

### Rich in Heart

Ming and his mother arrived in Hong Kong last year from Mainland China to reunite with his father. They stayed in an 80-square-foot room with only a bunker bed and some basic appliances. Hardly educated, his father worked as a construction worker and a nightshift security guard while his mother was a dish washing worker at a restaurant. Due to his parents' long working hours, Ming usually found himself alone at home. Not even a bit good at Cantonese nor English, Ming got low grades and merely no friends.

One Saturday morning, Ming decided to go get help at a nearby community centre where he can receive free tutorials from volunteers. Embarrassed and shy, Ming sat down at a corner. Immediately, a cheerful-looking old man addressed Ming politely, "Welcome! I am Mr. Wong, a volunteer at this tutorial centre. What is your name?" "M...my name is Ming," said Ming uncertainly. Mr. Wong patiently gave Ming guidance on his homework and they soon became friends. Mr. Wong not only taught him academically but also how to become a more confident person.

Soon Ming started to become curious about Mr. Wong's life. Where does he live? Why is he so knowledgeable? At the end of one tutorial session,

Ming decided to sneak after Mr. Wong and followed him to a building which says "Single Elderly Public Housing."

Noticing Ming following him, Mr. Wong offered, "Ming, this is where I live. Do you want to take a quick tour?" Mr. Wong showed Ming around, where each elderly person is allocated a room with a simple washroom. The elderly share a common kitchen and a living room on each floor. As Ming passed by the units, he saw different activities: someone listening to the radio; another one watering plants; many of them just sitting there and staring out of the windows...Most of them looked surprised and delighted to see a young chap like Ming around.

Mr. Wong explained to Ming that most of these elderly have lost their families one way or the other and to make matter worse, they were too old or incapable to find any jobs, leaving them no choice but to rely on social welfare assistance. Mr. Wong himself once had a family but they were separated after the war. Though he was once a teacher, his kidney problems forced him to retire early.

For the first time, Ming realized that he himself is very fortunate. At least he has got his family.

Instead of mourning about his own misfortunes, Mr. Wong demonstrated his

positive energy by extending help to others in need, explaining why he became a volunteer. Ming went back to his school and community centre and started telling people about needs of the single elderly. During festive seasons, Ming and his friends visited the single elderly: chatting with them and cleaning homes for them. Spreading their love and care, Ming and friends have never felt so "rich" before.

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