Eight Questions and Answers with Gigi Tsang, founder of “My Little Coffee”
「八問八答」— 訪問 My Little Coffee創辦人 Gigi Tsang

A Small Cup of Coffee  成就大意義

Q1. Tell us about your coffee shop. When did it start, how did it develop, and what is its business scope?
可以簡單介紹一下你的咖啡店？例如何時成立、發展歷程、業務範圍等等？

My Little Coffee was originally an online store that sold only coffee beans. My husband and I are both coffee enthusiasts, and we wanted to promote coffee culture in Hong Kong. As a result, we actively researched and improved coffee roasting techniques, introduced coffee varieties with distinctive flavours and characteristics, and shared them with fellow coffee lovers. We opened our first small coffee shop in Mong Kok in 2012, specializing in our own roasted coffee beans as well as other products. Now, in addition to our coffee shops in Prince Edward and Mong Kok, we have coffee bean stores and vending machines in several locations.

My Little Coffee 最初只是一間專售咖啡豆的網路店，因為我和丈夫也喜歡咖啡，很希望在香港推廣咖啡文化，所以積極研究及改良咖啡烘焙技術，並引入具特色風味及特別的咖啡品種，與咖啡愛好者分享。我們於2012年在旺角開設第一間咖啡小店，專賣自家烘培咖啡豆及其他產品。現在除了在太子及旺角的咖啡店，我們亦在不同地區設有咖啡豆專賣店及自動販賣機。

Q2. Why did you initially employ people with special needs?
當初為何僱用有特殊需要的人士？

We have been employing people with mild hearing impairments since 2015. In fact, it was due to a coincidence of factors that we hired them. Firstly, the constant turnover that we had in our young staff was very frustrating. We then learned about the charity organization "Silence" which primarily serves the deaf community, and we decided to give its members a try. I discovered that people with disabilities have certain capabilities, and as long as they are assigned to suitable positions, their performance can be quite satisfactory. At one point, out of our 14 staff members, 11 were hearing-impaired. We later tried employing people from other vulnerable groups, such as those with disabilities and SEN (Special Education Needs) young people.

我們自2015年起已僱用輕度聾障人士。實際上，當初僱用他們是出於偶然。當時年輕員工不斷流失，這讓我非常沮喪。後來認識了主要服務聾障社群的慈善組織「聾耳」，便嘗試聘用聾障人士。我發現殘疾人士有一定的工作能力，而且只要安排他們在合適的崗位，表現亦相當理想。曾經在我們14名員工中，有11位是聾障人士，
Q3. You must be very busy as the owner of a coffee shop, but you still participate in many charity events and support the Life Rider Career and Life Planning Project for ISSHK. Can you share with us some details about these activities?

Ten years ago, I started serving as a mentor for career counselling activities in special education schools and social welfare organizations, hoping to help more people through the medium of coffee.

I believe that there is a lack of support for vulnerable groups in terms of employment, especially for SEN youth. To some extent, they are overprotected in the education system, and I want to serve as a bridge for them to get to know the outside world.

For me, it is important to share career development and vocational skills with them, but guiding them to interact with others is even more crucial. They each have their own problems but cannot use SEN as an excuse. Once they start working in society, people's expectations of them will be just as high as for others.

I learned about the Life Rider Career and Life Planning Project, which helps young people to understand themselves, recognize their abilities, and plan their career goals early on. The project instructor once told me that a student named Ho Dee was very interested in coffee, and asked if I could provide an internship opportunity for him. He then became an intern, working in our shop during holidays and weekends.

Q4. What do you think of Ho Dee? Taking Ho Dee as an example, what do you think are the characteristics or weaknesses of SEN youth?

Ho Dee made a strong impression when he first arrived. His uniform was always dirty, and his appearance was unkempt. He also had a habit of being late. There were many things we had to teach him, from basic work knowledge and work discipline to self-care.

It's sometimes difficult for Ho Dee to focus on his tasks. He will "space out" at work at times and have difficulty concentrating. While SEN youth like Ho Dee have the ability to perform tasks, they need longer training time than others. Of course, they make mistakes sometimes. For example, when once they tried to make coffee drip bags, they forgot to put different varieties of coffee in different coloured packaging bags. At these times, they are comparatively less flexible in thinking how to solve an issue. We need to tell them what went wrong or how to improve or adapt.

對我而言，與他們分享職業發展、職業技能固然重要，但教導他們待人處事更重要。雖然他們各有不同的問題，但總不能以SEN作「道德標榜」，因為一旦踏出社會工作，別人對他們的期望是同樣嚴謹。

你知道社會的 Life Rider 生涯規劃活動，主要是幫助青年人認識自己，發展個人能力，及早訂定目標及規劃職業方向。當時活動導師跟我說其中一位學員「豪DIE」很喜歡咖啡，問我能否提供實習機會予他，我一口答應了，於是後來他便成為實習生，於假期及週末在店舖進行工作實習。
Q5. What are the strengths of SEN youth?

That SEN youth have commendable qualities. They are generally more straightforward and polite, willing to endure hardships, and open to self-reflection. They are also humble and eager to learn. Citing Ho Dee as an example, I arranged for him to clean the toaster which was giving out a very unpleasant smell - and he was willing to do the job. In general, they cherish the opportunities we give them more than ordinary young people do.

When these kids know that we truly care about them, they try their best to learn and perform well, which was very gratifying to me. I recently arranged for Ho Dee to teach a new intern who has intellectual disabilities, and he gained a sense of accomplishment from teaching others, making him more mature. He also knows we are putting our hearts into coaching him, and I was touched when he said: "I will give you a call every day when you grow old."

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Q6. How does the team cooperate with them? How to achieve inclusion?

There is generally a lack of proper understanding of SEN and people with disabilities among the public, and we also had no experience of employing SEN youth and people with disabilities. Therefore, some of our colleagues did not know how to interact or work with them. So I coordinated and participated in inclusive workshops, and consulted social workers to try to better understand and how to communicate effectively with them. We also organize activities regularly and encourage all colleagues to participate, fostering a better understanding and stronger bonds between team members.

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Q7. What special arrangements does the company need to make for people with special needs?

公司要作出什麼特別安排或相應的配套設施？

The main focus is to break down the work into small tasks that they can easily grasp. Sometimes, we also need to demonstrate the different steps and allow them to try them out. Throughout the process, we continuously assess their abilities and identify areas they need to pay attention to and improve. At the same time, we try to enhance their confidence and problem-solving skills at work.

We also teach them safety procedures, such as specific instructions for using coffee machines and packaging equipment, as well as familiarizing them with the company's environment and operations. We also need to establish work rules and scope, as well as arrange for a colleague who is familiar with the work to serve as a mentor to help them adapt to new tasks.

主要是分拆工作成為細項，令他們容易掌握，有時亦需要作出示範，說明每個步驟，並讓他們試做，過程中持續評估他們的能力，並找出他們需要留意及修正的地方，以增強他們工作的信心及處理問題的能力。

另外，亦要教導他們安全程序，例如具體指導他們安全使用咖啡機及包裝機，以及熟習公司的環境及運作等。我們亦會安排一位熟悉工作的同事擔任指導員，協助他們適應新工作。

Q8. Over the years, you have supported and trained many people with special needs, receiving numerous commendations. What made you persist in this field?

這些年來，你們支援及訓練不少有特殊需要的人士，得到不少嘉許狀，可以說說是什麼令你在這方面一直堅持？

I never felt that I was just being charitable or doing it because it was a "good deed". I firmly believe that everyone is equal. If God takes something away from you, he will surely give you something back in return. We had the opportunity to meet people like Ho Dee and others in need, and to help them with their career planning, teaching them how to interact with others. This is a blessing for us.

My husband has given me tremendous support along the way. He also feels deeply that if someone had helped him when he was young, he might have avoided many detours in life. So both of us treat these SEN youth like our own children, putting our hearts into teaching them, hoping that one day they can become independent and useful to society.

我從來不覺得自己在做善事，亦不是因為這是「善事」而做。我深信人人平等，如果上天在你身上拿走一東西，他必定會另外給你一點甚麼。我們有緣遇上豪Dee及其他有需要的人士，能幫助他們做一輩生涯規劃，教他們做人和待人處事，也是我們的福氣。

這一路走來，我丈夫給我很大的支持，他亦深深覺得如果在你年少時有人扶過他一把，他或許可以少走很多冤枉路，所以他和我一樣，待這些SEN青年如自己的孩子一般，用心去教導他們，希望有一天他們可以自立自尊，做個對社會有用的人。

Ho Dee used to spend his free time at home surfing the internet and had little social experience of dealing with people. But since starting his internship, he has become more punctual, responsible, and able to express his thoughts politely to Gigi and her husband. He has also learned to introduce different coffee product categories and features to customers. I am really happy to see him grow in this way. During one of our chats, he said: "Making money is actually really hard! It seems that he has really grown up!"
The Legco Delegation met with service users of the Fujian Scheme in Fuzhou
立法會議員親訪福州探訪「福建計劃」下之受惠長者

The Legislative Council ("LegCo") delegation travelled to Fujian Province from 15 to 19 July for a study tour, and visited retired Hong Kong seniors in Fuzhou to gain a better understanding of the implementation of the Fujian Scheme. ISS-HK arranged 20 service users who benefit from the Scheme to meet with Legco members on 16 July.

The President of LegCo, Hon Andrew Leung Kwan-yuen greeted the elders, followed by other Legco members including Stanley Ng Chau-pei and Tik Chi Yuen who invited elders to share about their living and retirement conditions in Fujian. The service users and Legco members then sat in groups to have in-depth discussions about their life in Fujian, and touched on topics like medical insurance and how the Hong Kong government can strengthen relevant policies to better benefit their livelihood in Fujian.

Since 2018, ISS-HK has been appointed by the Social Welfare Department as the agency to provide services for Hong Kong elders who intend to settle in to Fujian and apply for social security payments.

香港立法會代表團於7月15日至19日往福建省作職務考察，並於7月16日探訪了在福州的香港退休長者，了解「福建計劃」的實施情況。本社安排了20位受惠於「福建計劃」的長者與到訪的立法會議員交流會面，立法會主席梁君彥先向長者們問好，吳秋北、欽志遠等議員亦相繼發言，邀請老友記分享在福建的生活。其後，議員們與長者們分組交流，討論長者在當地的居住和養老情況、醫保以及政府如何加強推動相關政策，氣氛十分熱烈。

本社自2018年起獲社會福利署委任為「福建計劃」的代理機構，為有意移居福建並申領社會保障款項的香港長者提供服務。
The Shamshuipo (South) Integrated Family Service Centre once again received funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust Fund to continue its Project for another 3 years promoting the concept of “free play” and providing services to the community. The Project is specially designed for families with children aged 0-12. It meets the children’s play needs, while increasing quality parent-child time and strengthens community support and family functions. It achieves this through activities such as children’s play groups, family activities and workshops, parent support groups, school-based services, and community play spaces. This Project also provides training opportunities for local women to become “Play Creators”, helping to design and facilitate games for children. In order to enhance children’s involvement and autonomy in their play experiences, the Project also engages “Junior Play Creators” by emphasizing the elements of child-led games that allow kids to develop their creativity and imagination.

深水埗(南)綜合家庭服務中心再次獲得香港賽馬會慈善信託基金的資助，延續計劃三年以繼續推廣「自由玩樂」的遊戲模式及概念。計劃特別為育有0-12歲小朋友之家庭而設，透過舉辦兒童玩樂小組、家庭活動及工作坊、家長支援小組、到校服務及社區遊戲坊等，滿足孩子玩樂的需要，同時增加家長親子優質時間，擴闊社區支援，強化家庭功能。是次計劃同時訓練社區婦女成為「玩樂設計師」，協助設計推行遊戲，並增設「兒童玩樂設計師」，以兒童為本，加強孩子主導元素，釋放他們的創意和想像力。
A total of 33 children from the Small Group Home took part in the "Kadoorie Farm Art Workshop" on 23 April, organized by the Hong Kong Youth Arts Association and sponsored by the Bank of East Asia. The children had a fun and enjoyable time, with volunteers from the Bank accompanying them on visits to animals such as deer, leopard cats, parrots and pigs on the Kadoorie Farm. The children and volunteers also collected plants for group plant art creations and demonstrated great team spirit. The artworks completed by each group have been displayed at the "East Asia Green Art Festival". The activity not only provided the children with a chance to get closer to nature but also enhanced their artistic creativity.

**Introducing Bowen Theory to professionals serving Ethnic Minorities**

The ISS Family Institute held a course titled 'Introduction to Bowen Family Systems Therapy' on 30 May to provide training for professionals serving ethnic minorities. The course introduced Bowen Family Systems Theory, the systems perspective and emotional processes of families. After completing the course, the 30 participants gained better understanding of family emotional functioning, deeper self-reflection and better insight about self. They were inspired to apply the theory to counselling their clients to promote better family functioning.

國際社家庭學院於5月30日舉行「博域家庭系統理論輔導法簡介」課程，旨在為服務少數族裔的專業人士提供培訓，介紹博域家庭系統理論治療法、系統觀點及家庭情緒功能，30名參加者完成課程後，加深了對家庭情緒功能的認識，並增進了自我反思和了解，啟發他們將理論應用於輔導，促進家庭功能。
A Taste of Running a Café
經營Café初體驗

With the support of the "Project WeCan", social workers of the School Social Work and School Support Services arranged a youth entrepreneurship programme called "Café Business Experience" for 18 senior form students from the Yan Chai Hospital Lan Chi Pat Memorial Secondary School. The students first acquired basic knowledge through training courses such as learning practical skills for running a coffee shop, brewing coffee, creating latte art, and making desserts. Then they visited coffee shops in the district to understand their daily operations. To put what they had learned into practice, the students, led by the school social workers, held a "Coffee Corner" on campus during lunchtime from 15 to 19 May 2023. They prepared cups of latte and espresso as well as cheesecakes to serve the teachers and students of the school, creating a lively atmosphere. A total of 400 teachers and students joined the activity.

In 「學校起動計劃」資助下，本社學校社會工作及學校支援服務社工為18名仁濟醫院觀聲培兒紀念中學的高中同學，安排了一項名為「Café經營體驗」青少年營商計劃活動。參與的同學先透過參與不同的訓練課程，如咖啡店經營實務、沖調咖啡及拉花技巧、甜品製作等以掌握基本知識，並實地到區內的咖啡店考察，了解店務日常運作，從中吸取經驗。為了實踐所學，同學在社工帶領下，於2023年5月15日至19日午餐時間，在校內舉辦「Coffee Corner」模擬Café活動。同學們準備了多款咖啡如拿鐵、濃縮咖啡以及芝士蛋糕等招待全校師生，氣氛熱烈。活動共計有400名師生參與。

Emotional wellness with Mandala Art
曼陀羅藝術情緒治療工作坊

Service users from the HOPE Centre attended a workshop named Emotional wellness with "Mandala Art" on 22 March at which they learned how to identify different emotions and their impact on the body. They also practised how to make connections between their behaviour, thoughts and emotions. The session concluded with mindfulness practice through Mandala Art.

HOPE少數族裔人士支援服務中心於3月22日舉行曼陀羅藝術情緒治療工作坊，參加者學習識別不同情緒及其對身體的影響，並練習如何將自己的行為、思想和情感建立聯繫。工作坊以繪畫曼陀羅藝術畫進行正念練習作結。
HOPE Centre for Ethnic Minorities
HOPE 少數族裔人士支援服務中心

What do we do?
As a support service centre for ethnic minorities, HOPE stands for Harnessing Opportunities and Potentials for Ethnic Minorities. It advocates the integration of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong society, creating a community with cultural diversity, racial harmony and equality.

Who do we serve?
Ethnic minorities with Hong Kong Identity Card who come from countries including but not limited to Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, India, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

How do we operate?
We organise the following classes, programmes and activities:
1. Language Classes in Cantonese and English
2. Computer Classes
3. Free After School Tutorial Classes
4. Trainings and Seminars on Employment Services
5. Recruitment Day
6. Cross-Cultural Activities
7. Cultural Show
8. Volunteer Programmes
9. Counseling and Guidance, Referral and Sight Translation
10. Same Interest Support Groups

For children and teenagers aged 6 to 24 years old, we organise:
1. Photography / Creative Design Workshops
2. Guitar Lessons
3. Skill Based Interest Activities
4. Free Band Room (Advanced booking required)
5. Sing and Dance Lessons
6. Day Camp and Sports day
7. Youth Talent Show
8. Community Service and Events

Words from Programme Director
服務總監的話
Established in 2008, HOPE Support Centre has been providing various services for Ethnic Minorities Communities under sponsorship from the Home Affairs Department. Located in Wan Chai, we have had the privilege to receive government officials, students and other special guests and introduced our services for Ethnic Minorities. HOPE Centre also organizes several signature mass programmes like Beyond Race - Hong Kong is Home and Cultural Show. We look forward to your participation!

Mr. James Seen
孫樹邦先生

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Service Hours
服務時間:
Mon - Fri 星期一 0900-1800
Sat - Sun 星期六至日 0900-2100
Public Holidays 公眾假期 Close 休息

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