

# Inspirational Sparks

## Hallmarks of Success



## The Sweet Taste of Success

By Ng Huimin



**M**y childhood ambition was to become a lawyer. At the age of 17, I was far from fulfilling my dream. Having studied in neighbourhood schools almost all my life, I lost my sense of confidence of what I am really capable of. Nevertheless, I brought that dream with me to Jurong Institute (presently known as Millennia Institute), the place where I began my journey to success.

As a student, I was always contented to be “the average student”. I had never topped my class in any subjects or won an award in any competitions. Even though I might not be the last in class, it is hard to imagine if I ever will be a top student then. Or so I thought.

Disillusioned with my own abilities, I struggled with my examinations in Pre-University One. The results came as a shock. Harsh reality set in. I did so poorly for my examinations that my Home Tutor commented, “If you don’t work hard for the next semester, you might be retained.” Upon hearing that, I cried to my woes. It was heart-wrenching to hear these hurtful words. Look what I have done for myself! I was such a failure! I came to Jurong Institute in the hope of fulfilling my dream to study Law in the University but it all seemed so bleak there and then.

After that unfortunate episode in Pre-University One, I told myself that I would work harder this time. I couldn’t afford to lose again. Alas! Despite my high expectations and effort, my grades had shown little improvement. The anxiety, fear and silly anguish on my part prevented me from putting in my best. The sheer stress that ‘if I put in my best and still fail at the end’ mindset was tremendous...I just thought that the burden to do well was just too much for me to bear.

When all things look too depressing at that instant, an Economics test in Pre-University Two brought about a paradigm shift. That academic experience changed my perspective entirely. It was a usual class test that was scheduled by my Economics tutor. I still remembered that the test was on ‘Consumption’.

On the day before the test, I took out my lecture notes and started my revision. Out of my subconscious mind, I made a bold challenge to myself to go all out for the test. I decided not to hold back my efforts anymore. Determined and set to achieve, I sat at my desk and patiently read through the entire lecture notes.

I attended the test on that fateful day and found that the test was not as difficult as I would imagine. Shortly after, my Economics tutor had finished marking the test and the scripts were returned to the class for discussion. I was absent that day due to a cold. It was a pleasant surprise when my Economics tutor told the class that I achieved an ‘A’ for my test and topped the entire Pre-University Two! I could not believe it when I heard the news the next day. The class cheered for my excellent performance while I sat in

my seat looking shocked and overjoyed at the same time. I always thought that getting an ‘A’ was an impossible mission for ordinary folks like me.

Over time, I finally realised that success is not only a dream but can be a reality. Granted that success may not be a guaranteed outcome of hard work, but without hard work, success may never come. I should not have allowed the fear of failure deter me from putting in my best all the time. It was a vicious cycle of defeating thoughts that restricted my potential to perform. One cannot never be too certain

about his endeavours till he tries. I am glad that at this moment of retrospection, I had stepped out of my comfort zone to fight against my inner demons.

There was no planning, neither was there any clear direction where I was heading. I just held on the belief that I could and I can make a difference. Who really knows what is in store for me at the end of the journey? But one thing for sure was that I would only know the answer if I work it out, my way.

And now, finally, I know the answer to my future.

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A current member of MI Alumni Association 2007/2008, Ng Huimin graduated from the former Jurong Institute (JI) Class of 1999. Thereafter she obtained her Bachelor’s degree in Law from the National University of Singapore (NUS). Huimin is currently a lawyer in practice. We wish Huimin all the best in her future endeavours.