

Idiom by Lon Yan

齊心協力

qi2 xin1 xie2 li4

A boy was hit by a car and ended up being trapped under the vehicle. His mother saw what happened and fainted.

The accident happened in Leicester in the UK. A witness described the dramatic rescue that followed: "All of a sudden, people came from everywhere and started lifting the car off him. There were people who live in the area and people coming out of the church, they all came together.

"I couldn't believe how quickly the community came together to rescue the boy from underneath the car."

The boy suffered serious injuries but the quick action of the Good Samaritans – about 15 of them – saved his life. That was a heartening example of "齊心協力" (qi2 xin1 xie2 li4).

"齊" (qi2) is "uniform," "together," "orderly," "心" (xin1) "the heart," "feeling," "intention," "mind," and "齊心" (qi2 xin1) is "to be of one mind." "協" (xie2) is "to assist," "joint," "together," "to cooperate," "to harmonize," "力" (li4) "power," "strength," and "協力" (xie2 li4) means "to unite efforts," "to join in common effort," "to work in concert," "to join forces."

Literally, "齊心協力" (qi2 xin1 xie2 li4) is "to be of one mind," "to work in concert." The idiom means "to work as one," "to make concerted efforts," "to pull together," "to work with a common purpose."

"齊心協力" (qi2 xin1 xie2 li4) is the most effective way to achieve a goal. It is the formula of success, be it for a small group or the society at large. But this is exactly what the SAR seems to be lacking right now.

Terms containing the character "協" (xie2) include:

協調 (xie2 tiao2) – to coordinate; in harmony

協助 (xie2 zhu4) – to assist; to aid

協商 (xie2 shang1) – to consult and discuss with each other

妥協 (tuo3 xie2) – to compromise