



The Road Travelled So Far and Wide



Dr. H.Y. Ng
Programme Director 2002-2008

I would like to begin this short memoir by congratulating the M.Soc.Sc (Counselling) Alumni Association (AA) for its first mounting of a Newsletter before recounting the birth of the counselling programme.

The idea of creating this programme has been a response to sustain university education in face of substantial budget cut by the government on tertiary education. Despite its mundane origin, in September 2002, the programme began with a bang rather than a whimper, as applicants far exceeded the modest number originally set, hence, the use of two streams within one class to accommodate the demand and the diverse backgrounds of the student population. The arrangement of such a structure, and a low student-tutor ratio, while financially costly, has been a deliberate decision to ensure quality in teaching and learning, so was the choice of recruiting part-time teachers who are **practitioners** in their own field of expertise, since counselling is first and foremost an activity intending to optimize the quality of life in individuals, groups, or organizations through fostering personal strength, growth and development, and the learning of effective coping skills (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy; The American Counseling Association). It is the “doing” that can demonstrate if this activity is helpful to people. Having said that, an immediate question is of course what makes counsellor training effective?

In the introduction to his book (1964/1986) “Psychotherapy: the purchase of friendship”, Schofield warned of the psychotherapist falling “unwittingly into the role of moral counselor or morale coach, and can be seduced into the chronic role of ‘best friend’” (pp. 2). Indeed, how does counsellor training turn a “best friend” into a conversationalist with the ability to heal human misery? The following information which gives the rationale for the curriculum is abridged from the programme proposal written in 2000:

“As the programme is designed to provide education in the ‘Social Sciences’, four major competency areas are addressed in the curriculum... :

a) Knowledge in Research: research and data analysis as reflected through a foundation course in research, practice evaluation, and the completion of a practice-based project.

b) Knowledge in Counselling: theory and practice in terms of

human development, understanding psychopathology, assessment and counselling theories.

c) Skills in Counselling: practice skills in assessment and counselling and interdisciplinary communication, focusing on working with diverse populations (gender, age, ethnicity etc.), and in diverse settings (welfare, education, and health care).

d) Values and Ethics: understanding the roles and responsibilities of being a counsellor, ethical and personal dilemmas in practice, Code of Ethics, etc., as reflected in a foundation course in counselling theories and practices” .

The training model thus emphasized an integration of knowledge and practice that goes beyond technical training, i.e., producing technicians who may have the skills but not the intelligence to use them wisely. This reminds me of a client I once assessed. He was a driver of public vehicles found to have hoarded over a hundred traffic violation tickets, all unpaid. He turned out to have an uneven profile in his abilities, rendering him being good at technical skills but with very poor reasoning and judgment. Needless to say, he had been a danger to the public for as long as he was on the road. As counselling is a ‘talking cure’, the person who does the talking must necessarily be the major variable contributing to treatment effectiveness. One might think that a poor counsellor cannot be as harmful as a reckless driver, this is a very mistaken view given damages done to a person’s mental status can be as irredeemable as a fatal car accident. I was reminded here of a student who reported she identified so much with a relative’s tragic life that she gave permission for the latter to commit suicide when her advice was sought. Fortunately, the relative survived the suicide attempt. What goes wrong in this case is that the student has traded all objectivity for empathy, or reason for blind emotions. To remain level-headed, sensitivity and self-awareness are vital for an effective counsellor in order to guard against transference to and from the client, whether positive or negative in nature.

There are several features in the curriculum for promoting self understanding and development. Apart from the weekend long “self awareness” component in skills training run in a *closed group* format, all skill - based electives have also been taught likewise in order to facilitate self disclosure during the teaching and learning process. For those students who have been willing to subject themselves to self examination through appropriate self disclosure, the practicum is yet another training



ground for self growth if the student is willing to be critical of himself or herself. Indeed, a very satisfying outcome from the programme has been reports from graduates of their change in attitude and outlook in life, for the better that is, having gone through two years of ‘grilling’ studying in the programme. Some even claimed that self healing took place. As Socrates says: “Know thyself” . A wounded healer is perhaps the closest to being an effective counsellor.

To abridge again from the programme proposal: “As emotional stress and distress can occur in many situations throughout a person’s life, a counsellor can help people to identify problems and assist in finding constructive ways to cope with these situations, such as job stress, family and relationship issues, social and emotional difficulties related to loss, disability or illness... The early identification of signs and symptoms of stress and distress can help prevent the onset of more severe forms of mental disorders. Thus, the counselling programme has been planned to achieve a dual aim: first, creating a group of graduates in many walks of life who are in positions of dealing with people in need of support, for example, nurses, doctors, welfare workers, managers, personnel workers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, etc. This would extend the network of support services and act as a first line of help and assistance for those under stress before they develop more severe forms of mental disorders... Second, the programme aims at adding to the armamentarium of social workers and teachers who have already been working for some time in their professional roles and find themselves in need of further insights in counselling and guidance within their professional work... To achieve a real integration of the concepts and practices of counselling with the daily work of the students, the programme is run in a part-time mode... with the practicum taking place in the students’ respective occupational settings...” .

I hope such documentary information given above help to clarify the original aims and purposes of the counselling programme, and to answer some queries raised by former students, such as the insistence in the use of a closed group format for teaching and learning, or the practicum being best taken in the student’s own work setting.

To recapitulate, while the counselling programme was born out of the need for tertiary education to survive budget constraint, it has outgrown this narrow focus, as evidenced by the setting up of AA, the brainchild of Dr. Rico Liu, graduate of 2005. Assisted by Dr. Tony Lau, former Chairperson, and Ms. Clara Chan, current Chairperson, and committee members of Council, AA has indeed established itself as a support network for worthy causes, most noticeably the running of the Sichuan Project. As originator of the counselling programme, I take pride in congratulating AA on its success, and hope that it will take on the role of a critic of the programme, given their experience ‘surviving’ through it.



Prof. Erik Kvan

I would like to end this stroll down memory lane by paying tribute to my teacher, Rev. Dr. Erik Kvan to whose memory the Erik Kvan Memorial Book Prize has been established. This prize is given to a graduate each year to commemorate the life and work of this man. What is his relevance to the programme? I now quote from a preface I have written for a book of memories produced by graduates of the year 2005:

Professor Erik Kvan knew of the eventual launching of the counselling programme back in 2000 when it was first in the making, as he was still teaching with me then at the age of 83. This ‘graying man’ , as he would like to be referred to, in his usual wisdom, said to me simply, ‘Do something decent’ . When business in the academic world has become commercialized, thanks to the economic recession in recent years, these three little words set a direction to which the counselling programme has embarked on. Participants in our annual briefing sessions might recall my plea: “No monkey business please, you won’t be able to ‘roll’ through!” ...I am thankful for the support of all colleagues who have contributed to keeping things decent.

As Oscar Wilde said, “Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught” (The Critic as Artist), what I have learned from my teacher is beyond measure, likewise, I wish all of you will look beyond mere appearances, and seek wisdom from within. [JFYNG June 23, 2010]

GOOD NEWS

Art JAM

- **ACT FAST!!** A continuing education activity “ Art Jam ”, to be delivered by Ms. Jackie Li (2006 graduate), will be held on **July 24, 2010** at KKL Building, HKU, Rm1302AB. For enrolment or enquiries please send your name, contact number, year of graduation (or student member) to Vava Kwok at savava@ust.hk or Clara Chan at clara_wun@yahoo.com.hk. Enrolment Fee (material cost inclusive) : AA members \$150 (a special rate of \$100 for Volunteers of Sichuan Care Project); Non-AA members \$250. Payment will be collected on the day of the workshop and be made in cash or cheque payable to: H.K.U. Master of Social Sciences (Counselling) Alumni Association or 香港大學輔導學碩士校友會.
- **Mr. Stephen Char** (2004 graduate and Hon. legal advisor of AA) has been selected as Recipient of the HKU Department of Social Work & Social Administration Outstanding Alumni Award (2010). Please click onto AA website <http://counselling.sw.hku.hk/alumni.htm> to watch a short video clip for some good sharing from Stephen.



Congratulations !!

「川港心連心·師生共成長」 --愛與關懷在映秀



Rebecca Ko (四川關愛小組召集人)

川港學生迪士尼愛心之旅

二零一零年一月三十日，一個陽光燦爛的周末，一個期待已久的日子，川港兩地學生終於在香港迪士尼樂園——一個充滿歡樂的地方見面。當天，校友會主席及三位會員擔任了義工，陪伴著他們一同度過一個愉快及難忘的周末。



我們所做的是被肯定的 和有果效的...

劉家輝(兒科醫生·上任校友會會長·現任財政)
二零一零年一月三十日
天晴，一張張熟悉的面孔，又再出現在我的眼前。我們一起吃早餐，

一起玩機動遊戲，大家有說有笑，小朋友和大朋友都很快便混熟了。那天，我看到的只有孩子的笑臉，那些憂傷的面孔都收起了。跟他們的老師閒談時，得知老師和同學們在四川大地震後，得到了從四方八面而來的關心，不但令他們感到非常溫暖，生活也安定下來。聽到這些話，我明白我和校友會所做的工作，是被肯定和有果效的。我很希望這些四川兒童，在愛之中，心靈得重整；在未來日子中，能堅強和快樂地成長。

但願他們能積極勇敢地走過未來的人生道路

馮寶玲(中學教師·校友會會員)

二零一零年一月三十日(星期六)，我懷著戰戰兢兢的心情去迎接四川映秀小學的師生。

期待已久的時刻終於來臨。在城堡前的歡迎儀式中，我想：「終於與他們聚在一起了...」、「傷過痛過，他們又在一起了...」。當川港兩地學生的代表分別讀出他們往來的書信時，言詞雖然簡單純真，但也觸動了各人的心。

整體而言，映秀小學的學生都是聰明有禮的，盼望他們也能善用這些優點，走過未來的人生道路，而我經過今天後，決定要學好普通話，好讓我下次可與四川的孩子好好地溝通！



他們堅強的抗逆力令我十分感動

林金燕(懲教主任·註冊社工·校友會委員)
與他們交流的過程中，我深深地被他們堅強的抗逆力感動。孩子不但沒有自怨自艾，更努力地學習運用健全的肢體去生活。那種積極面對困境和努力生活的態度，實在讓我們上了寶貴的一課。



天災無情，人間有愛·讓愛和關心照遍映秀

看著孩子們臉上的笑容，我感到他們漸漸從地震的陰霾下走出來。回想起第一次到映秀小學探訪時，有的小朋友表現較沉默、反應亦較慢；有的較為活躍或暴力；有的爭著或搶奪禮物。看到這個情境，我不禁感到擔心和痛心，但相信關心和愛能為他們帶來希望。回港後，校友會成立了「關愛四川小組」以「川港心連心·師生共成長」為目標，開展為期三年的「愛與關懷在映秀」計劃。透過「一人一信·愛心傳送」(學生篇)，讓香港學生以書信向映秀小學學生表達關心。計劃已踏入第二年，我們看到川港兩地學生透過書信能夠彼此分享，互相支持和勉勵。



此外，我們亦安排校友會會員與映秀小學教師定期通信，為他們送上關心、支持和鼓勵。隨著四月十七日的開展禮，「一人一信·愛心傳送」(教師篇)正式展開。本計劃的顧問 Angela Wong [前排右二] 和 Bibiana Chau [前排左三] 亦帶領著我們出席。當天，我們不但分享了參與這計劃的感受和期望，亦即場完成了第一封信。另一方面，我們與512年青工程師大聯盟正積極籌劃於暑假到四川舉行夏令營，希望透過不同的活動，表達關愛及協助映秀小學師生們積極面對生活。



最後，校友會希望有更多的校友能參與計劃，讓他們在愛和關懷中積極面對未來。

We need your support !!

新任會長感言

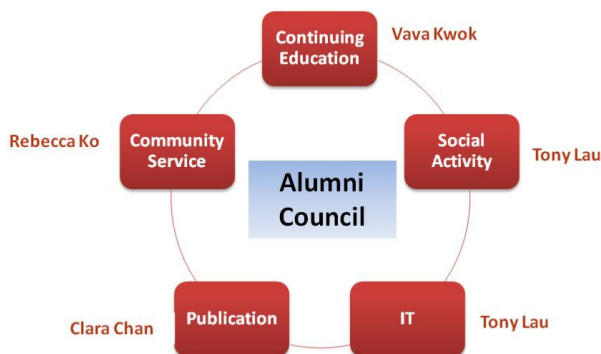
Clara Chan

在剛卸任會長 Dr. Tony Lau 過去四年的帶領下，我看見熱心的顧問、幹事及義工們積極推動香港大學輔導學碩士校友會的活動與發展。期間，校友會在中國512地震后到汶川映秀小學探訪，並認定這是一項為期三年的關愛計劃。由於會長任期不可連任兩屆，我便欣然接受提名接替Tony成為今屆會長，為的只是希望把校友會正在開展的服務工作（包括映秀小學關愛計劃）得以承傳下去。在此謹感謝顧問 Dr. H.Y. Ng 和 Ms. Angela Wong 的支持，及歷屆會長 Dr. Rico Liu 及 Dr. Tony Lau 的領導，為校友會奠下良好的基礎。

我期盼來年有更多畢業校友及同學加入校友會，積極參與並願意起來接棒，彼此配合來推動校友會的持續發展，達致以下**創會章程的目的**：

- 促進會員的聯誼交流，擴闊人脈網絡
- 藉著校友會的平台凝聚力量，舉辦學術、康樂、交誼、文化與社區服務的活動
- 推動輔導專業的素質的提升
- 向會員發佈輔導學碩士學系的消息
- 為就讀輔導學碩士學系的同學給予學習上的指導

今年，校友會幹事會設立五個委員會，以鼓勵會員參與有關活動的義工或為我們提供意見，如有興趣者，請發電郵到 hkucounselingalumni@yahoo.com.hk 聯絡以下成員：



新會友登記及活動公佈，請瀏覽校友會網頁 <http://counseling.sw.hku.hk/alumni.htm> 或透過班代表了解：

- 2004 Chris Ng | chris_nnl@yahoo.com.hk
- 2005 Rebecca Ko | rebeccako2003@yahoo.com.hk
- 2006 Jackie Li | jackieckli@gmail.com
- 2007 Stella Cheung | stella.rainbow@gmail.com
- 2008 Wing-ye Kwan | kwingy2004@yahoo.com.hk
- 2009 Maple Lau | sshmaple@hotmail.com

請大家大力支持校友會活動 !!

親愛的校友和同學，您們好！轉眼已四年多，從主席一職卸任，一遍遍的回憶浮現於腦海中，令我回味無窮。在2006年畢業謝師宴中，廖醫生向我說：「有沒有興趣參與校友會的會務」。我聽了之後便與當時籌備謝師宴的籌委商量，他們也有興趣，我們便接手參與校友會會務。一心朝著校友會的核心目標而計劃活動，又得到各委員和顧問的支持，一連串活動也順利完成。其中給我印象最深刻的活動有靜修營、伍博士的送別宴和四川之行。在靜修營之中，我可以真正地「靜」下來，去檢視自我內心世界，認識自我。在伍博士的送別宴，看到伍博士的門生之多，陣容之大，和溫馨場面，令我驚嘆。又四川之行令我明白校友會中有很多有愛心的同學，默默地為四川兒童和老師作出努力，令我敬佩不已。

在校友會工作的四年中，與同學和老師多了接觸，建立了深厚的關係，那是珍貴的。也在分享處理個案之中，得到更多指導。參與校友會，令我得到的比付出的更多。我謹此向伍博士(Dr. Ng)，黃嘉茵女士 (Angela)、各委員、大學和各同學致謝。祝校友會在未來日子中，有更好更理想的發展。

Dr. Tony Lau



From left to right : Rebecca, Vava, Wing-ye, Peony, Clara, Angela, Rico, Tony

校友會幹事會

2010年校友會年會在3月27日在香港大學舉行，第四屆校友會幹事會順利產生，成員(畢業年份)如下：

- 會長： Ms. Clara Chan (06)
- 財政： Dr. Tony Lau (06)
- 文書： Ms. Peony Chiang (06)
- 義務律師： Mr. Stephen Char (04)
- 幹事： Ms. Anson Lam (06)
Mr. Antony To (06)
Ms. Jackie Li (06)
Ms. Rebecca Ko (05)
Dr. Rico Liu (05)
Ms. Stella Cheung (07)
Ms. Trista Lam (09)
Ms. Vava Kwok (06)
Ms. Wing-ye Kwan (08)
- 顧問： Dr. H.Y. Ng
Ms. Angela Wong

我們感謝香港大學輔導學碩士課程主任Dr. Samson Tse 在當天為“持續教育專題”主講“Talk therapy (or psychological interventions) for people affected by bipolar disorder”，並透過討論彼此交流。

校友會代表Rico(左)贈送紀念品予Dr. Samson Tse(右)



當晚還有聯誼第一炮，多位課程導師與校友會友在飯局中聚首一堂。

