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Before coming on this trip, I had set myself several aims of what I wanted to achieve. Mainly I wanted to test myself to see if I could bear with living and working in the much tougher rural conditions of Dabao which should be a closer simulation to that of third world countries where lots of humanitarian field work would be carried out. At the end of the trip, I think I've gained a lot more than what I aimed to achieve in the first place. Of course there is the impact of realising how privileged we are to be living in a place such as Hong Kong, taking many things such as flushing toilets, education and clean running water for granted. But in my reflection I would like to focus more on the impact the villagers left on me, in particular the story of the family I visited.

The family consisted of a young boy and his grandmother. The boy's mother left him at a young age and his father was an alcoholic with a bit of a violet streak who worked away from home so the boy was left to be raised by his grandmother. Having spoken a bit more to the boy, we learned that he really liked studying but was unable to pursue this interest as he had to help his grandmother with farming and other household chores, fast tracked into becoming the family's breadwinner. It was at this moment that we drew the connection. He was much quieter than many of his peers, but now we could understand why and immediately felt sorry for this predicament he found himself in. It wasn't fair, but then life isn't fair. So what could we do to help him?

We only had 3 days in the village. Our main aim was to deliver health education to the villagers, teach them proper hand hygiene and dental hygiene technique. But for me, I think sometimes just being there and having fun playing with them for several days may go much further than we think especially for the aforementioned boy. My most touching moment in this entire trip happened when he came up to me and gave me a paper lantern which he folded. Now I knew first hand how truly inspiring this act of acknowledgement can be for our determination to continue down this chosen path. Though we wouldn't be able to comprehend what sort of pressure he faces each day but we can do our best to help alleviate this pressure from his mind for several days, giving him much needed respite which surely can only be good for his mental health.

In addition to this I also learned a lot from my more experienced teammates about how to carry out public health intervention, for example why measuring blood pressure was unfeasible as the villagers would not be able to continue monitoring their blood pressure after we left and even if they knew that they had hypertension they were not in a position to receive suitable treatment for it.

To conclude, this trip really has been an eye-opener in many perspectives for me in addition to helping me confirm my desire for frontline humanitarian work. I now aim to learn more about how to plan and carry out public health intervention so I can take on a more leading role next time around.