

My name is Shitou. I am from the Sanctuary in Chichester. Today I am going to talk about volunteering. To be honest I have no idea where I should start. Six months ago, I was a foreigner who could only say thank you and sorry in English. It's incredible that I can stand here and talk to you today. Amazing. I feel like I'm dreaming. Not a bad dream.

So, before I arrived in the UK, a lot of things happened to me. I used to be a designer and I have a very lovely family. I have my own career. I think I should be an enviable person; Everything changed from when I spoke about Hong Kong and human rights, but that's another thing.

Introducing about my past is to let you know that I am a proud person of my own. So, I have my own pride and I can't enjoy free food and drink while complaining that the meat is too old, the salad is boring or why we don't have free public transportation, or why I am getting free clothes that are so bad looking.... I can't.

That's the first reason why volunteering is so important to me, because I want to give back. I want to be able to give back what I've been given.

I know many people are thinking, "Our government spends £800 million a day to support these people, so what have they done for the UK or for us?" That's what I'm thinking too. What can I do for this country when I've got so much.

I know you will say, "No come on, we don't think that, we are very friendly". I know you are very friendly; but when you think the food we eat and the place we live is your taxes, you still don't think so? No, you definitely think so.

This is my second reason to be a volunteer. I want you to say to your wife or husband when you are having dinner with your family at night, "I know there is a person from China at Sanctuary, although I can't remember his name, but that guy is okay". See, when you mention someone, you may not remember their name but you definitely will remember their country. So, even though I hate my government, they are awful, they are dictatorial, but I am Chinese, I love my Country. I just oppose the political party, so I can't let you say something bad about me when you mention me and my country.

I don't know if you saw the news, but Sunak planned to send some people to Rwanda. I know there must be many political reasons for this. However, in my opinion, as Asylum Seekers if you actively do some voluntary work after coming here and do more things for this country or community instead of sleeping in a shelter all day, I think there maybe more British people against this plan. I don't think any family would like to have a person in their home who eats and drinks all day for free. Instead, they hope that the people who come here would do something in return for taking them in.

I believe there are two idioms in your country that you should be more familiar with than me, "don't bite the hand that feeds you" and another one is "you scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours". What a simple truth, but some people just don't understand.

I don't know if I have conveyed exactly what I mean because this is the day I've spoken the most English. If not, just remember to tell your wife or husband that the guy from China is amazing, that's enough.

Finally, I want to say that I have nothing to offer but blood, tears and sweat. Thank you everyone!