

CHALLENGES

Looking back 2 years ago, I never thought one day, i would have to go far away from my family and my friends, going to a strange new country alone, have to take care myself and coping with all the problems in life. My life would have never changed if i had never seen my friends, one by one, going abroad to countinue filling up their thirst of knowledge. I started thinking about studying outside my home country but i could not get rid of the thought about being less confident then my friends. Having more discouragement than encouragement, I almost gave up. But a crucial thing happened to me, i received a scholarship by Cambridge Tutors College to enroll 2 years A-level course. My life has really turned to a new page from now on.

Time goes by, two years of studying in England swiftly passed with many of my memories. A fop of two years ago was replaced by a guy who is confident that being yourself and standing on your own feet are two criteria to make success. I replaced my usual answer “No” by “Yes” in confidence when people asked me to join in a club or just doing some volunteer jobs. Two years have changed my character, my thought also my life.

The first time going to an European country, standing in one of the biggest and busiest airports in the world, Heathrow. I feel so small in the huge airport. Ten minutes have gone, the queue became just a bit shorter than before, thirty minutes and then forty minutes, it did not improve that much. I dragged my feet slowly step by step with the heaviest backpack that is almost as twice as my size. My shoulder could crack at anytime; I decided to put it

down before realizing I was in the first row already. Lucky me! The friendly officer asked me to give him my passport and all the documents that he needed. Swiftly, all the procedure have done and I left the airport to go to my host family in my school taxi. The first stage in England was not that bad for me. Significantly, I have realized my first lesson in this new country, patience.

My host family was very friendly and they treated me like a real member in their family. Everything seemed to be all right until the day I had to go to school. My new college was totally different from my oriented-college in Vietnam. Each group only had about nine students or maybe less than this especially; we were from various parts of the world. Like a thousand of overseas students, I must be acquainted with the new European method of studying. I could forget the usual night-study but replacing by the library-study, forgetting to have my own shelf of books at home and using the public books in library. However, these are not big problems for me, but for a student from an undeveloped country on the other hand, using a new modern technology was not easy at all. Experimenting with a new method, indeed, was an ill time. Amazingly, giving up never weighed on my mind, selecting how to carry on is much more difficult. As the matter of fact, in the first two weeks B and C grades were usual for me and a study of using laboratory equipment like one more subjects that only me needed to take.

If there was a concept that I have learned from this European education, it was fairness and self-motivation. Teachers always tried to give their students a chance to do their best; also, student could freely express what they thought. We always made own impression that is

unique in our project or course work. Here, I did not need to take any extra classes and replaced by long hours in library during the exam time. The teacher always encouraged me to make my self –decision. They readily listened to me every time that I need and appreciated my effort. I became more confident without inferiority complex about an unskilled student from a developing country before.

Being a capable and all-round student, I like taking myself academic as well as social challenges. The greatest challenge since I graduated my secondary school in Vietnam has been to finance my extra living cost in England. It was not a big amount of money but for a young and inexperienced boy, it was not easy at all. Apart from schooling, every Saturday, I worked in a Chinese restaurant in my town's center. I knew how difficult to earn money though they were just a few quid. Appreciating the difficulty of my parents in earning money in order for a new good life of their children is the best lesson that I have learnt . This job not only helped me to earn money but also improved a lot my experience in social life.

Two years of my challenge have gone. Although i know, there would be more difficult challenges in my life, two years in England is an enough time for me to test and confirm my abilities. Now, I am more confident than any other time to say, I am ready to conquer all the new challenges to come.