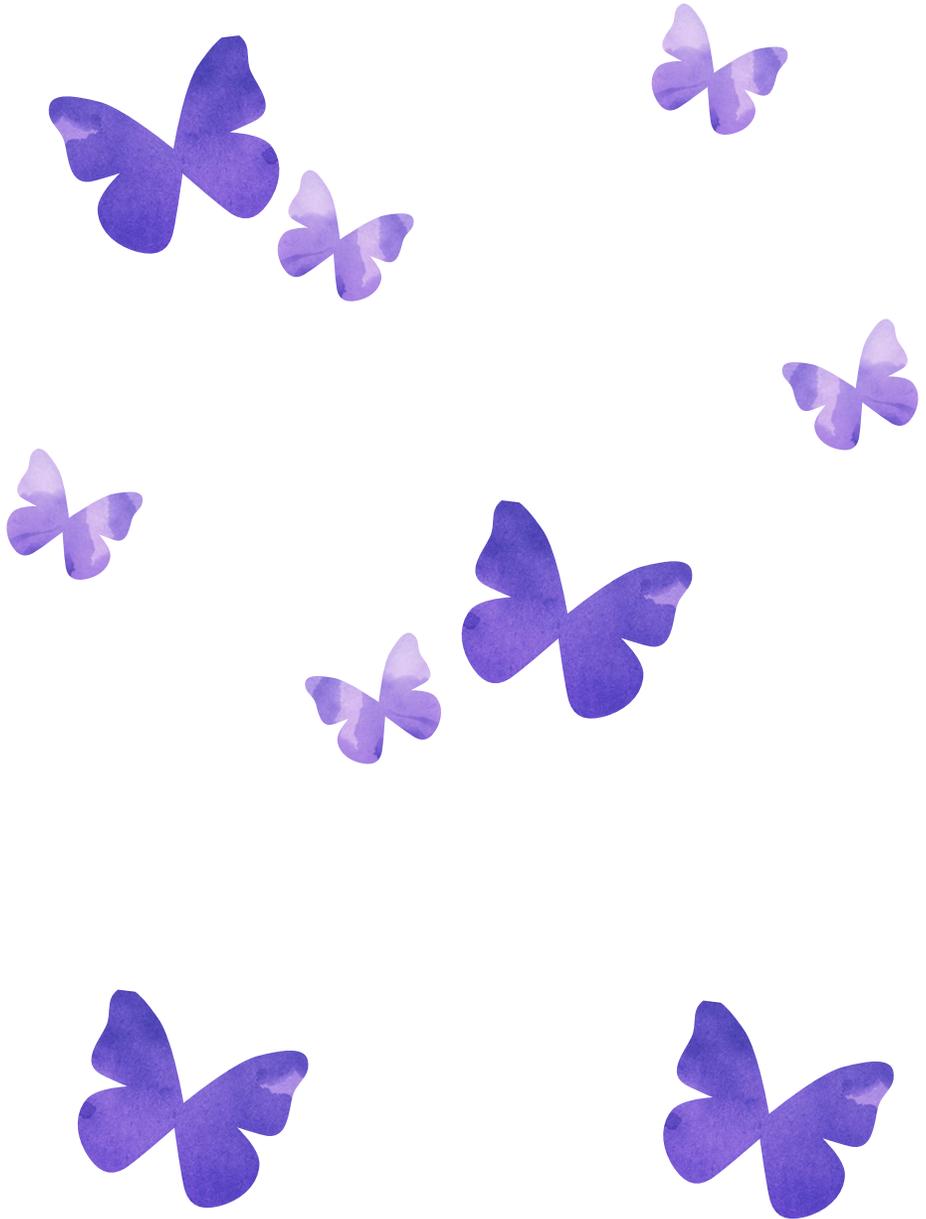
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Lok Sin Tong Wong Chung Ming Secondary School
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與T.E.E.N. 同行2.0:

亂中求變， 化蛹為蝶



SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS





出版日期: 2017年8月
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亂中求變，

化蛹為蝶

序言

中信里昂證券行政總裁

自2009年開始，中信里昂證券和「里昂證券主席信託基金」已十分支持婦女基金會。里昂證券植根香港，能夠回饋過去31年蓬勃發展、我們創立及員工安居樂業的所在地，實在感到自豪。

過去七年間，共有60多名中信里昂證券員工，包括我本人，均積極投入「突破TEEN¹才計劃」。透過這領袖培訓計劃，中信里昂證券能直接幫助家境有困難的青少年，在他們成長路上提供所需的技能和經歷，讓他們可以勇敢地為自己人生作出適當的選擇。

「里昂證券主席信託基金」的宗旨，是在我們運作的社區，為有需要人士提供援助。透過我們獨特的員工贊助計劃，鼓勵員工積極參與所有服務社群的項目。推動服務社會的文化，增加對有需要人士的關注，是基金的核心信念。

改變從來不易，需要大量持份者長時間的付出。由婦女基金會出版「突破TEEN才計劃」首份報告至今的五年間，計劃的成效十分顯著。我誠意推薦你細閱這份報告，以了解幫助本地最脆弱一群青少年正面發展的所需要素。

中信里昂證券很榮幸能夠支持這項重要的青少年培育計劃。

中信里昂證券董事長
施立宏

¹T.E.E.N. 代表Talent Empowerment、Equality and Networking，意即培育才能、平等和聯繫網絡。

序言

婦女基金會董事會成員暨
「突破TEEN才計劃」
指導委員會成員

「突破TEEN才計劃」自2010年開始，致力讓家境有困難的青少年活得充實，已成為婦女基金會的基石。計劃能夠取得成功，主要歸因於計劃參加者與負責計劃的同事，及與擔任他們青年導師的大學生之間的緊密關係；還有一年計劃的緊密結構及安排，透過一系列工作坊及活動，為參加者提供領導能力及性別意識的培訓，和啟發性經歷。

堅持嚴謹及獨立的計劃評估是婦女基金會的傳統。我們邀請了作家兼前編輯及記者蘇詠寧(Winnie)擔任第一屆「突破TEEN才計劃」的獨立觀察員，並於2012年出版了

「突破TEEN才計劃」的第一份報告。此報告則是Winnie跟進了五年前因計劃而有所突破的參加者，成長至今的發展，還有她與往後多屆參加者的對話。報告以質性研究方法撰寫，當中包括了個案研究、訪問及個人評論，妙筆生輝、引人深思。誠如Winnie在報告中表示，與五年前撰寫報告時比較，今天的她調整了自己的樂觀。現已投身社會的早期計劃參加者，雖已成長了，但受到現今香港社會大環境下的影響，也不能幸免於困惑及負面思想中。

中國人喜歡說「與其詛咒黑暗，不如燃點燭光」。同樣地，美國有婦女運動先驅者多蘿西戴爾令人振奮的明言：「沒有人有權利坐下來絕望，很多事可以去做。」

我們可以肯定婦女基金會，和從計劃第一屆開始便大力支持的中信里昂證券等熱心機構及人士，今後仍會堅持為香港社會及基層的青少年「燃點燭光」。

婦女基金會董事會成員暨「突破TEEN才計劃」
指導委員會成員
簡何巧雲

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鳴謝

簡介

價值觀的疑問

當我在2011年為婦女基金會的「突破TEEN才計劃」撰寫首個個案研究時，我為見證到計劃參加者的種種蛻變而感到十分振奮和充滿希望。當時我寫道：「看見參加者的成長，重燃了我的信念，相信香港人也可以掌控和塑造自己的命運。」

五年後的今天，我訪問了過往四屆的「突破TEEN才計劃」參加者，並跟進曾訪問過的第一屆參加者，在完成計劃到中學畢業一年後之間的成長發展，我的樂觀變得更為審慎。

雖然計劃還是有很多值得慶賀的地方，但正面的蛻變不是像按開關掣，說有便有；這是一個流動的過程，要達到持續改變需要不間斷的關注和努力，所需的遠超一個人的決心。幫助青少年發展他們的潛能和能力去「掌握及塑造自己的命運」，跟栽種一株植物不遑多讓 -- 需要健康的種子、肥沃的土壤、適合的環境和悉心栽種的人。同樣地，不只是青少年，任何人若要發掘及發展自己的潛能，也需要：

- » 卓越的種子 -- 當中蘊藏的技術、知識和資源是需要透過教育、經驗和家庭背景累積得來。
- » 正面情緒的土壤 -- 擁有強烈的希望感和感恩之心（不止是有掌握自己生命方向的信念，還有化為行動、付諸實踐的能力），能讓人保持思想開放，而不易陷入因沮喪、焦慮、絕望而引致思想封閉。
- » 有生機的環境 -- 除了時間、精力、空間和新鮮空氣這些保持身心健康的基本條件，還需要一個提供充足機會，容許嘗試、實驗和成長的社會，重視多元化才能和廣義的成功標準。
- » 激發和培育成長的關係 -- 溝通是建立關係的鑰匙，尤其是面對已確認、表達和肯定的負面情緒。

現今社會過份傾向和看重「卓越種子」的學術成績，並不惜以其餘三項元素為代價。可是其他三項對成長發展過程也同樣重要，甚至更為重要。就如種子種了在有毒的土壤、缺乏足夠的陽光、水份和肥料，小孩在這些條件下成長會被窒礙，甚至至永遠無法充分發揮其潛能。

不幸地，社會整體往往把精力投放在如何令種子表現得更好、學得更快和更努力；我們往往把收成不好怪罪在壞種子身上，比反思、想象、堅持不懈去辨識、挑戰及改變制度上的失敗容易。時間和精力固然重要，但每個人，由學生至家長、由老師至學校行政人員，以至非政府組織的員工，縱使確認過份重視短期學術表現是不健康，長遠會導致問題，也缺乏時間、精力和資源去改變現狀。結果，香港青少年面對日益增加至不可承受的期望和隨之而來的壓力，不少會選擇抽離、放棄希望、甚至想自殺，這正好從近年學生自殺潮的悲劇中映照出來。

如果這些「突破TEEN才計劃」參加者的故事，可以觸發哪怕只有一個的改變，也不緊要。我們必須承認時間和身心健康（外化為個人精力和活力）是我們最珍貴的資產，我們必須懂得更有智慧地投放時間、精力和專注力，改變才可能發生。作為成年人，如果我們把自己也拉扯至極限，根本沒有餘力去好好照顧他人，所以我們必須懂得愛護自己，才可以為下一代樹立正面的榜樣。當成人聲稱：「我沒有選擇、我要維持生計」，孩子得到的訊息便是成長是可以為任何「更值錢」的事放棄自由，以自己的目標和價值觀作出妥協，換來一生的無力感。

計劃參加者的經歷，突顯了窒礙計劃長期持續地產生正面影響的三個問題。歸根究底，這些問題連繫到更深層損害香港社會、經濟發展的問題：缺乏時間和精力的勞動人口，錯過以持續發展去孕育和體驗有意義和豐盛人生的機會。我們必須抗衡：



- » 強調成績、認知能力多於非認知能力如創意、協作和接受挑戰的傳統社會、文化和經濟思想，會窒礙香港年輕人的發展空間
- » 扭曲的價值觀，例如重視物質的本地文化，往往把金錢和物質財富等同成就和成功，從而令一些非物質的貢獻，例如照顧家庭等普遍認為是女性天職的價值被低估
- » 缺乏正面和啟迪人心的榜樣，以扭轉把年輕人推向負面和走進「牛角尖」的趨勢



當然這些議題並非單憑婦女基金會和「突破TEEN才計劃」可以解決，但至少我們不會被問題的複雜性嚇怕，仍致力透過與各界合作、互相學習、討論、分享、交流經驗，尋求解決方案。記下這些故事的目的是為大眾提供一個反思重要問題的起點：我們真正珍視的價值觀是甚麼呢？這些價值是否與我們希望為下一代帶來的相符呢？如果不是，我們需要甚麼的價值觀，以及如何開始把它孕育出來呢？

「突破TEEN才計劃」 概況：賦與青少年做 決定的權利

「突破TEEN才計劃」讓學生有機會和不同學校的學生交流和擴闊他們的社交圈子。這個計劃的目的不是讓好學生變得更優秀，而是凝聚一班本身不出色的學生，令他們可以互相幫助，一起成長。」

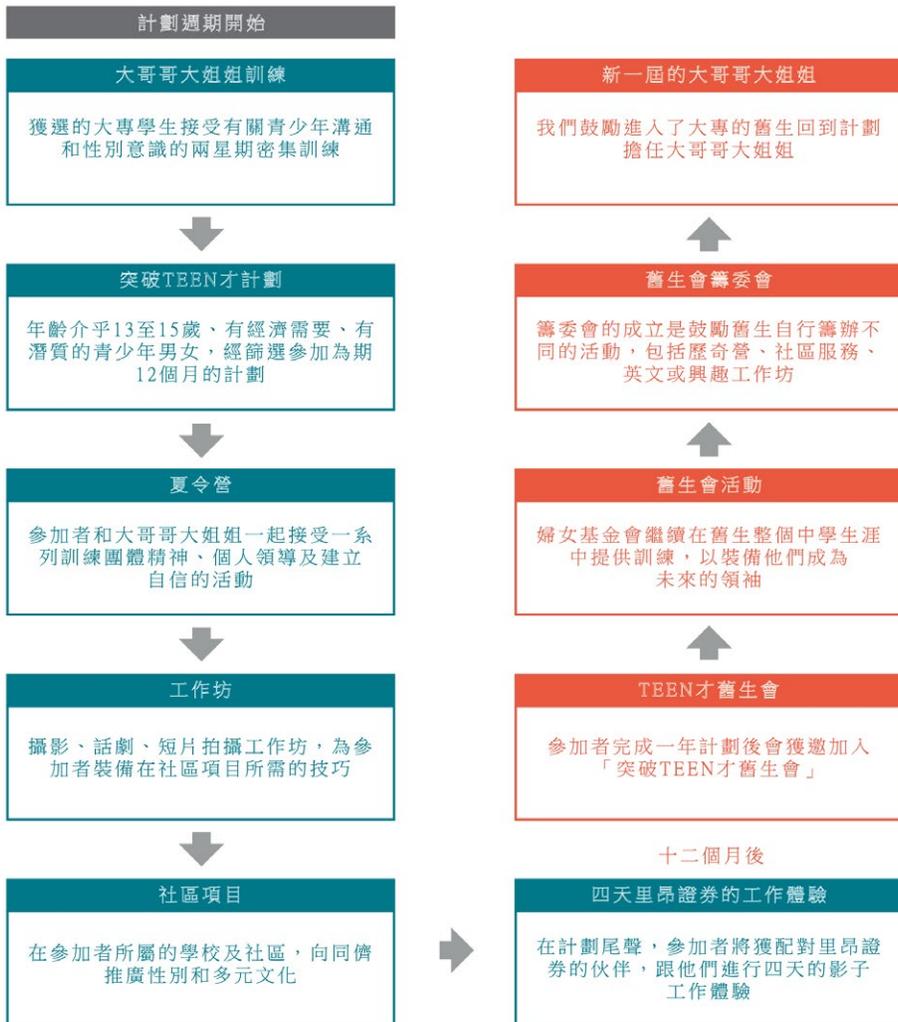
-- JACK，大哥哥11-12年度

「突破TEEN才計劃」這些年來一直演變。過去六年，每一年也挑選約40名年齡介乎13至15歲、有領袖潛能的男女學生加入為期一年的計劃。參加者皆來自資源匱乏或有創傷經歷的家庭，並因為他們所具備的潛能而獲選。計劃的目的一直是培育參加者的領導才能和性別意識。為達成這目的，計劃包括了一系列結構緊密的技巧工作坊、社區項目和富啟發性的民間和商界領袖演講。支撐計劃的是參加者與婦女基金會挑選和訓練的大哥哥大姐姐、婦女基金會員工和其他導師間互相扶持的關係。計劃推行至多年後的今天，證明坦誠的溝通是建基於互相尊重，也是建立緊密關係的基石。由計劃第一天開始，參加者已身處一個不分階級、重視不同意見、彼此尊重、權力平等的環境，來自不同組別學校的學生也會被平等看待為大家庭中的一份子。

建立長遠關係需要每個人的承擔。責任會轉移，但不會消失。我們總需要有人開始對話，然後由其他人回應。隨著年月日過去，每個人的角色可能也有所改變，但最終也學會如何去擔當領導和跟隨的角色。

參加者一開始已需要負起一定程度的投入和發展的個人責任。這裏不是一般本地學生經歷的傳統式教育，被拖著手、不停訓誨和「餵飼」等，取而代之的是參加者會被安排在鼓勵自立決策、激發自我動力的體驗中。活動的氛圍是給予參加者自我發展的機會。計劃代表一個安全的環境，讓他們犯錯及從錯誤中學習。透過計劃的壓軸社區項目，參加者學會團隊合作、公開演說和推動社會改變的技巧。

但「突破TEEN才計劃」不是在一年後便完結，計劃蘊含著回饋的精神。參加者從計劃畢業後，變成積極的舊生會成員，在踏入大學後再經申請及篩選，回到計劃擔任大哥哥大姐姐。計劃最終希望他們能透過這些關係建立的技巧和能力，訂立更遠大的目標和長大後推動改變，繼續正面影響他們的家庭、工作崗位和社區。



圖一：突破TEEN才計劃週期

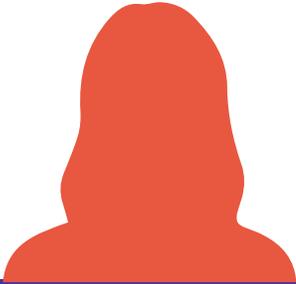
與「TEEN才」成長



首屆「突破TEEN才計劃」的參加者，轉眼已由中二升上中六，與計劃同行逾四年。他們很多在中學時期是「突破TEEN才計劃」舊生會的活躍份子，其中四名還在升讀大專後回來擔任大哥大姐。這報告結集了當年曾接受訪問的他們，在2014年畢業時的感言，2015年再次回顧的一些感想。

我們多以為年輕人是樂觀的，應該對將要展開的人生雀躍不已。但以下與年輕人的對話，最令人觸目的反而是年輕人對殘酷現實的妥協。雖然「突破TEEN才計劃」鼓勵一班TEEN參加者去追逐夢想，但四年來，這些年輕人每日的生活都會逼他們面對一些現實狀況。例如，他們發現很多機會都不是屬於他們的。四年前對跆拳道滿懷熱誠和信心的Vincent現在處處流露著厭倦。同樣地，Chloe亦對香港社會的希望幻滅。四年前的Elizabeth看似能妥善應付痛失雙親的經歷，但現在就感受到為未來打算的重擔，且不敢向家人傾訴秘密。Frank則例外地由剛參加計劃時極為害羞、懷疑自己的價值，變得更快樂，在學習電影與攝影上亦取得好成績。

他們的一言一語，反映了在香港成長的複雜經歷，掙扎著如何協調互相矛盾及競逐性的價值觀，擔心被迫追求缺乏真正選擇的生活，而不得不降低對自己和社會的期望……



「追求一個公平、公正、廉潔的社會是天真及不切實際的！」

– CHLOE

「我的公開試（中學文憑考試）成績平平。當我發覺公開試有多重要時，已經太遲，難以追上了。

我現在在台灣一所大學修讀電腦科學及工商管理，課餘兼職待應。我的成績很一般。這裡的生活沒有我想像般有趣。

我想擺脫家人。每當父親不知就裡便無理地對我和母親咆哮時，我便會很不開心。我覺得在香港無時無刻都被人監督和控制一切，沒有自由，不能做自己喜歡做的事。我在台灣沒有家人在旁的壓力，反而更自由。我跟父親完全沒有交流，但跟母親的關係很好，還會定期致電給她。我還未決定會留在台灣或回港，但似乎台灣較適合我，在香港較難生活。

我明白我的理想和現實永遠會有一段距離。我的理想社會或許難以達致，但我希望至少社會是公平、公正和廉潔的。可悲的是這個標準看來也遙不可及，也許**追求一個公平、公正和廉潔的社會是天真及不切實際的！**台灣和香港在這方面都好不到哪裡，在台灣，我看到餐廳如何逃稅。現在的我長大了，會看到事情的黑暗面。

我在「突破TEEN才計劃」學到幾個觀念，其中一個是性別定型。我認為這計劃成功地提升了我們在這方面的意識，我的思想亦受其影響。每當我跟人談起性別定型時，別人總說事情就是這樣的（男人跟女人都有特定的模式），生命本身就是不公平的。他們不能接受另一面的看法 -- 不公平是由性別定型造成。若我有家庭，而財政狀況又允許下，我想當個全職媽媽。我認為照顧家庭十分重要，我喜歡把東西打理得整齊清潔，讓我丈夫回家有個舒適的安樂窩。

我最仰慕的人是Rita。很多成人都裝作比我們知道得多，但Rita不會。她像一個二十多歲的人，不論對方甚麼年紀，都能與他們融洽相處，並願意聆聽和幫助人。」

程沛玉 (Rita)是婦女基金會副行政總裁，她一直有跟在台灣Chloe (化名)保持聯絡。Rita感受最深的是Chloe的無力感：「我想給她更多的支持，因為我深深感受到她對自己生命的無力和無助。她每天都要為口奔馳，為了賺錢維持生計和繳付學費，不論假期或學期間都要辛勤工作。她無時無刻都很焦慮，吃得不多，十分瘦削。除了缺錢，造成她無力和無助的另一原因來自她的家庭：她的家庭由男性角色主導，缺乏一個有力量或懂得培育的女性榜樣。如果她家中發生甚麼事，沒人能幫助或改善那情況。」

可悲的是，Rita描述Chloe身上的那股無力感絕非獨立個案，相信很多香港人，尤其是年輕人，都會找到共鳴。今天不少年輕人都或多或少對年長一輩失了些尊重，因為理應有能力推動改變的年長一輩，往往只是相反地示範了屈服在無力感下。這後果是廣泛而深遠的影響，正如Rita指Chloe認為「未來是不能確定的，想將來是沒意思的。」





可是視野是很重要的，行為是可以改變的。「突破TEEN才計劃」其中一個目的就是鼓勵跨代的交流和指導，以及提高參加者的性別意識及留意性別定型的負面影響。Chloe的想法正說明了像「突破TEEN才計劃」一類的計劃，只能教授性別定型的知識，但知識不足以改變個人的心態和行為。Chloe的人生目標仍然受傳統性別框架限制，可能基於她自身的生活經驗，情願退回常人的「正常」想法，也不以開放態度面對一連串可能的選擇。年輕人需要勇敢、客觀公正及具同理心的學習榜樣，鼓勵他們考慮不同出路和可能性。



「我無時無刻都感到很疲累！」
– ELIZABETH

當年Elizabeth (化名)為準備中學文憑公開試，她抱怨長期睡眠不足，嚴重至無法正常生活。

「我無時無刻都感到很疲累！通常晚上1-2時睡，早上6:30起床溫習；偶然會10時睡，然後清晨3-4時起床。現在的我，沒有什麼可令我開心，我的生命只圍繞著讀書。我最憂慮是金錢及考試成績，尚幸家人的財政還可負擔我的補習費。我的成績普通，不知道我讀書的方法是否正確，老師建議我溫習過去的考試卷，我花了兩個半小時才完成了一份卷，但我的專注力只有兩小時，之後便很暈，無法專心。」

就如很多「突破TEEN才計劃」參加者一般，她不會找家人尋求安慰：

「我很多秘密都不會跟家人說（我姨媽和哥哥），家人不知道我有男朋友，他們不想我拍拖。Rita就像我母親，她說的可能跟我家人差不多，但從家人口中說出就像多了一重隔閡，我也不知道為甚麼，我就是沒辦法把真正的想法告訴家人，但我可以告訴Rita，因為她能理解我們的想法。家人對我十分嚴厲。我真的很羨慕那些能跟哥哥、姊姊談心的朋友，我哥哥忙於工作，我則忙於學業，所以我們沒有機會談話。」

離校一年後，她變得成熟，與家人的關係也改善了：

「我們多了溝通，對彼此也寬容了。我有了更多自由，跟阿姨的關係也好了。」

起初，Elizabeth想在商科發展，但身邊的人都反對她的決定。

她現時一邊讀書，一邊做兩份兼職工作。可是成績仍然是她的主要憂慮。

「我擔心能否升讀大學學士學位及金錢」。

Rita指出Elizabeth像Chloe一樣，在學業及兼職之間掙扎，但覺得Elizabeth比較正面和樂觀：「她花很多時間在教會，在那裏她找到最大的支持。」



「生命就是要逼你妥協！」
-VINCENT

自中學畢業後，Vincent對他的將來看得頗悲觀：

「**生命就是要逼你妥協！**如果你不能維持生計，你怎會感到快樂？教跆拳道不能維生，而且不是你三十歲後還能做的事。要是追逐我的夢想，參加奧運比賽，我需要作出很多犧牲，包括家人和事業。即使我真的入了奧運，沒有人會在意；即使我贏了金牌，我可能得到一些名氣，但我還是賺不到多少錢。香港給予運動員的支援不足，我已做了七、八年，贏了亞洲錦標賽，但在香港，無人會賞識。」

我真的很欣賞得獎單車手黃金寶，能為自己的夢想犧牲一切，他從不認輸，或作出妥協，我沒法像他。我得考慮很多事情，例如我的生活，家庭和將來，我的顧憂令我沒法做我想做的事。

我想成為消防員，除此之外我還能做甚麼？警察只不過是「有牌爛仔」；如當海關，同事都上深圳玩樂，你可以不跟著去嗎？如果他們做些不道德的事，你可以不加入嗎？如果上司要

你做些違背良心的事，你可以不做嗎？要發展事業，就要取悅上司，跟他們應酬。若不這樣，他們就不站在你那一邊。我擔心生命會逼我妥協。」

畢業一年後，Vincent完成了毅進高級文憑課程，現在保良局負責帶領營地活動：

「當我見到我的學生改變，就會很滿足，就像「突破TEEN才計劃」把我改變。我想嘗試到外國生活，或許讀書吧！但我擔心家人。我的目標是得到穩定的收入，想成為消防員、警察或郵差。如果有機會，我想移民，在其他國家，人們有真正的生活，但在香港，我們只能算是生存。香港人賺得不多，但生活費高昂，填鴨式的教育制度，根本不可能裝備學生活出自己的人生。」

Vincent是活躍的T.E.E.N.舊生，他歸因「突破TEEN才舊生會」籌委會的經驗令他成熟了。Rita亦觀察到現在的Vincent成熟了、冷靜了，不再那麼衝動，人變得謙虛和懂得感恩，但他成熟的代價是失去了他招牌式的天真燦爛笑容，現在的他變得悲觀及負面，只專注於實際的謀生事情上，即使不甘心於目前的際遇，也失去了改變的衝勁。





「每個人都有自己的問題，但我們每個人也可做點事去改變！」

– FRANK

在第一屆的受訪者當中，Frank (化名)在抗逆能力及樂觀方面的改變可說是最大的。他在中五時很不快樂，但慶幸在教會中找到藉慰。

「中五時的我頗不快樂 -- 沒有朋友，爸爸又「生蛇」，常悶悶不樂地躲在家中，甚至在我六月生日時，也很孤單，情緒很低落。無所事事，沒人陪伴的我，有天碰上鄰居，問他去哪裡，他說正要去教會，我問可否一起去，就這樣我開始了返教會。那年的七月至九月，我頻密地返教會，教會讓我學會感恩，我不是時時都想返，但每次在教會，也剛好在講述些我正煩惱的事，聽完後便忘卻當時的問題。教會裏每個人也很溫暖、友善和真誠。中六的我快樂得多，獲邀成為風紀，有一位很好的跑步教練，結識了幾位同樣喜愛音樂的朋友，爸爸的健康也好轉了。」（他父親在一年後離世了。）

現在的Frank沒空上教會了，他想以大哥哥的身份，幫助同樣經歷掙扎的現屆T.E.E.N.參加者：

「我當了大哥哥後變得成熟。我的改變在「突破TEEN才計劃」開始，在當中接觸了很多人，得到了很多精采有趣的經歷，後來更成為「突破TEEN才舊生會」籌委會的一份子。加入計劃前，我很少說話，以為那代表「型」，也沒甚麼自信。「突破TEEN才計劃」的各項活動，真的擴闊了我的視野。當我還是計劃參加者時，很多個人問題都不懂得處理，故現在我想幫助跟我過去一樣的參加者。每個人都有自己的問題，但我們每個人也可做點事去改變！」

Rita憶述大家如何被Frank在大哥哥大姐姐遴選面試時的分享感動。「婦女基金會T.E.E.N.計劃經理Jill，想起Frank當年參加的模樣，跟他面試時自信的表達及分享，便感動得熱淚盈眶。當他獲選為大哥哥後，他在訓練營的表現很好，儘管當時他父親已病重。雖然不久後，他父親不幸地離世，卻沒有影響他對計劃的付出。他的熱心幫忙及投入，令他成為參加者中最受歡迎的大哥哥之一。他真的很照顧參加者，跟當年參加計劃時的他，是其中一位最被動

的參加者，簡直是一個強烈對比。」

Frank對在香港知專設計學院修讀中的創意課程顯得很積極：

「我修讀創意課程時很有動力和決心，但當我工作時的動力更大，當我剪輯影片時，我會很專注和勤力。在生命中有方向是十分重要的，當我遇到困難時，我會嘗試找方法解決。」

Frank似乎是少數因找到生命方向，而感到希望的參加者之一。他經歷過迷失、掙扎，而在找到出路的過程中，變得更自信和樂觀。對Frank來說，在他人生的最低潮時，「突破TEEN才計劃」和教會的支持，似乎培養了他真正的感恩，令他能以希望面對挑戰，而不是被無力感佔據，變得消極。

從這四名參加者的故事，可見「突破TEEN才計劃」對成長中的他們在面對混亂和自我發展階段有重要的影響，他們都從計劃中得到一些得著。他們及其生命在投入職場後，會如何發展還有待觀察，但如前述，他們正面對著真實不過的生活和經濟壓力，今天的年輕人身處充斥著負面影響的社會，包括家庭間缺乏信任和溝通、正面榜樣寥寥可數，還有扭曲的價值觀。



「TEEN才」 故事的啟發#1： 絕望與無力感



雖然參加者在「突破TEEN才計劃」下都經歷了成長和蛻變，但他們故事背後均突顯了他們對未來和身處的環境感到絕望及無助。歸根究底，這源於他們在成長期缺乏正面的模仿榜樣、家庭或其他照顧者的情緒支援。雖然「突破TEEN才計劃」為他們提供了代替的環境、互相支持的關係和榜樣，但計劃本身不足以抵銷圍繞及影響著他們的負面思想和情緒。

當參加者最終中學畢業後（有些人甚至更早），他們便要面對真實世界的挑戰，特別從Chloe和Vincent的故事，可以明顯感受得到，他們對社會重視物質價值，多於公平、公義、自由和平等等價值的失望和理想幻滅。他們感到沒有選擇，只能放棄理想，甚至價值觀，以維持生計。這看法與之後的參加者相同，因為香港的年輕人，愈來愈感受到遵從大眾價值以維生的壓力。

ANNIE，T.E.E.N. 12-13 年度： 「我做不了英雄！」

Annie 是一個很有想法的青少年。她接受訪問時還是一位中四學生，已感受到要適應環境時，理想和生活的選擇便會產生矛盾。在反思何謂英雄時，她有感而發：

「在我的生命裏，我從來沒有做過英雄。例如當老師在上課時錯怪了同學，我不會指正，以免惹麻煩。我想這跟環境有關，當所有人都一樣，你不會想自己成為例外的一個；否則，別人會視你為異類。我曾想與別人不同，但之後發覺這樣很難生存，我跟其他人完全沒有話題，他們覺得我冷漠，我真的感到孤獨，所以決定不突出自己，最好的做法是跟意見相同的人在網上交流，但不會見他們。所以我選擇甚麼也不做了，所以「我做不了英雄！」

KELVIN， T.E.E.N. 13-14 年度： 「但這不過是一個嗜好！」

當時還是中三學生的Kelvin，訪問一開始便說沒有任何嗜好或興趣，但不到15分鐘，他便細說自己多享受剪輯影片和創意寫作。他提起這事時，我們正討論他的英文成績。雖然他知道英文的重要，卻提不起動力去改善。我承認透過教科書學語文是可以很沉悶的，因而建議他尋找有興趣的來閱讀和觀看，或會更有學習動力。一陣短暫的沉默後，他坦言自己喜歡摸索不同的影片剪輯技巧，亦留意到網上很多教學影片也是英文。當我鼓勵他可投放更多時間在這方面，因這可能是他希望當警察以外的另一個事業選擇，他回應說：「**但這不過是一個嗜好！純粹娛樂！**」我只能想像到成績欠佳的男生，往往被灌輸當警察是最實際的選擇、是一份社會地位不錯，收入又穩定的工作。又因為他沒接觸過在創作行業工作及以剪接影片維生的人，便混淆自己喜歡做的事只是嗜好及玩意，看不到作為事業發展的可能。

像Kelvin一類的學生，要鼓勵他們去發展自己潛能，不單需要給予他們新的體驗，還需要不同的人與他們交流，給予他們不同及更廣闊的視野，這正是「突破TEEN才計劃」為參加者提供的其中兩個重點。

當計劃參加者及他們身邊的人，也看不到眼前不少真正的機會，在一個短視的世界中成長，只會感到絕望和無力。當所有人都以為成功只有一條路時，通往其他方向的門便會關上，潛能也無法發展，更會隨時導致破壞性的後果，甚至悲劇。

在2016年3月，七名香港學生在9日內了結了自己的生命。在此前六個月，即2015年9月至2016年3月期間，共有22名學生自殺，其中四人自殺是發生在五日之內²，學生的抑鬱、焦慮和自殺警號已響起。這些死訊引致不少學生紛紛表達沮喪和絕望，其中在Facebook「名校Secrets」群組的匿名留言中，不難發現以下的例子：

「這個時代下學生除了讀書，已沒有甚麼可以做。但不讀書，甚麼都做不了，也沒有未來。但就算讀飽書，得到的未來也不是我們所想要的未來。大學畢業，做專業人士；做不到專業，就入政府；入不了政府，就是廢青打工仔，



²Elizabeth Cheung and Peace Chiu, "Students at breaking point: Hong Kong announces emergency measures after 22 suicides since the start of the academic year", 南華早報, 2016年3月14日下午12:05更新, <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1923465/students-breaking-point-hong-kong-announces>

然後一世人只有結婚、供樓、生小孩這幾個checkpoint（中途站），終點是死亡。根本上，當你聽到這個遊戲的關卡，你就會覺得不吸引、不好玩、不想玩。玩下去只會浪費時間來增添痛苦。不明白為甚麼到了此時此刻，報紙還會把責任推卸到死者「不愛讀書」之上，好像是性格有缺陷一樣。社會是時候要反思，青少年自殺的背後，為甚麼學生會不愛人生，不愛未來。」

代與代之間的差異，以及對缺乏機會和選擇的絕望已不再是新鮮事。世上也沒有比變幻更恆久的事，但改變的步伐正以無人能預期的速度加快。我們固然知道未來一定與今天不一樣，只要回望過去10年，便可知改變的步伐是如何急速。10年前，社交網絡和分享平台還只有雛型。今日，Facebook 和 Airbnb已是極其成功的公司。10年前，上哈佛一課的唯一方法是考進大學、付高昂的學費。今天任何人也可透過網上平台，如edX.org或其他大型MOOC (Massive Open Online Course大型網上開放學習平台) 報讀哈佛、史丹福或香港大學的課程。我們看到舊行業被淘汰，現有行業在轉型，新行業和技術冒起，此種種都在改變我們生活和工作的模式。

可是……

我們或基於無知、恐懼和缺乏想像等原因，仍然抓緊舊的規範。成人把他們的恐懼投射在自己的孩子身上，當小孩發揮想像力時，成人通常會嘲笑、輕視他們的創意，視之為天真或年少的幻想，卻忘了改變和轉變總是由年輕人的幻想推動的，就如朱克伯格創立面書時只有19歲。雖說，世上能成為朱克伯格的人萬中無一，但世上每個角落也有年輕人在幹著令人振奮的新鮮事，只要一窺2016年福布斯亞洲版「30位30歲以下創業者」名單³便可見一斑。雖然我們的社會仍會需要醫生、工程師、老師和警察，但仍然有很多其他職業存在，甚至不會受香港地域所限。與此同時，仍有很多機會有待創造。

³福布斯亞洲版「30位30歲以下創業者」名單：<http://www.forbes.com/30-under-30-asia-2016>

香港是否有為未來裝備今天的年輕人，還是只為轉眼即逝的現在作準備？我們應如何面對現今的慣常被快速淘汰？當今天的學生對未來有一套想法時，我們又是否願意聆聽，更重要是會否給予他們時間和資源去嘗試？還是我們也不自覺地不斷把年輕人和社會推向精神失常的邊緣，甚至不察覺是我們自己一手造成的？俗語有云：「精神失常的意思是重覆做同樣的事情，但期待不一樣的結果。」

「TEEN才」 故事的啓發#2： 家庭內缺乏信任和溝通



對很多受訪的計劃參加者來說，他們對改變社會、追求更美好將來的絕望和無力感，與其在家中和學校的壓力有關。很多參加者感到父母不了解他們、不支持他們，而老師則只會不斷強調爭取好成績、入大學、找份高薪厚職的重要。這些均導致溝通的鴻溝、家長和子女間互不信任的惡性循環。

家長經常投訴成長中的子女：「我的子女什麼也不對我說」。但我的經驗是青少年大多很健談，很願意跟真正有興趣聆聽和了解他們的人分享自己的想法。這當中沒甚麼秘密，只需聆聽者停止說教和批評、不堅持只有自己的世界觀是對的、有耐性，和肯理解青少年仍在探索自己的身份、學習清晰地表達自己那數不清，甚至困惑的想法、情緒和渴望。

AMAZING, T.E.E.N. 11-12年度： 「我跟我媽有嚴重的代溝。」

當Amazing中學畢業時，他最大的不快來自學校和家人：

「我媽和姐姐經常爭執，爸爸不跟我們同住，但我跟他較親近。**我跟媽媽有嚴重的代溝**，當我弄傷了，她會因為我不看醫生而呼喝我。她常常對我大聲呼喝，或許她是關心我，但我真的跟她無法溝通，她把我所有問題都歸咎於我拍拖上（但他當時並沒有拍拖）。有時我溫書，晚了回家，她便指責我跟女朋友拍拖，我真的不知道怎樣回應。我告訴她是在溫書，她會說：『圖書館會開到這麼夜嗎？你有這麼多書要讀嗎？』」我告訴她自修室開放至晚上10時，但她翌日還是問同樣問題。」

幸運的是，Amazing遇到一位老師，幫助他想通這些問題和改善了與家人的關係。中學畢業一年後，Amazing 在城市大學修讀他一直夢寐以求的社工副學士課程。或許因他對前路的不確定和恐懼減少了，以及有老師的引導，他現在跟家人的關係改善了。

「青春期的我，自我中心得很，常常反駁父母，認為與他們有代溝。之後有一位老師讓我明白應該珍惜與父母的關係，如果我想他們改變，應該主動踏出第一步，做些令他們開心的事。我學會了從我媽的角度出發，諒解她。我們現在多了溝通，我會讓她知道我的生活事，例如學校成績和跟誰拍拖等，現在她以關心取代懷疑。我們之間還是有代溝的，例如對佔領中環的看法，但我們學會了避免因意見不合而吵架。」



GAZELLE, T.E.E.N. 11-12年度：「我的家庭較複雜。我不太喜歡我爸。」

當Gazelle(化名)還在中學時，她經常受家庭問題困擾：

「**我的家庭有點複雜**。我會跟媽媽說話，有時也會跟哥哥說，但**我不太喜歡我爸**（他賭錢，脾氣又差）。當我回到家時，我只會入房。媽媽會直接問我問題，例如是否拍拖，然後說不要浪費時間，讀多點書罷。」

畢業一年後，她父親去世了。

「當我爸離世後，我想起很多快樂的童年回憶，令我覺得應該對他好一點。我跟媽媽的關係時好時壞，我們的代溝也很大（42年！）。在爸爸去世前，我跟媽媽有較多交談，很多時也為她給錢爸爸賭馬而爭吵。在他過世後，媽媽的情緒不太穩定，當她不開心時，就會對我呼喝，怪責我賺的錢不夠多、讀書不夠勤力。現在我們各有各忙，不多說話了。我嘗試易地而處，從媽媽角度去想，特別在爸爸過世後，但她不明白爸爸過世，對我也打擊很大，所以我能做的只是儘量不跟她爭吵。我跟哥哥關係不錯，我們常常聊天。爸過世後，他搬回家住了。」

從Gazelle 的故事，可見父母如何壓抑子女。在中國文化教導下的子女，被要求尊重父母，包括在不合理的情況下。在Gazelle的例子，她承受著破碎家庭的重擔，自己賺錢養活自己的同時，還被標籤為壞孩子。



欣, T.E.E.N. 13-14年度：「我不會在家人面前哭，我只會埋在床裏哭。」

就讀名校的欣，在中三時因為太忙碌的日程而苦惱，甚至情緒崩潰：「當學校社工跟我談夢想時，我就開始哭，我反思我的人生究竟是甚麼。我每日也很忙，不夠時間休息，在朋友面前我顯得很開心、快樂，但內裏我真的很累。幾個月前，我和我圈子的四個朋友鬧翻了，只因我忙得沒有時間和他們吃午飯。我很少跟別人傾訴不快，只把心事埋在心裏。那天聽完社工一番話後，晚上便再也忍不住，哭了一整晚，眼也腫起來，如果別人見到我也有脆弱的一面，不知會怎看我。大哭一場後我覺得好了一點，**我不會在家人面前哭，我只會埋在床裏哭。**父母給我很大壓力，要我取得好成績，將來找一份好工作。我的姊姊和哥哥成績都不好，所以所有壓力都放在我身上。在父親面前，我是個傻大姐，如果我在他們面前哭，不敢想像他們會如何處理，會想什麼，一定覺得是發生了很壞的事。」

青少年與父母均互相投訴彼此間難以溝通。父母覺得子女把事情藏起來，子女則覺得父母知愈少，愈少機會被罵，反正父母不會聽信他們。

兩代缺乏溝通已不是新鮮事，亦可以改善。這不僅是溝通技巧問題，一方面成年人對今時今日青少年所面對的獨特經歷、環境、壓力和挑戰的理解有落差；另一方面，青少年也對父母的背景、困境或奮鬥經歷缺乏理解。父母很少會反思自身的經歷，如何塑造成他們現有的世界觀，因此沒有與子女分享他們反思過的寶貴經驗和智慧，反以生硬的命令、吩咐取代，特別是「照我說的去做，而非跟著我去做」的那類成年人，只會強化父母的專制和偽善形象，即使那是出於好意或自以為是以子女最大利益出發。

「TEEN才」故事的啓發#3：

缺乏正面及勇敢的榜樣



計劃參加者以他們的父母或身邊的成年人為學習的榜樣，可是他們眼見的，跟他們被教導的價值往往互相違背。青少年對成年人最不滿的是「講一套，做一套」、「自私」、「重錢重利」，而不為更大的福祉著想。以下只是其中的一些例子：

「我好怕成個腦淨係諗住點樣做先對自己有利的大人，好恐怖！佢地好可憐！只係知道錢，忘記自己個心係餓緊。」

「社會給青少年甚至大人，都有一種錢就是萬能的感覺。」

「D大人成日問你咁樣做有咩用？其實有D野唔一定係物質上可量度價值先叫有用，好似快樂，係情感上既價值，係無辦法量度，但唔代表無用。」

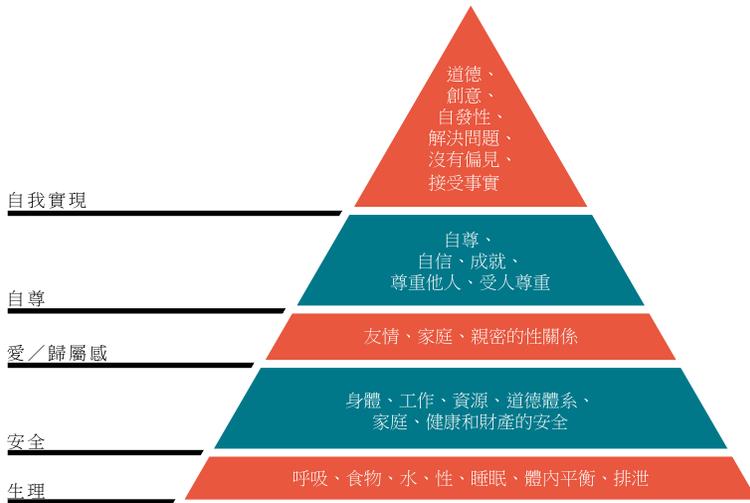
另一方面，很多成年人都視現今的青少年為被寵壞了的港孩。畢竟大部份青少年視為理所當然的舒適和繁榮，是建築在上一輩的眼淚、汗水和犧牲上，這犧牲包括了在艱苦的經濟環境和動盪的社會下掙扎求生，包括了他們個人的夢想和抱負，結果成功地打造香港成為閃耀的國際大都會、金融中心。但我們的下一代是否也有同樣的機會？

在1999年，香港的平均月薪為\$11,839。直至2016年第四季度，香港的平均月薪是\$15,451⁴。如以過去17年的30.5%薪金增長，對比過去五年平均每月人均支出（2009/10 (HK\$7,137) and 2014/15 (HK\$9,253)）的29.6%增長⁵，可見通漲如何加劇一般香港「打工仔」的生活壓力。

隨著個人和社會發展的轉變，現代人的需要和價值觀亦隨之改變。按亞伯拉罕·馬斯洛（Abraham Maslow）的「需求層次理論」，今天的青少年包括來自基層家庭的，也在渴望更高層次，即「金字塔」第三層的「愛」和「歸屬感」或以上；可是今天已屆中年的父母，成長於需要為「金字塔」最低兩層的「生存」和「安全」而掙扎的香港，他們意識到「安全」並非理所當然，需要艱辛地建立，相對他們的子女只會視為理所當然，這就是代與代之間，產生溝通和看法差異的主因之一。

⁴平均月薪資料來源：<http://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B10500092016QQ04B0100.pdf>

⁵每人每月平均開支資料來源：<http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/so290.jsp>



圖二：馬斯洛的「需要金字塔」理論

來源：Maslow, A.H. (1943). "A theory of human motivation". *Psychological Review*. 50 (4): 370-96.

當上一輩人視追求財富為其個人及家庭的主要目標，這些財政上的穩定，為他們的子孫提供了追求更高層次需求的優勢。換言之，能夠在必然安全及溫飽的環境中成長的青少年，會是更有興趣花精力追求歸屬感、被接納、探索及實現他們內在需要的一代。在本質上，兩代間的生命意義，由累積財富及地位，變成發掘及發展個人潛能的渴望，不過是香港經濟發展下的自然現象。

可是繁榮下的香港，近年發生不少衝突和危機，原因是並非所有人都得到這些經濟上的「安全」。香港有14.3%⁶人口仍然活在貧窮線以下，今天的香港，青少年面對愈來愈狹窄的機會，和感覺上較低的生活質素，要改變現狀，重拾過去社會上的正面動力和和諧，香港需要真正思維上的轉變。

⁶2015年香港整體貧窮人口資料來源：http://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/pdf/poverty_report_2015_c.pdf

「TEEN才」的

解藥：

建立溝通和互信的關係、
具備正面和勇氣的榜樣、
栽種希望

關係有兩種模式：一種能助人盡展所長，發揮自己最優越的一面；另一種則突顯對方的缺點，讓人意志消磨。不幸地，計劃的參加者常感到與父母、師長、甚至朋友的關係是後者。

跟過去多屆「突破TEEN才計劃」參加者談天，他們都重複提到一個人：婦女基金會副行政總裁程沛玉(Rita)。對很多以往的參加者來說，Rita猶如他們另一個母親，經常提醒他們自己擁有的優點、對自己失去信心時不要放棄信念。計劃首三年的參加者多視她為榜樣、受愛戴的導師，她會為學生改變了壞習慣而歡呼，當他們為成績、家庭或關係失落時，成為他們WhatsApp的傾訴對象。Rita的例子提醒了即使成年人有多忙碌，願意花時間和精力，鼓勵學生相信自己是很重要的。以下只輯錄幾位早年參加者的分享，以突顯具有支持的關係，對青少年的成長和發展有多重要。

「Rita真正明白年輕人。我們通常在大人面前會有不同的表現，但她像是我們的好朋友。剛開始計劃時，我原打算退出，但她不允許，一直打電話給我。我雖然得到這機會，卻沒有珍惜，但她沒有放棄我，還不斷鼓勵我善用這個機會。如果不是Rita，我就不會留在「突破TEEN才計劃」-- Amazing, T.E.E.N. 11-12年度

「Rita真的很疼我們。當我們要求參與一些活動，如上次台灣之旅，但沒有資金，Rita就會找贊助給我們。我功課學業上有問題時，她就幫我找補習社。婦女基金會真的為我們做了很多。」-- Dory, T.E.E.N. 11-12年度

「我改變了一些我以為自己永遠也沒法改變的。我以前沒有方向，也很不成熟。Rita經常幫我們尋找方向，經常給我們意見。至少我知道現在所學的，對將來有什麼用。在此之前，我只知道我要讀書，不太清楚讀來做甚麼…… Rita真的很特別，要找一個像你媽媽的人很難，但她把我當作自己的女兒看待，當她知道我有敏感，便會在WhatsApp及Facebook問候我。」-- Gazelle, T.E.E.N. 11-12年度

「最困擾我的是家人的健康，和欠缺一班親密的朋友，有時我會覺得沒人關心。『突破TEEN才計劃』給我歸屬感，我常常問Rita和Jill的意見，我知道當我不開心時，可

以找他們傾訴。」 -- Helen, T.E.E.N. 11-12年度

「我在『突破TEEN才計劃』裏學到包容，也從Rita身上學會服務他人的心態。她幫助別人時，從不要求回報。之前有參加者走歪了路，她也不會放棄他們，亦不會只在計劃期間才幫助我們，她在計劃完後仍會關心我們。當她在Facebook見到我不開心的留言，便會立刻傳訊給我，問我過得怎樣，為什麼不開心等。她不止幫助年輕人，還會幫助老人。認識她之後，我變得更快樂，對人和對事也變得更包容。以前我不喜歡跟成績不好的人做朋友，害怕他們會拖累我的成績，漸漸地我只想跟有利於我的人做朋友。就在我快要變成這樣的人時，『突破TEEN才計劃』和Rita把我拉回來，教我如何接受生命中不同的東西，擁抱和享受生命。以前的我會以是否在同水平或地位來判斷別人，但現在我能接受和跟不同的人相處。」 -- Annie, T.E.E.N. 12-13年度

毫無疑問，Rita跟計劃早期的參加者以高度個人化和真摯的交流模式，為計劃定下了調子。但長遠而言，任何計劃也不能只靠一人的付出來維繫，不管那付出有多大。Rita意識到計劃的發展，不能依仗她一人，近年她放手了很多。今天的參加者不再那麼多提及Rita，他們仍會熱切地分享，在計劃中與不同人結下的友誼，以及他們對項目經理Jill Chung 和項目主任Davy Mak的尊敬和喜愛。

現時大部份照顧和指導計劃參加者的責任，都交托在已受訓練的大哥哥大姐姐身上，讓參加者在加入的第一年，與他們建立更緊密的關係，而大哥哥大姐姐亦會更投入計劃，發展出互相支援的網絡。



正如2011-12年度的計劃參加者Angela所言：「開始時，我跟大哥哥大姐姐建立關係，比跟其他參加者容易，他們問了我很多問題，令我說話。我們組至今仍跟大哥哥大姐姐有聯繫，會在WhatsApp群組問他們感情和功課等問題，他們真的很關心我們。」

計劃首年試行的特別之處，在於一眾參加者均與Rita建立關係。在計劃踏入第六個年頭，計劃裏的每個人也為推動計劃而付出，有如在貧瘠的土地上播種。這計劃在香港仍是獨特，在於它強調讓參加者在安全和沒有批判性的環境下，透過不同的體驗和機會，勇敢地突破自己的舒適圈，締造更多的友誼、學習更了解自己。這計劃相信即使沙漠也有綠洲，而T.E.E.N.大家庭中的每位參加者、婦女基金會的員工及義工都各盡他們的本份，幫助香港最需要幫助的青少年。

你可以為一點改變做些事嗎？



沒有時間便沒有希望：時間是孕育關係和潛能的代價

香港是一個步伐急速、缺乏時間的城市。人人都習慣了以撲火、捷徑去解決問題及維持運作。我們很習慣以貌取人，著重「贏在起跑線上」。正因為我們如此缺乏時間，我們也傾向重視短期目標和短暫的解決方案。

在香港這樣的環境下，很少人和機構願意熱切地投放時間、資源和精力去推動真正和持續的改變。因此現時坊間為弱勢青少年提供的，多是短期和臨時性的工作坊和計劃，婦女基金會能在2009年推行計劃至今，得到里昂證券承諾八年的支持，更顯得難能可貴。里昂證券和婦女基金會均明白時間和承諾的重要，才能和參加者建立長久的關係，指導他們渡過成長的關鍵期。

全賴里昂證券的支持，計劃才能透過「突破TEEN才舊生會」持續跟進所有參加者，這平台令婦女基金會能罕有地長時間與200多名參加者保持緊密的關係。雖然以上的訪問未必極具代表性，但也帶出了部份在香港長大的青少年的獨特經歷、需要，及他們如何看待身邊的世界。

在「突破TEEN才計劃」的首年，沉默、不合作、不投入、不擅辭令的參加者，都已變為有自信、積極投入團隊的一份子，他們的改變令參與計劃的人，包括婦女基金會的員工和他們的老師也感驚訝，令大家可以樂觀地延續計劃。第一年的參加者帶出最重要的訊息是：我們的邊緣青少年，如所有青少年一樣，只是需要關係的支持，給他們安全感去承擔風險、建立動力、自信和溝通技巧。但接下來的幾年，我們更清晰知道，這些改變是不可以預計的，不一定朝著單線發展的，尤其是在混沌的青春期。對一部份參加者來說，他們發現自己的改變，甚至表達感激，是來自後來的舊生會活動或其他人生經歷。

Holly (T.E.E.N., 11-12年度) 為準備中學文憑試，在過去兩年都不是舊生會的活躍份子。公開試後，她重返舊生會，並在一次艱辛的野外訓練營後，寫了以下一段說話給 Rita：

「親愛的Rita媽：

我很感激妳看得出我有多努力和轉變了多少。我發現自己在這訓練營間改變了很多，特別是與四年前參加突破TEEN才訓練營時比較。以前的我喜歡扮公主，現在我終於懂得如何照顧其他人。我覺得自己成熟了，成為一個更好的人，一個我一直想成為的人：有毅力和決心去達到目標。我見到一個新的自己，最終找到自己的光芒。我以往只見到自己的弱項，更曾懷疑自己哪裡有優點。」（Holly 被選為16-17年度計劃的大姐姐）

Cat (T.E.E.N., 11-12年度) 在舊生會中並不活躍。但出乎意外地，她在中學文憑試後傳訊息給Rita，對在計劃及婦女基金會其他活動中，得到的所有友誼、指導和經歷表示感激：

「我很感激婦女基金會給予我的所有機會。如果沒有大家，我不會有那麼多美好的回憶、經歷、友誼和指導。我所說的是，多謝婦女基金會的每一位員工，籌辦了這麼美好的活動。多謝你們所做的一切。」

「突破TEEN才計劃」毋庸置疑地影響了一群參加者，而每位參加者亦互相受其個人、社會經濟、文化環境及其他因素影響著。計劃經歷多年，婦女基金會對此已掌握了更具體和實在的理解。

對我而言，六年經驗的寶貴發現，是個人成長的潛能，受制於個人可控制的因素以外，需要時間去認識及理解。對成長期的青少年，精神和情緒極受社交和生理改變影響，時間和耐性顯得尤為重要。



正面改變的札根，需要耐性。快速的改變或會是短暫，改變步伐較慢的人，可能反而有更持久的改變。有些已離開計劃的參加者，過了些日子後回歸；對婦女基金會而言，最重要的是這門永遠為他們而開。

近兩屆的大哥哥大姐姐，有九位是第一、二屆的參加者，經正式申請、面試而入選，開展了計劃一個良性循環的軌跡。曾經歷過困擾的他們，現成為後來參加者的正面榜樣及導師，他們的個人改變，對有相同困擾的參加者而言，是最強大的鼓勵和最真實的見證，讓參加者明白只要有時間、毅力、對新思維、經驗持開放的態度，今日的困擾將會化為將來的力量。



成就美好將來的代價

什麼的價值觀最能解決青少年所面對的問題？

抑鬱和絕望的解藥，是給予學生更多時間和自由去發掘、去犯錯和從錯誤中學習。要正面教育和塑造我們下一代，成為快樂和有貢獻的成年人，所須的是時間，並沒有替代品。提倡讓小孩放慢步伐，享受更開心的童年，在今天人人都在追趕改變、對未來充滿憂慮的環境下，似乎有違常理。可是只要想深一層，我們真正需要的或許不是加速，而是更有耐性、樂觀、不害怕慢下來，才可給予我們空間，成就一個更健康、更快樂的社會，並重新發現耐性和抗逆力的重要。

解決家庭間缺乏信任和溝通的妙藥也是時間 -- 聆聽的時間、對話的時間、通過分享正面經歷來維繫關係的時間，以欣賞取代命令、批評和指責的時間。

最後，缺乏勇氣和正面榜樣的解藥便是勇氣。在今時今日的社會，怎樣才算是有勇氣？其中一種勇氣是為成功重新定義。與其以成績、工作銜頭、金錢及財富衡量成功，我們更應該以年輕人可承擔的風險、克服弱點和挑戰的堅持、對人的慷慨和仁慈、擁有的快樂和希望來衡量。成年人必須以身教示範和指引青少年，建立以正面價值為本的性格特質，例如情緒智商、側隱之心、忍耐力、謙卑、誠信、對人的尊重、迎接不確定的勇氣、願意改變、對新想法及新思維持開放態度。

最終，我們希望此書能引起「突破TEEN才計劃」參加者、他們的家長、老師及整體社會的討論，以及鼓勵他們在態度和行為上的改變。我們需要勇氣、承擔及齊心合力，以扭轉現時不斷攀升的青少年自殺、試圖自殺、自殘及其他受精神健康困擾的個案，為整體香港重新定義一個更快樂和健康的社會。

建立正向溝通及抗逆力的資源

為幫助青少年建立希望及增長思維，成人需以身作則，願意摒棄成人就是「生命專家」這概念。以下的資源曾於婦女基金會的「突破TEEN才計劃」及「智選人生計劃」中測試使用：

正向溝通：

筆記：

課題：正向溝通。

網址：https://www2.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/scds/images/content/activities/Positive_Psychology_Training_App/PPTrainingApp_PositiveCommunication.pdf

水桶理論：

書本：

Rath & Clifton (2004), *How full is your Bucket?*, New York: Gallup Press

希望思維：

書本：

何敏賢、袁雅儀 (2013), *點亮希望 - 開展色彩人生*, 香港：協康會

文章:

Vicki Zakrzewski: *How to Help Students Develop Hope*, 2012.

網址：

http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_help_students_develop_hope

增長 vs 固有思維：

書本：

Dweck, Carol S. (2007), *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, New York: Ballantine Books

文章：

McKay, Tom, *The Brains of Successful vs. Unsuccessful People Actually Look Very Different*, 2014. 網址：<http://mic.com/articles/89579/the-brains-of-successful-vs-unsuccessful-people-actually-look-very-different>

為未來作準備：

文章：

E-kids:STEM,打破性別偏見·拓展女性就業路向, 2016, 31-34頁.

網址：https://twfhk.org/sites/default/files/1229_PCV_1.pdf

程沛玉：對TSA及未來教育的前瞻, 2015。

網址：

[http://www.ohmykids.org/2015/10/對TSA及未來教育的前瞻-](http://www.ohmykids.org/2015/10/對TSA及未來教育的前瞻-程沛玉/)

程沛玉/

錄像：

Sugata Mitra: The Future of Learning.

網址：

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-e9VWRMWcdI>

了解青少年：

文章：

Linda Stadel: The Emotional Skills Every Teen Needs to be Taught.

網址：

[http://lindastade-educationwriter.tumblr.com/post/157190477177/](http://lindastade-educationwriter.tumblr.com/post/157190477177/the-emotional-skills-every-teen-needs-to-be-taught)

the-emotional-skills-every-teen-needs-to-be-taught

錄像:

1. 鄧家怡 Carrie Tang: A Hong Kong Girl's Perspective.

網址：http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PggYQro_prY

2. Dan Siegel: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain.

網址：<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH-BO1rjXbQ>

講座摘錄:

- Why Teens Turn From Parents to Peers:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thxlUme7Pc8>
- Why Teens Seek Novelty & Danger:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGcFqzZYjxQ>
- The Purpose of the Teenage Brain:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gw9GrgNcYcg>

支持婦女基金會，攜手推動社會改變。

鳴謝

個人

Adrienne Yu
Alan Li
Alice Li
Andy Lau
Arielle Stambler
Arthur Hui
Belinda Hoi
Billy Yau
Cecillia Chen
Charlie Wong
Chelsea Borchers
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