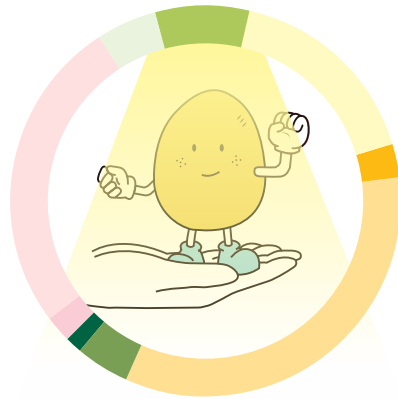


Finding the Balance



Life is a long river, and we are but travelers; at times we must choose one path over another, at times we ponder in the roaring waters...


Before graduating from middle school, as I recall, my plan for the future was a complete blank. Not a slightest hint. Eventually I followed my mother's advice and went to Tzu Chi College of Technology in Hualien (now known as Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology). It was a sheer luck come to think of it. After five solid years of training in nursing and humanistic cultivation, I have learnt not only the professional aspect of nursing, but also acquired the attitude of a nurse. The school had taught me that nursing is not merely a profession, but a life-long endeavor that affects other lives.

In 2005, not long after my graduation, my friends and my family informed me that TTCH was recruiting registered nurses. I still remember the nervousness during my interview and the thrill of receiving the acceptance notice, as if it was just yesterday. And then 12 years passed in the blink of an eye.

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To be honest, as a registered nurse, the real challenge is that the physical and mental hard work I put in are not necessarily recognized or appreciated. It frustrated me from time to time. Fortunately, with the sharing and guidance of the head nurse and my fellow colleagues, I began to understand that wisdom only thrives from the frictions of people and affairs. Lives spent in the wards are not the lives we desire. A person experiencing physical discomfort may be going through mental fatigues as well. Having that empathy at heart, I became more positive at work. Just like Master Cheng Yen said, “Be down-to-earth, and well-grounded in life, instead of seeking only, a sense of accomplishment. We feel such peace, when we lead, a well-grounded life.”



Got the new character as a mother in life, Huang Wan-Di (right) enjoys the achievement of nursing profession and keeps finding the work-family balance.

The greatest challenge in nursing, for me personally, is not the work itself, but to find a pleasant balance between work and family. In this regard, I am still a student.

From enduring the discomfort of pregnancy to giving birth to my eldest daughter, juggling between work and family really burned me out. And the guilt of not being able to spend time with my daughter unless I was on vacation slowly ate away inside me. Thanks to my parents, who took meticulous care of my daughter, I was able to withstand just a little that guilt; and the teaching excellence award given to me by the hospital in 2015 was a tremendous recognition of my work performance.

When I became a mother for the second time, my daughter was already four. She was mature enough at this time to clearly articulate her emotions, to insist on my company when going through her homework, to passionately prepare for her role on stage the night before, and to nag her parents to read her bedtime stories before she willingly falls to sleep. Simply being there with her was not enough for her. My second daughter also reminded me of my eldest daughter when she was younger. At first I followed my old routine, having my parents taking care of them, and spend time with them on my days off. But for some reasons I could not stop seeing their cute little faces in front of me, constantly reminding me that I am a mother. However, I could not simply give up my job at Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital. After a long discussion with my husband, we decided to change our lifestyle, including relocating and long-distance commuting, so that I could, to the best of my ability, lead a balance life between work and children.

My full time work as a registered nurse, coupled with two-hour commuting each day, is extremely exhausting physically and mentally. "You can't have it both ways," the saying goes. Shouldn't there be a win-win solution somewhere? This question troubled me for the longest time. It was when Master's words came to me. Gratitude, respect, and love. I am grateful for the birth of new lives into our family, giving me a chance to experience what life has to offer; I respect for the work I have, a profession that is all about saving lives; and I love everything I have at this point in time, which allows me to spend every second of my life to its fullest. With a change of mind, I realized that the constant pressure and challenges are what helps me to experience and appreciate life once more. To me, finding the equilibrium point between work and family, and the hardships are not so hard anymore.