



No matter whether it is a sweaty hot summer or a chilly cold winter, you will always find a tall and lean figure unlocking the main door of Tzu Chi Sydney (TC) at 8.30am every day. By 6pm, when the after-hours traffic has gradually dispersed, you will also see the same figure walking around TC, checking every window, electric plug, and light before carefully locking up and heading home. He is Brother K. C. Lee, the guardian of TC.

You could have mistaken him as a retiree with a lot of spare time. But in fact, he is a successful IT professional. After a distinguished career with many large well-known companies such as IBM and Cathay Pacific Airways, he is now an important technical staff member of UNISYS Australia. It goes without saying that he is always busy. Besides attending to TC before and after work, he also comes by train every day during his two hour lunch break to sort out the pull tabs from aluminium cans collected for recycling. This is all because of a Tabs For Wheelchair campaign – every 15kg of them from aluminium cans can be exchanged for a wheelchair. Therefore, he is doing his utmost to collect the tabs so that he can donate wheelchairs to charity groups in need. He will then rush back to work after those recycling works.

Some TC volunteers have nicknamed KC “Brother Soy milk”. This is not because he likes to drink soy milk. Instead, it is because he realises that soy milk is a rich source of plant-based protein and is a drink that will greatly benefit vegetarians. Therefore, twice a week, he uses his lunch break to make soy milk. Its tedious process does not bother him. He stores the soy milk in bottles and keeps them refrigerated for other volunteers to enjoy. To cater for those suffering from hyperglycemia, he even uses different colour caps to distinguish between sweet and non-sweet soy milk. Such is his attentiveness to others.

If you think that KC is already busy enough then you are wrong again. He also drives to China Town and Burwood every Friday and Saturday to collect unsold breads from bakeries. He will then carefully sort them according to each care recipient’s needs before delivering to them in Redfern. In addition, because of his outstanding English skills, he is also a great help with handling of office correspondence, negotiation and translation in areas such as fire-fighting and insurance. He epitomises completely the Chinese hard-working attribute. He also donates blood regularly, 600ml every three weeks. He has already done this for more than 200 times, an unsurpassed record of benevolence. Persistence is another special strength of his character.

Looking back, his affinity with Tzu Chi seems to be predestined. As he is a DIY person at home, he came across Da Ai TV channel by accident when he was adjusting his satellite antenna one day. Through that, he came to know about Tzu Chi. After two years of watching Da Ai, one day he was asked to pick up some items from the Sydney office for delivery to the Melbourne branch as he was driving to that city for other reason. That marked his first contact with Tzu Chi. That was also the time when Sydney office was undergoing extensive reconstruction. With so many things needed to be done, his joining was like a living Bodhisattva sent by Buddha to help.

Some said that you would need spare time to be a TC volunteer. Others said that they had to wait until they retired. But as a matter of fact, if you are determined to do good deeds and can use your time slots effectively, you can still achieve a lot even if you are busy at work. KC is a good example of that. The most valuable thing about him is his perseverance with his benevolence every day. This is not something an ordinary person can attain. We once asked him: "How do you maintain a balance between family, work and voluntary work at TC?" He answered: "Through effective time management and then do you best."

Master Chen Yen's aphorism - "Just do it" has inspired Brother Lee the most. At the same time, he is also its perfect embodiment. We should all learn from him!