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My name is Ka-ye. I would like to share with you the difference in my life before and after I learnt to dance.

Two years ago, I joined one of the extra-curricular activities at school – a Hip Hop, Street Dance Group. Actually, I had no idea what it was. In the beginning, I just thought of it as another activity; dance a bit, pass the time. I never thought I would continue for long. But later, the dancing instructor – Ah-hoi – chose me to go to Youth Outreach and join a program called “Dancing to a Healthy Life.”

Before I got involved in Street Dance, I never used to talk at school. The teachers did not consider me a problem student because I was never cheeky to them and during classes I just went to sleep. In fact, I had no good feelings towards the school at all and so I kept pretending to be sick so that I didn’t have to go.

After school, there was nothing to do and so I often hung around on the streets with my friends until 11.00pm or midnight before I went home. My parents were very worried and would often phone me and ask me where I was. They were such a nuisance so sometimes I would just cut the line or pretend that my battery was dead so that I didn’t have to take their calls. It saved me so much bother. Later, after I had begun dancing, I fell in love with Street Dance and I spent most of my time dancing. Even I myself did not understand how, once I began to dance, I could dance for several hours non-stop. I didn’t feel tired but felt happy. But my Mum and Dad thought I was stupid to spend my time on something like this and kept nagging me. So troublesome!

Two years ago, one of the instructors for “Dancing to a Healthy Life” – Kam-kit – helped us establish a dancing group called “Horizon”. This crew was made up of students from different schools and I was one of the members. In the beginning, the crew had 28 members but now there are only 10. For one reason or another, the other 18 have all given up dancing. But I didn’t give up. Because of the program at Youth Outreach and the Horizon Crew, I loved dancing more and more. My crew mates and the support, encouragement and teaching of my instructor all made me want to carry on.

Each time I went out dancing, I told my Mum and Dad and let them know where I would be and what I was doing. Now my parents know that if I come home late it is because I am dancing. I am not so much a problem as before. Whenever they phone me, they just tell me to be careful and ask me to try not to come home too late. I feel that they are really concerned about me and my attitude towards them has improved tremendously. I have been dancing for two years and I feel my life is much fuller. Whenever I have time, I go dancing and sometimes I even have to go for competitions on Saturdays and Sundays.

Although sometimes I feel very tired, I have never thought of giving up. On the contrary, I struggle even harder to keep my direction and reach my goals. When my Mum and Dad see me performing on TV or being interviewed by magazines and then hear the neighbors praising their daughter they feel so proud and I feel so happy.

Before, I used to be a little girl fond of playing around but not having the courage to do anything serious. But since I took up dancing, my self-confidence has increased and I am quite willing to try even the hardest dance moves. I make demands on myself.

At school, although my results are not too good, at least I do what any good student should do – try hard. My thinking is much more positive and I feel that I am much more open. Now I laugh all the time.

At school, some of the teachers support my dancing. Once, I injured myself during a performance and the thumb on my right hand got broken and dislocated. I had to spend three days in hospital. One of my teachers phoned me every day. My parents got worried and told me to stop dancing because they were afraid that I might get injured again. After my hand got better, I told Mum and Dad that if we dance then sooner or later we will get injured but I wouldn't give up dancing because of some minor accident. In the end they too stood by me.

Before, the school told all students to leave the school premises before six o'clock. Now they have changed. We are allowed to stay and dance until 9.00pm. Sometimes the teachers will also stay with us until late. Now, home and school give me a feeling of warmth. This year, I am the Class Monitor, a Student Leader and I am helping the school promote dancing and attract new students.

Last November, another girl on the Horizon Crew and myself prepared a performance for the "Asia Street Dance Competition". We won second prize! We were so happy; we had succeeded so well. We could see that hard work does bring results.

This is my story – before and after I learned to dance.