



From a Senior:

I'll Slow Down for You to Catch Up

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The junior nurse character played by Lin Yu-Mei is a “standardized nurse” during the “Clinical preceptor Teaching Simulation workshop”. Participants for clinical preceptors demonstrated their communication and teaching proficiency through role plays in mock-up situations. Among the participants, Yu-Mei was most impressed with Oh Pei-Ju of Surgical ICU. Lin Yu-Mei said, “Senior Oh is very persuasive, she makes people want to listen when she inspires them.”

It was end of October 2016 when I participated in “Clinical preceptor Teaching Simulation workshop”. The simulation scenario was that junior nurse Lin Yu-Mei was overwhelmed during shift change with a series of mishaps: forgetting to dispense medication to a patient, sending away a patient’s vital medication by mistake, and dropping a needle on a patient causing bleeding. I played the senior nurse of the next shift and had to clean up the mess.

New recruits are usually apprehensive of their seniors’ response. When I saw a junior feeling down, I would first draw her attention away from the effect so I can analyze the cause. “I was like you before so I know how you feel.” Using empathy, I shared my similar mistakes which were part of my growing up. We get better at prioritizing and handling things as we become more experienced. Eventually, we would notice the progress we have made.

“Better be scolded than make mistakes.” Problems don’t usually come one after another, they happen simultaneously in a scrambling manner. Seeking help is the first

thing we should do, whether from our seniors or teachers. During chaos, a senior nurse focuses on the patients, she/he may be too preoccupied with solving patients' problem to worry about your feelings or to give you immediate feedback. She/he may be even blunt to you. But I believe when everything settles down she/he will spend time to explain each case and provide you with her/his thoughts and advice.

Guiding the juniors is also a learning experience. During my 4-year tenure as a clinical preceptor, every junior nurse I tutored had different personality and tested me with different scenarios.

I remember the frustration I felt the first year. Being always bustling, my pace was too fast for the new and naïve one. "Didn't I tell you yesterday? What is happening today?" I had grave concern of her because she made the same mistakes day after day. Would she be able to care for the patients? Would they safe at her hands? I seriously doubted it and I watched closely over her shoulder, which was stressing her out.

Then I consulted a senior clinical preceptor. She told me my instantaneous response might interrupt and deprive a junior's opportunity to think and learn. So within the scope of patient safety, I started to slow down and gave the junior feedbacks at the right time.

This change transformed the junior nurse for growth. After she was able to work independently, I still kept track of her patient care outcome. I found that she did take note of my advice and she is indeed making great progress. It gave me a sense of accomplishment and made me feel good about being a clinical preceptor.



Clinical preceptor Oh Pei-Ju (right) has learned to slow down her teaching to leave room for new recruits to learn and to think.