

Idiom by Lon Yan

不屈不撓

bu4 qu1 bu4 nao2

A girl suffering from brittle bones disease did brilliantly in this year's Diploma of Secondary Education Examination and was admitted to study law at the University of Hong Kong.

Cherry Ho Cheuk-wing, from the Christian and Missionary Alliance Sun Kei Secondary School, has to use a wheelchair due to the genetic disorder. She completed six subjects in the examination and scored 30 points.

She wanted to use the professional knowledge as a lawyer to help the disadvantaged in the future, especially minorities and the disabled.

Her formula of success in the face of adversity: "never give up and don't stop striving for excellence and achieving what you want for the future." This is the spirit that

is embodied in the idiom "不屈不撓" (*bu4 qu1 bu4 nao2*).

"不" (*bu4*) is "no," "not," "屈" (*qu1*) "to bend," "to submit," "不" (*bu4*), again, is "no," "not" and "撓" (*nao2*) "to flinch (退縮; 退開)," "to yield." Literally, "不屈不撓" (*bu4 qu1 bu4 nao2*) is "not to bend and not to yield."

The idiom means "unyielding," "indomitable," "dauntless," "tough." The spirit that it speaks of is "perseverance."

"不屈不撓" (*bu4 qu1 bu4 nao2*) is a prerequisite if one wants to succeed in life. Being "不屈不撓" (*bu4 qu1 bu4 nao2*) may not always let you reach your goal, but not being beaten by failures, and keeping up the spirit to fight another day is in itself a great triumph!

Terms containing the character "屈" (*qu1*) include:

屈服 (*qu1 fu2*) – to submit; to surrender; to succumb to

屈辱 (*qu1 ru3*) – humiliation; to humiliate

屈就 (*qu1 jiu4*) – to condescend to take a position

屈膝 (*qu1 xi1*) – to go down on one's knees; to bend one's knees