

School: St. Stephen's Girls' College @ 2, Lyttelton Road, Hong Kong

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Age: 16

My Views on the Hong Kong Spirit

Hong Kong, the city of amazement, has developed from a little fishing village into an international financial centre within a hundred years. The success of the metropolis is actually the fruit of Hong Kong people's distinguished spirits, they bring Hong Kong's past, along with its present to welcome the future.

Unlike in western countries, work and family mingle seamlessly in the lives of every Hong Kong-ers. Currently, the working force is dominated by 'baby boomers' who were born after the World War II, they were brought up in an environment where competition was intense; as a result, they were and are very competitive, they know exactly what they want. They grasp every possible second to work – white collars travelling in MTR never talk because they all are concentrating on their iPhones and blackberries, refusing to miss any chance to progress, to further improve; the lights in offices are still on even after office hour and the offices are forever crammed with workers; 'homes' are only places for continuation of office work for Hong Kong-ers, forming a vivid contrast against people in other countries, who follow the principle of 'carpe diem' strictly. Some call them diligent, some call them obsessive. But still, it pushes the society onward and forward.

Adaptability, the ability to adjust oneself readily to different conditions, especially adverse ones is one of the most prominent spirits of Hong Kong people. It does not promise successes; yet, guaranteeing survival. For the past decades, Hong Kong has undergone numerous significant events, allowing only the fittest to survive. The burgeoning economy leads to economic restructuring; from primary to secondary industry, then to tertiary industry, and now developing into a knowledge-based economy, this all happens within several decades. Also, in times of downturns, in terms of economic and social aspects, for example, SARS and financial tsunami, despite all the hardships, Hong Kong people still manage to pull through, while economies in other countries literally collapse.

Pragmatism emphasizes practicability; again, it is an element that does not promise successes; yet, guaranteeing survival and stability. Yes, Hong Kong people are ambitious, they strive and struggle to achieve more, to earn more, and to climb up the social ladder; yet, they know what their limits are, they know themselves well enough to make smart decisions, they never overestimate themselves and do unrealistic things, every move is carefully measured and calculated. Therefore, they survive in the financial tsunami, while US citizens practically all go bankrupt.

Realizing dreams are particularly essential for a place to progress. In this cosmopolitan, 'Hong Kong spirits' are determined to realize 'Hong Kong dreams', while

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retaining its core values, such as rule of law, freedom, equality, openness, and a corruption-free society. Hong Kong-ers cherish their dreams, and are determined to turn Hong Kong into 'a city of opportunity', as well as a 'township of pleasure'. To realize their dreams, they march forward courageously, even when they are facing a biting wind or cold rain pouring down on their heads, they do not easily give up.

Spirits of Hong Kong are well embodied in Hong Kong-ers, i.e. diligence, adaptability, pragmatism and realizing dreams, carrying these qualities, they courageously embrace the unknown future.