



Male Nurse Diary

**Ko Chung-Yao,
Registered Nurse,
Surgical Ward,
Hualien Tzu Chi
Hospital**

Swimming Toward the Nursing Ocean

After graduated from middle school, I didn't know what I wanted to do next. I didn't want to go to regular high school, so I picked up an application for Tzu Chi vocational training. But I still didn't know what I want to do. My family saw the application had Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology(TCUST)'s nursing field and commented, "Tzu Chi has a good reputation, go to Tzu Chi." Without second thought, I went to Hualien to study nursing and started my nursing career.

At first, I had no idea about "Nursing". I thought it was only to perform injection and administer medicine. After reading the curriculum, I realized it wasn't that simple. The courses include Psychology, basic Nursing, Anatomy, Pathology, and Critical Care, etc. Also, studying at school is so much different than the actual internship when I realized the skills and theories that I learned from school were different from real practice at the hospital. When we were at school, we used mannequins (dummy) to practice. Even if we made a mistake, we could do it again and again. But the hospital is a different story. We face real





patients whose temperaments and sentiments allow little tolerance for mistakes.

I still remember when I was an intern; I was very nervous. I even wished my classmate would measure the patient's blood pressure for me. I felt like a newborn fish facing a big ocean. I was very scared. During my internship, the teachers were constantly accompanying us, carefully checked the medicine and our necessary skills. The teachers were also with us to explain to the patients. If we didn't do good job at first, the teachers would always be there to help us accomplish the task.

During the phase of nursing training, I really appreciated my teacher Pan Chao-Kuei. Because of her teaching and inspiration, we realized that nursing was for both physical and mental conditions. After a series of internships in the departments of obstetrics, pediatric, psychiatric, public health, and trauma, I finally established some knowledge that associated with the theories which I have learned from school. I was able to apply the knowledge to the patients during my internship. The practices also enhanced my understanding of the theories that I learned from the books.

As I progressed to senior years, pressure and stress increased. I was lucky to have met teacher Lee Chung-Jen, who would always invite us to go out for some exercises to release stress and helped us understand classwork. He helped us understand difficult theories with easy approaches. Our lead teacher Lee Tze-Ying always treated us like her own children. She always listened patiently to our complaints, and then offered us the

positive energy to continue our journey in nursing.

When we reached the last session of our internship, we didn't have any teacher to guide us but the senior nursing staff to lead us. Not only had we learn from patients we chose, but also patients the senior nursing staff were assigned. At first, I was a bit nervous; luckily, the senior nursing staff all was always very kind to guide us. Although the unit that I chose was overly busy, the lead nurse would explain to me what I needed to improve and taught me the knowledge about diseases whenever there was opportunity. I noticed that even



though the unit was busy, the senior nursing staff always helped each other. Thus after the graduation, I chose this unit to continue my nursing career.

Being a male, I had to serve in the military where I was assigned to a military hospital. I didn't know where my courage came from; I volunteered to go to the emergency room. Then there was a series of the emergency and patient care training. When I started the service, I didn't know in what condition the next patient would be, it was a very fast pace. A patient could walk in, and then fainted all of a sudden. I still remembered my first encounter with a patient who needed CPR. I forgot everything that I learned. Luckily, the lead nurse didn't scold me, but taught me the steps and theories of emergency and how to handle it. Thus, after my shift, I would practice in my head the whole process of emergency situation. I also encountered many emergency cases after that, I was able to handle the patients and saw the heart beats bounced back. When the team saved a patient, the joy was indescribable.

After I had completed my military service, my role was reverted back to the workplace and I started to lead younger staff members. I not only needed to take care of my patients, but also teach younger student nurses. Although I may not be as good as my mentor, I am working hard toward that goal. I continue to work hard and enrich my nursing knowledge. It is always a great joy to see a patient get well and go home. Now when people ask me my occupation, I would always answer them proudly, "I am a nurse."