

A Letter of Advice

6E (2017-2018) Shiu Chun



Dear J.C.,

Thank you for your letter regarding your difficulty in pursuing your passion and dreams to be a vet. I deeply understand how it hurts when such opposition comes from parents, the ones who are supposed to care about us the most and respect our dreams and individuality. Passion and aspiration are precious in our life and it is really sad to have them shattered, especially under the profit-oriented atmosphere in Hong Kong, in which many parents hope that their children will economically prevail in the future by attaining high-salary jobs such as doctors and lawyers. At the same time, parents are also one of our main sources of spiritual support. To keep both your passion and your intimate relationship with your parents, I would advise you to do the following to strike a balance.

First and foremost, I suggest that you should seek more information about the career paths of being a vet and its required academic credentials. I truly comprehend that passion can sometimes provide us with an impeccable path in which we can find enjoyment and job opportunities alike. However, without sensible thoughts, a reckless pursuit in passion can indeed lead us astray and to a route of regrets. In your letter, you expressed that you have continually been thinking about your future and that you aspire to be a vet owing to your undying love for animals. Surprising as it may seem, the career path for being a vet may not be as simple as it appears to be and loving animals is certainly not the sole criterion to be a vet with eminent success. Similar to an actual doctor, being a vet is indeed a doctor for animals per se. Studying medical degrees in university has a dubious distinction of being extremely stressful and difficult. Students have to beaver away in hard toil from dawn to dusk to achieve sufficient

scholastic achievements to be a doctor. Before you walk towards your path of being a vet, I think you need to deeply consider whether you are strong enough to face those hardships. Besides, you have to consider whether your love for animals will stay intact when you have to repeatedly deal with animals with injuries, sickness or even perform operations for them. One of the effective ways to help you think of such problems is by harnessing the power of technology. You can obtain plenty of information related to how you can be a vet in the internet, including the academic credentials required, average salary and working experience of vets in the actual workplace. You can also consult teachers of the career planning team at school. In addition to sweeping away your personal doubts and misunderstandings about the career path of vets, the information gathered can also be used to persuade your parents to let you follow your dreams. Seeing how you make every endeavor to gather such realistic information, I am sure your parents will try to respect your interest. Besides, the more you are enlightened in the field of being a vet, the less likely you are going to walk in a path of regrets.

Another thing worth doing is that you should try to communicate patiently with your parents and express to them face-to-face how serious you are with your dreams. Hong Kong is indeed a fruitful place full of employment opportunities and career options, which your parents may not be fully familiar with. Besides, it is also a place of risks, competitions and challenges, which parents by no means want you to bear. Thus, it is indeed understandable if parents reject your decision based on the possible assumption that vets are just dealing with animals aimlessly, with meagre salary unlike doctors and lawyers. I understand a curt answer of “No” might be as heartbreaking as it is discouraging. But in fact, if your parents strictly forbid you to walk in a path they consider risky, rather than responding apathetically and allowing you to do whatever whim you have in your mind no matter good or evil, it is a sign that they are caring about you and strive to protect your future. Before you feel frustrated and succumb yourself to their concern, I think it would be wise if you try to talk to them patiently and politely, expressing your will and bringing with you the information you have gathered about vets. I am sure they

will be willing to listen.

To sum up, it is not uncommon for parents' expectations to be running counter to what we have in our mind. Career choices are in fact an intricate and contentious subject that can induce lots of misunderstanding between your parents and you. Both complete obedience and defiance are not a desirable cure to such problem. Before you feel frustrated or annoyed by your parents' responses, I strongly recommend you take the first step to research and communicate with your parents with calmness and rationality. Hope you would find my advice useful. Write to me if you encounter other problems.

Best,

Chris