

MFS Creative Writing Competition 2017-18

F.5 1st Prize

Or Wai Ching Eric, 5D-19

How can we express our care and love to the handicapped?

A handicap is a physical or mental impairment that substantially prevents a person from having a normal life. There are many ways to help people with disabilities. However, as I had never come into contact with any handicapped person, the term 'handicapped' had meant nothing to me until I joined a very meaningful activity.

Last year, our class had to attend the program "Being a handicapped" held by the Sham Shui Po East Teens Club as an OLE activity. At that time, 'handicapped' was a foreign idea to me and I had not the least interest in it.

The program started with a simulation activity. I was blindfolded, during which a task as simple as walking up the stairs, reaching a near destination or crossing the road posed a real challenge. I tried some other tasks but to no avail. Finally, I had to open my eyes.

Failing miserably as a temporarily blind person, I found that the 'eye-opening experience' came as a great relief. How glad I was to regain my vision! Yet, not everyone in the world can just open their eyes and be able to see.

When I was 'blind', I could still envisage what the world had looked like. There were mental pictures that took me along. I was then enlightened. How about those who were born blind? I wondered if they could tell different colours or shapes in their mind's eye.

Being empathetic now, I realize the practical needs of the handicapped. They are inconvenienced in various ways by their disabilities. Without suitable assistance, they may even encounter danger. So, how can we express our love and care to them?

As a start, we have to be considerate and avoid using offensive words when referring to or communicating with the handicapped. Without respect, whatever done will be futile.

Then, we can look for opportunities to be volunteers. Many organizations provide assistance to people with disabilities. An example is the United Disabilities Service, which strives to help the handicapped live more independently.

Alternatively, we can support fundraising for the handicapped since they probably need to pay for medical and other expenses. We may not be millionaire philanthropists, but every dollar of our donation counts.

Small gestures in our daily life can also mean a lot to the disabled. Helping them get on board and alight, offering them seats near the exit and simply being patient and courteous to them when taking public transport are all easy things to do.

As long as we do not turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to the needs of the handicapped, we must be able to find our own ways to show our love and care to them.