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A great ambition was set while serving in the army

Obligated military service

The training stories in obligatory military service are a common conversation topic among many men in Taiwan. Friends made in the military might also be of vital assistance in the future. Many soldiers might see their visions more clearly and set goals while sharing their dreams with each other in the military.

Six months after graduating from I-Ning High school, Tai Chiang Ching started to serve in the military. He was assigned to serve in the Oil Brigade of Shui-nan Air Force in Taichung. During military service, he got to know his supervisor, Wang Sen-liang, who later became his best friend and mentor. Wang had an important role as a military advisor in Tai's life journey. He provided much valuable advice, and also supported as well as encouraged Tai to start an enterprise in teaching and mastering the abacus and mental arithmetic.

Wang Sen-liang had served in the military since October 9 1981, but was assigned to Shui-nan Air Force later than Tai Chiang Ching. Coincidentally, Wang was first assigned to Huwei, Tai's hometown, to receive basic training at the Air Force recruit military unit. However, they didn't know each other at that time. Wang was then assigned to Shui-nan Air Force the year after; thereupon, they got to know each other and became good friends. They were assigned to serve in the financial office in the Air Force; while Wang served as chief financial officer, Tai served as financial personnel.

There were about 80 soldiers serving in their unit in the Shui-nan Air Force. The finance office in charge of finance and budget accounting for the brigade was a small unit that encompassed four members of personnel. Aside from Wang Sen-liang and Tai Chiang Ching, another two acted as a Major Budget Officer and as financial personnel. Wang Sen-liang is four years older than Tai Chiang Ching; he worked with Wang during the day time and slept next door to him at night, so they saw each other every day and night.

The soldiers serving in the Shui-nan Air Force worked from eight o'clock in the morning until five o'clock in the afternoon every day. Tai and Wang would take a walk together after dinner from about five to six o'clock every day, when it was usually a comfortable sunset regardless of season. They would talk about their childhood, their secrets, and their own ambitions.

Tai Chiang Ching became more serene while serving in the army; in Wang's eyes, Tai was very well educated. That might be because Tai grew up in a very poor environment. Therefore, he was able to cultivate himself as a dedicated, honest and compassionate person. No one ever saw him get angry while serving in the military. Tai Chiang Ching retained the characteristics of simplicity and honesty like his fellow countrymen. He was polite, respectful, and also willing to share his own ideas and help others. Wang got along with Tai very well, and they were the kind of people who could carefully follow the prescribed order and set high standards for themselves. Therefore, they developed a great friendship.

Before Wang studied business at college, he had already worked for three years. Therefore, Wang was not only older than Tai, but also more experienced. Wang was prudent and dedicated, and very good at analysis and integration. Therefore, Tai highly respected and trusted him. He treated Wang as a mentor who could help him grow and develop. Since they had become good friends, Wang knew about Tai's personal growth and educational background, and how he worked part-time in order to save money to pay his tuition fees. He also knew how much Tai wanted to become an abacus and mental arithmetic teacher, since he was planning to create teaching materials for abacus and mental arithmetic even while serving in the army. Wang also got to know that, when Tai was studying at I-Ning High School, he had received great support from a famous teacher, Mr. Hong You-tian. He knew that Tai had been selected as a member of the abacus mental arithmetic team that had represented the school. He also knew that Tai practised every day so his skills of abacus mental arithmetic improved rapidly.