



PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR TEACHER



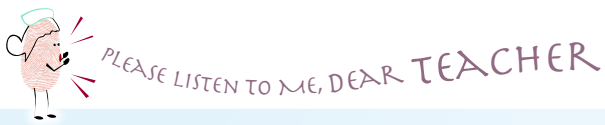
# Though with Osteocarcinoma, Transferred to Nursing Dept. and Stick with the Goal

## **Parting the Soccer Field and encountering Loving Care while in the Hospital**

A serious illness in my childhood came as a turning point in my life. It changed my attitude towards life. I used to love jogging under the sun because my lifelong goal is in sports. However, I had to withdraw from a soccer team right before the last game during elementary school after being diagnosed with malignant osteosarcoma, also known as bone cancer. My tibia was infected and had to be treated immediately. All of a sudden, I had to retire from soccer. I was wheeled into a cold operating room for surgery, followed with a series of chemotherapies. Despite the ill fortune, the care I received from the medical staff touched my soul. They showered me with love as if I was their own child and a close family member. I finally understand how people can truly give and ask for nothing in return even for a total stranger. For the two years in hospital, their encouragement prepared me for the life challenges ahead.

## **Desire to Serve Patients with a Nursing Major Delayed Graduation**

Radiology was my major (Department of Medical Imaging and Radiological Science) when I first started at Tzu Chi University of Technology & Science (TCUST). My initial plan was to get a job related to medical care at a hospital so that I could help people. When I learned that the Nursing Department was accepting transfer students, I started to consider changing my plan. I realized that “nursing” brings me warmth and inspires me to grow so that I can share my affection to children like myself who was on the receiving end in the past.



The transfer process is complicated and it likely extends my time to graduate. I was going to be a third-year student, after the transfer, my graduation will likely delay for two more years. I consulted with many people and most of them recommended me to stay put because nursing is a tough profession. What concerned me most is to regret for not taking the chance. At the end, I followed by feelings and made the decision to transfer.

### **Gratitude towards Mentors for Guidance and On-time Graduation**

After the transfer, my class advisor, Professor Chuang Jui-Ling was very helpful. When I was running around like a headless chicken, she monitored my grades and helped me pick the courses. She knew my story so she did her best to help me stay on course. She guided me to navigate the curriculum to graduate on-time.

During my transfer application, I was interviewed with the Department Chief. She only asked me the reason for a nursing major. I told her my experience and the reason; she approved my application right away. It was not until I attended some of her classes that I appreciated even more for her dedication to students. One time, she asked me my well-being, "Are you feeling better? Are you able to follow the pace of the course?" Her caring remarks were my main motivation to work hard in class.

My third and fourth year class advisor Prof. Yang Chun-Tien was also a good mentor. Due to transferring major, I often need more credits than my classmates. There were usually many documents and forms that need to be approved and submitted. Even with the additional paperwork, my teacher was committed to help me graduate on time. They went beyond the call of duty to nurture us as if we were their own. In order not to take for granted their loving care, I shall work hard to fulfill their expectations.

### **A Nursing Journey - Foster Lifelong Learning**

It has been two years, going to the third, since I transferred from radiology, an equation-filled with physics and chemistry, to nursing. Although the journey has been challenging, it actually supplements growth in the future. Sometimes I ponder: "Had I stayed in radiology, I would've graduated by now." Nevertheless, I have no regrets because I know my goals and I am marching towards them steadily.

People said that university study is like "Four Years of Play" - the course work lightens as you migrate to senior years. Initially, I was not used to the demand when the course load increased as I moved toward my last few years. However, after a



**After starting at the Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology, Weng Zhen-Guo has been active in school activities as a goodwill ambassador. Photo shows his work in Myanmar to participate in a children's play, distribute charity goods and immerse in the local culture.**



while, I was used to the “demanding yet productive” lifestyle. This is what nursing is all about – endless lifelong learning and improving in continuous clinical practices. Only when we continue to learn and grow would we be able to keep up with the modern demand. What we learn today could very well become an ancient history by tomorrow. That has been my profound understanding and takeaway in nursing.



**Supported by Willpower;  
Internship and Exams Challenge the Mind and Body**

My family was not very supportive of my decision to transfer because my health is not suited for a job that demands prolonged standing. Since my illness at twelve, I received an artificial joint replacement on my right leg; my family is opposed to anything that could



harm my legs. I recognize their concerns and it took a few convincing discussions before they come to terms with my decision.

It was not until the fourth year of continuous clinical practices, I appreciate the importance of a healthy body. Due to the demand of prolonged standing and walking, the long hours of class work, and accumulated stress and exhaustion, my body was showing signs of strain. I don't think my body is worse than others, but the inherent medical condition is a great concern. After rounds of chemotherapies and procedures, my body was scarred. I rely on willpower to stay strong for my dream and for the choice I made. I believe all nursing students have their own personal motivation and determination to keep them going. Nursing is about empathy and love. It demands endless passion and joy. I think that is the power that supports nursing students through their journeys.

### **Step by Step; Care for the body and mind**

The fourth year internship marks the beginning of a milestone in my life. After a series of clinical studies and internships, I observed and learned from those experiences. Life is full of impermanence and hope. I learned the interpersonal skills and the vicissitudes of life. Internship is demanding. Not only do I have to face the pressure from senior classmates, professors and patients' family members, I also have to deal with reports, documents and medications after work. These are tremendous stress that may cause some to breakdown and become depressed. I remember I was having a hard time during internship and I asked the teacher a question, "What if I lost my passion in nursing?" She replied, "Well, then it's lost." I was shocked by her response. She continued, "There are always ups and downs in life; sometimes you feel happy and sometimes you feel sad. Passion is not forever. You may burnout one day. If you feel stagnant because of a temporary slump, then take some time off. What's more important than passion is your goal. With goal comes motivation, with motivation comes harvest, and with harvest comes determination."

I often think we misuse "nursing" to limit ourselves, to give us stress. My internship teacher said we study nursing to protect lives. Instead, we put nursing care under the microscope, giving ourselves unnecessary stress and turmoil. Our job is to educate ourselves and not be caught in the ideal of nursing and jeopardize our nursing potential. Once I come to terms with that thought I reached a deeper level of understanding for nursing. Nursing is not just caring for others; we must first care for ourselves. How can you care for others when you can't even take care of yourselves? Solving this conundrum, I am now more determined to realize my nursing goal.



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### **Giving Is a Precious Opportunity; Passion to Spread Love and Kindness**

A person experiences explosive growth when placed in a pressured environment. Pressure prompts motivation which triggers responsibility. When you achieve something on your own, the sense of accomplishment is many times larger. When you receive praises from others, the joy you get is genuine. There is nothing more rewarding than hearing the family member of a patient say, “Thank you for all your hard work.” When you see them heal and discharged from the hospital, knowing that you have taken good care of them, you realize that was your original passion and intent. I remind myself that I was once a patient receiving care and now I must grasp the opportunity to reciprocate and



Weng Zhen-Guo was promoting “111 World Vegetarian Awakening Day” and asking students to join the movement.



**After learning about the Nursing Department is accepting transfer students, Weng Zhen-Guo decided to take the chance. He appreciates the Professor who reminded him to keep up with the course pace and take supplemental credits.**

care for others. Good or bad, they are what motivate me to stay in the nursing profession.

For the future, I believe everything has its orders. Things happen in life for a reason. No matter what the challenges are, we must overcome obstacles and not be overwhelmed by them. Always remember your initial resolve. It is important to hold on to passion with a passionate heart, I will excel in nursing. I hope I will serve in the children's hematology department and apply my own experience to help comfort patients through their cancer treatments. Perhaps I can also cultivate the seeds of love in their hearts that one day will grow and spread.