

TZU CHI NURSING CARE



*With the Compassion of Bodhisattvas,
Where Ever Sufferings Are, We Are.*



Courage and Mindfulness

As a nursing professional in clinical practice, the condition changes and challenges occur. Face the “now” and see your mood, toward yourself and others. No judgement, positive or negative, treat it with mindfulness and handle it with mindfulness.

Put the methodology of courage into practice, break through and conquer difficulty, accumulate self-confidence and self-actualization.





Huang Chih-Min, Head Nurse, Respiratory Care Center, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital

The study of “courage” was a craze that originated from Japan and later swept across Taiwan in recent years. Chinese translation publications that about the claims of the deceased Austrian psychotherapist Alfred Adler, the founder of the school of individual psychology, with themes such as “The Psychology of Courage”, “The Courage to be Disliked” that stayed on top of the chart for weeks and months. The surprising phenomenon soon caught our interest. We decided to take it upon ourselves to investigate the issue further.

We in the nursing profession are often met with a wide variety of challenges and complications. For example, we struggle to operate independently when we were beginners; we are concerned with our students’ performances when we become clinical instructors; and we need to constantly adapt to new obstacles when we assume new positions or undertake new assignments. When immersed in those stressful moments, how would you think or respond emotionally? How would others treat the scenario? Everyone has their own shares of challenges. The only way forward is to overcome them. That is why we the editorial team of Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital (TTCH) chose to investigate the topic “The Courage to Face Challenges”. We believe that by recognizing our own thoughts and attitude, it would enable us to learn from each other the courage to overcome challenges.

Grow from Our Own Failures

We conducted a survey by sending an electronic questionnaire to all the nursing staff in all six Tzu Chi hospitals, and 1,420 valid questionnaires were returned.

Basic Statistics

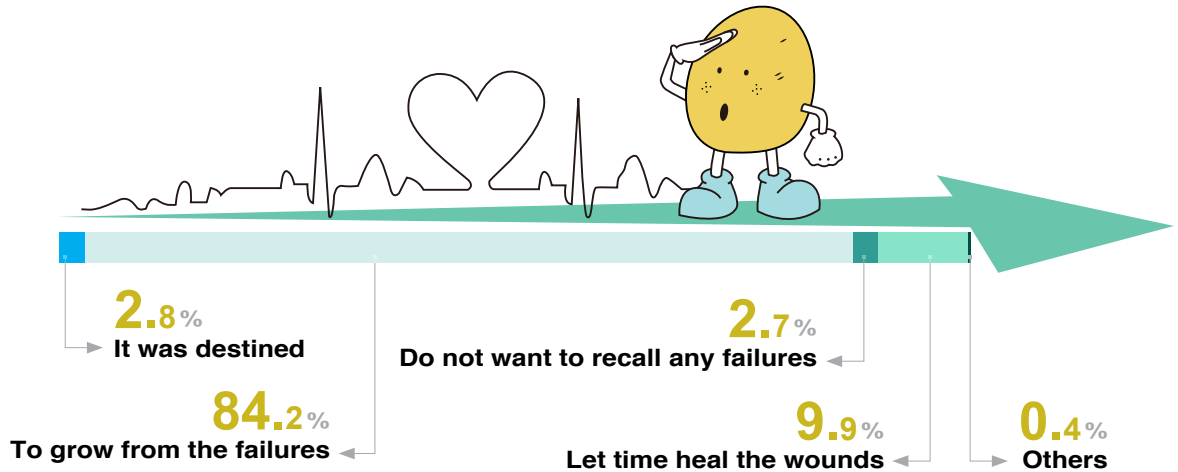
Gender	Number of People	%
Female	1,348	94.9
Male	72	5.1
Total	1,420	100.0
Age	Number of People	%
under 20	72	5.1
21~25	506	35.6
26~30	226	15.9
31~35	219	15.4
36~40	205	14.5
above 40	192	13.5
Total	1,420	100.0

Nursing Level	Number of People	%
N	526	37.0
N1	216	15.2
N2	490	34.5
N3	124	8.8
N4	64	4.5
Total	1,420	100.0
Job Title	Number of People	%
Registered nurse/nurse	1,153	81.2
Deputy head nurse	52	3.7
Head nurse	60	4.2
supervisor	21	1.5
Functional unit/case manager	41	2.9
nurse practitioner/senior RN	93	6.5
Total	1,420	100.0
Department	Number of People	%
Internal Medicine	295	20.8
Surgery	231	16.3
Pediatrics	59	4.2
Obstetrics & Gynecology	61	4.3
Intensive Care & ER	283	19.9
Functional Unit	12	0.9
Kidney Dialysis	50	3.5
Operating Room	93	6.5
Outpatient Clinic	180	12.7
Palliative Care	24	1.7
Administration	36	2.5
Psychiatry	39	2.7
Others	57	4.0
Total	1,420	100.0
Hospital Working Experience	Number of People	%
Within 1 year	274	19.3
1~2 years	215	15.1
2~3 years	178	12.6
3~5 years	185	13.0
5 years and above	568	40.0
Total	1,420	100.0



Q1

Recall any failures or setbacks you have experienced in your line of work. Which of the following matches your interpretation of these experiences? (N = 1,420)



In our first question, we asked our nursing staff to recall their past failures in the workplace. The answer was one-sided: 84.2% chose “to grow from the failures”; and 15.8% chose “let time heal the wounds”, “it was destined to be”, “do not want to recall any failures” or others.

The result is a clear indication that a majority of our nursing staff have the experience and the capability to perceive their failures and setbacks in a positive light.

A Leap out of the Comfort Zone

The second question aimed to investigate the amount of people who possesses the positive mentality to say “yes, I am ready” when receiving new tasks or assignments. The result showed that 40.5% answered “frequently 60-79%”, 29.8% answered “sometimes 40-59%”, and only 17.7% “always 80-100%”. The three positive choices occupied a total of 88%. The results of the first two questions right off the bat was inspiring. Most clinical nursing staff are capable of facing new challenges, assignments, and curve balls at work with a positive mentality, which suggests that a majority of them are in a healthy state of mind.

We nurses, particularly when we are promoted to the supervisor position such as deputy head nurse or head nurse, must find the courage to be disliked and give our juniors a push at the right time, so they can move pass the minor angst or unpleasanties that are holding them back.

For example, one of my juniors submitted a case report that was rejected. When I encouraged her to revise her report and have another go, all she wanted was to run away. “I don’t want to submit it again. It will only be rejected again,” she said. According to Adler’s theory, she chose not to submit her case report out of the fear that it would be rejected, however the ultimate intention was to avoid submission, and the possibility of rejection was merely an excuse. So I asked her this, “Do you want your submission accepted? If yes, you better act now!”

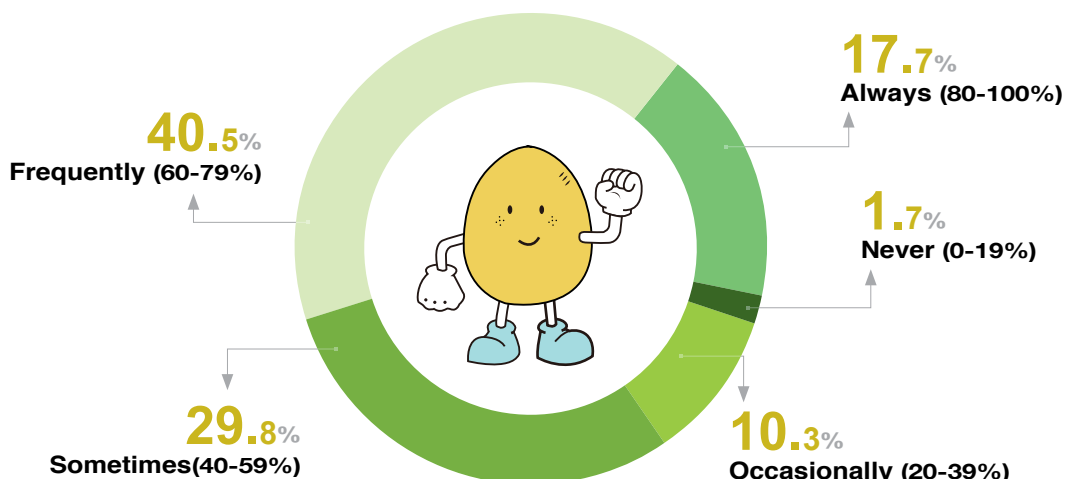
Enhance Psychological Muscle with Self-Reflection

The next question asked the nurses about their emotional responses, or psychological muscles, to self and others when challenges emerge. As result, 70.9% chose “always looking ahead” and scored 3 points and higher, 93% chose “willing to learn” and scored 3 points and higher, 71.3% chose “smile it off”, 79.2% “forcing a change of mind”, and 79.4% “eager for challenge” and scored 3 points and higher. It is evident that more than 70% of the answers scored mid to high in the positive mentality of our nursing staff in the wake of challenges, and more than 90% chose “willing to learn”, indicating that the education of positive mindset is deeply rooted in the nursing staff in clinical work.

TTCH holds a holistic health care competition every year. The hospital encourages every unit to submit their holistic health care exemplars in clinical work for the competition, and to have them (primary nurses in particular) to share on stage their personal

Q2

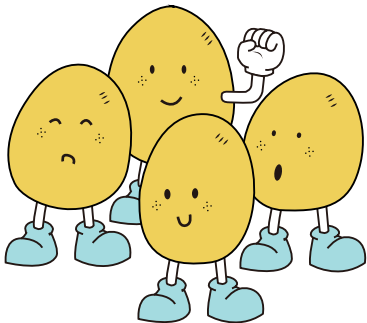
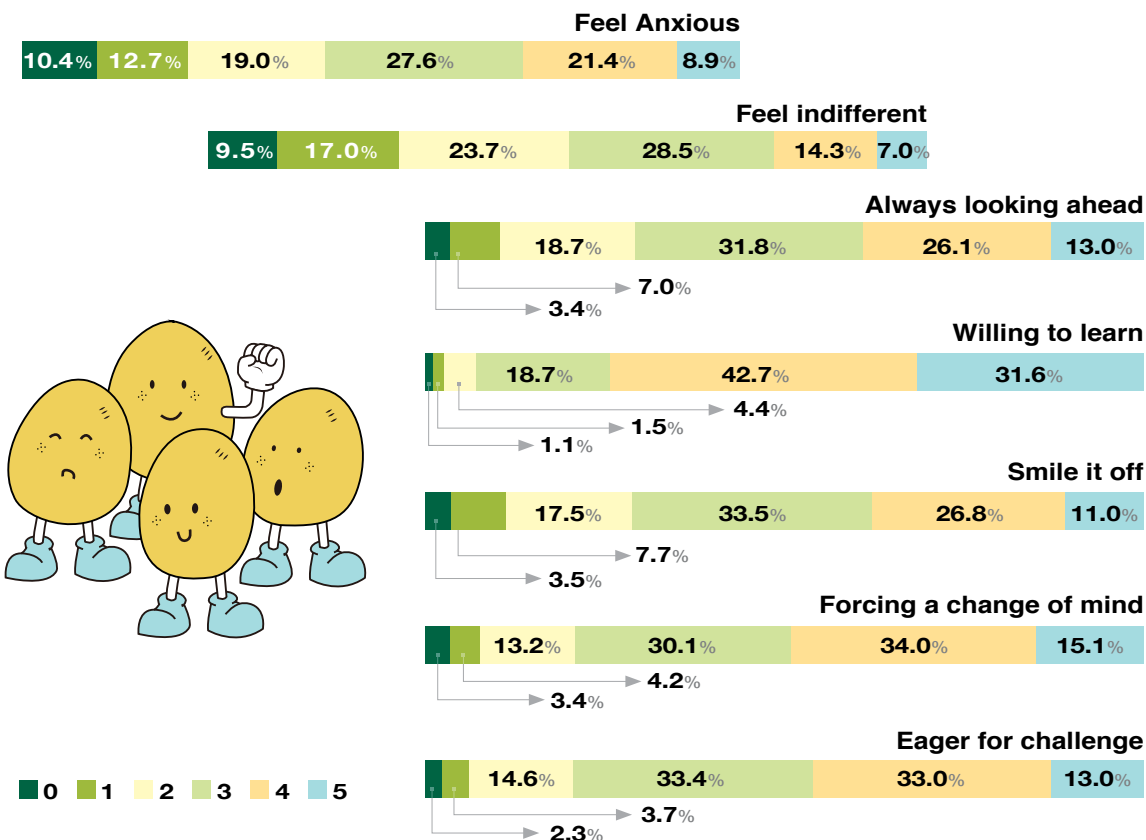
In the past month, what are the frequency of your “yes, I can” response to new or unfamiliar assignments given to you by your head nurse (or higher)? (N = 1,420)





Q3

Recall the challenges you have faced at work in the past month. How would you interpret your mood response or thoughts in regards to yourself? (0 to 5 Scale)(N = 1,420)



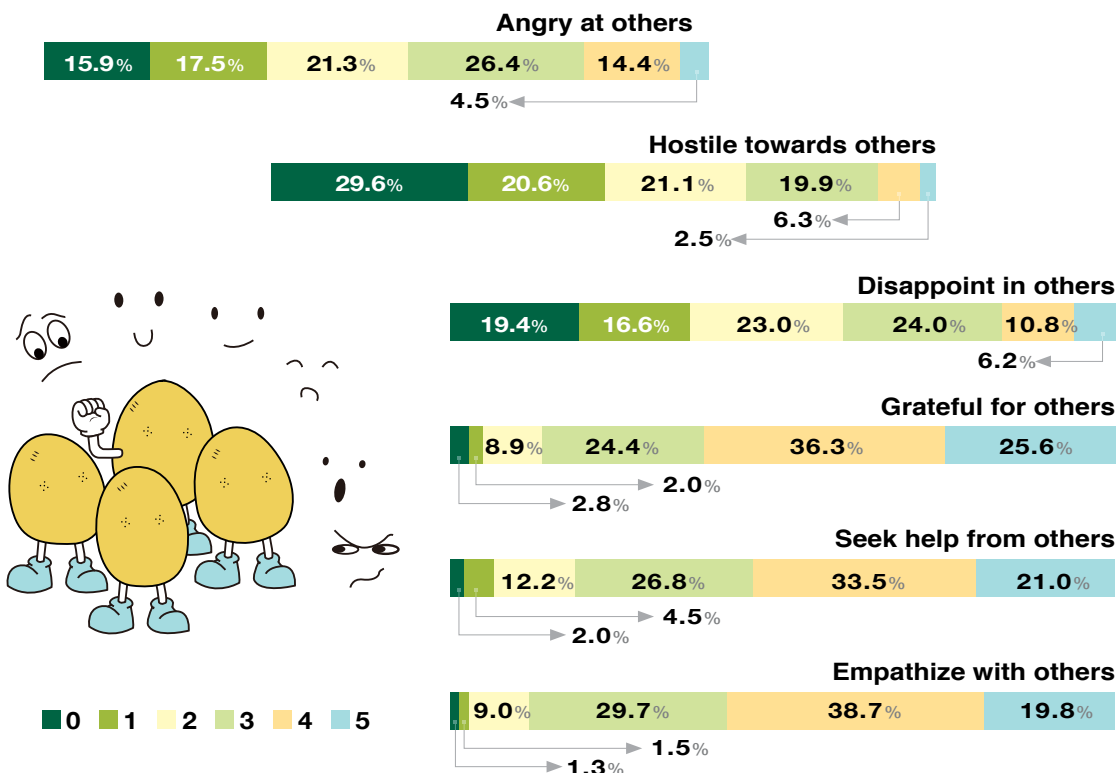
experiences. The competitors are judged by the hospital supervisors and near 200 hospital volunteers. Most juniors get intimidated from the sheer number of the judges and refuse to participate, fearing that their performance are not up to it. From my personal experience of counseling new nurses though, they tend to reject at first, but after they take the stage, it's hard to get them off of it. Perhaps it is because they are talking from experience about people they care for, the emotions are genuine and flows from within. After they leave the stage, regardless of the score, these young nurses are rewarded by the accomplishment of presenting a case report singlehandedly in front of a large audience. By overcoming challenges, people grow more confident in saying "yes, I can". That feeling is fantastic.

On the other hand, nearly 30% of the nursing staff fall under the lower end of the positive mentality spectrum, indicating that either they are less resilient to pressure, or that they are encountering obstacles at work. We would like to remind our supervisors to approach our staff who are struggling at work with guidance and support. Perhaps the resilience training and counseling for nursing staff is a direction we can focus on in the near future.

I have counseled a junior nurse before. She was an optimistic soul who turned anxious all of the sudden, and her signature smile was nowhere to be found. I asked her what happened. She failed to give me a straight answer, just excuses. After some investigation, I realized that her sudden change of mood came from the fact that her shift change with a senior nurse did not go as well as planned. When the senior nurse asked about patients' conditions, she was unable to answer some of them, and the fear that

Q4

Recall the challenges you have faced at work in the past month. How would you interpret your mood response or thoughts in regards to others? (N = 1,420)





she might disappoint her senior was the cause of her anxiety. With that in mind, I taught her some key points to follow during shift exchange, and spoke to the senior nurse on her response to her junior. The anxiety was gone. She was back to her vibrant, optimistic self in no time.

Observe, Introspect, Non-Judgmental

How the nursing staff perceive other people's emotional responses in time of stress, aside from their own anxiety, demonstrate the degree of control they possess over their personal emotions. The result indicated that 65.2% chose "Angry at others" and scored from 1 to 3 points, 61.6% chose "hostile towards others" and scored 1 to 3 points, and 63.6% chose "disappointed in others" and scored 1 to 3 points.

As a matter of fact, acting anxious and or indifferent, or feeling hostile and disappointed toward others in time of stress is only normal. There is no need to self-criticize when these negative emotions arise, but instead employ the mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) strategies we talked about in the Dec. 2016 issue, perceive our physiological and psychological states while remaining non-judgmental.

Solving problems, not emotions, is a key ability that everyone in clinical work must possess.

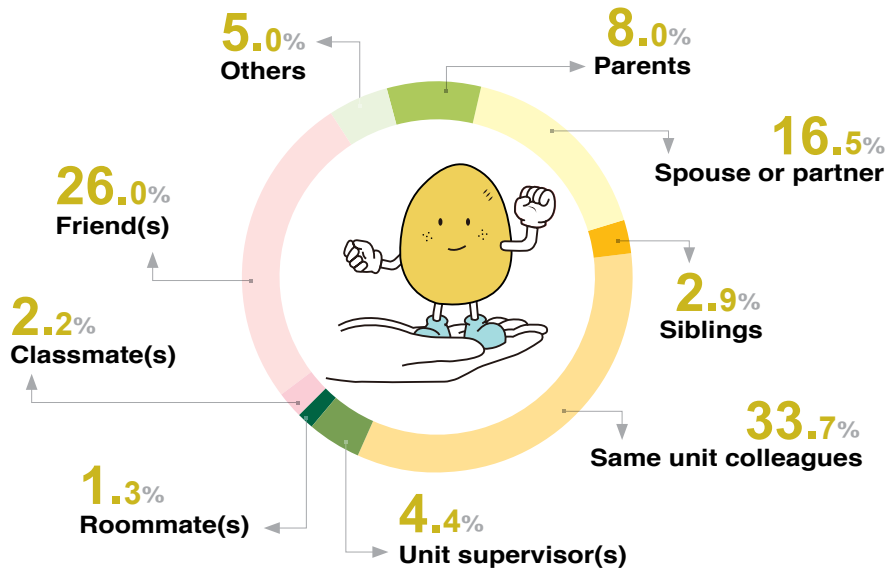
Working Together Doubles Courage

Life is a series of challenges at all levels, whether it is family, partner, work, or interpersonal relationships. If there are someone around to give you a helping hand in times of need, you would not be as helpless in your struggle to overcome whatever it is you are facing. Our last question asked about who are the ones that helped them out of trouble, and the result indicated that "colleagues in the same unit" topped with 33.7%, followed by "friends" with 26.0%, "spouse or partner" 16.5%, and "supervisor" 4.4%. Just as we predicted, support from colleagues in the same unit is the helping hand that lifted others through hard times; coupled with the support from supervisors, about 40% of the nursing staff overcame their predicaments with the aid and support of their fellow coworkers. After all, we speak the same language.

For example, when a special patient with a rather complicated disease is assigned to a junior nurse by a head nurse, the assignment is not just a challenge in the eyes of the young nurse, but also an act of recognition. This is something that I constantly remind the supervisors and seniors in clinical work. When we are instructing our juniors, giving appropriate challenges and companionship would inspire the young ones to overcome their challenges, and in turn gain equivalent level of growth, confidence, and courage as well.

Q5

Recall the challenges you have faced at work in the past month. Who helped you out of the predicament? (N = 1,420)



From my personal experience, nurses tend to advance their education throughout their career not only to improve their professional skills, but to enhance their psychological training and communication skills as well. I believe the Adler craze offer those who are seeking psychological training a viable alternative.

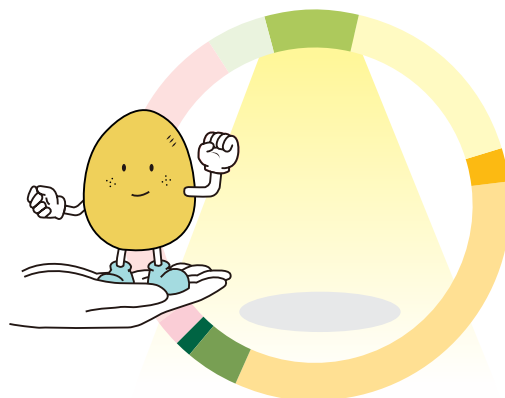
Non-Judgmental Acceptance of Self Is the Way to Happiness

Adler believed that in our life time, we have to confront three forces: societal, love-related, and vocational. He believes that all problems are interpersonal relationship problems, that our fate is determined by our actions, and furthermore, that we must possess the courage to be disliked by others. When we feel trapped by our circumstances, Adler's individual psychology may be able to shed light on an alternate approach to problems in life that arms us with the knowledge to overcome the trouble we face.

The result of this survey echoed our expectation, or rather surpassed our expectation. In other words, the courage index of the nursing staff across six Tzu Chi hospitals are high, and their ability to be mindfulness are strong. Nursing is a career filled with curve balls and changeups. If one shows up in front of you, do not worry, for we are with you.



Be Brave for Your Loved Ones



Honestly, telling the story of my father's passing from my own mouth requires great courage. To be able to tell it though, means I've taken another step forward.

I chose nursing because of my father and his illness. I chose the Heart Lotus palliative care ward when I started working in hospital to understand what death is, going that I could have the wisdom to standby my father, who was tortured by liver disease, to encourage him to voice his inner feelings, and to stay by his side during his last days. Who would've known that he was the one who taught me a lesson. If you can't empathize with your family, how can you accompany them and listen to their feelings when the time comes?

That year, on July 1 of the Chinese calendar, I was in a library preparing for my certification exam when I received the news of my father's automobile accident. My mind went blank. My uncle drove me to the hospital, and I saw my mother outside the emergency room, visibly shaken in fear. I have to be brave and be the shoulder for her to lean on, I told myself. After

**Yu Hsiu-Feng,
Registered Nurse,
Heart Lotus Palliative Care Ward,
Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital**

listening to her recounting the details of the accident, I only hoped that my father could pull through. The door to the operating room opened. A nurse walked out. She explained to us that my father had been unconscious since the crash and suffered a whole-body fracture, and that his heart was pulsing solely because of the drug administered. Looking at my father, soaking in blood, the words of my teacher flashed across my mind. She said that hearing is the last of the five senses to diminish. I lean forward and started speaking, “thank you for pampering me for as long as I can remember. I am truly blessed to be your daughter.” I promised him that I would become an excellent registered nurse, and that I would





take care of mom. As if he could hear me, my father's heart stopped at that very moment.

I used wet wipes to clean his body from head to toe, inch by inch. I thought it was the best postmortem care at the time. If I had another chance, I would use warm towels to clean him and dress him instead of the freezing cold wet wipes.

After I did what I could for my father, I returned to the Heart Lotus ward. A Tzu Chi volunteer came over and started massaging my chest with her palm. I burst into tears. As the gentle energy pounded against the depth of my heart, all the sorrow and pain came bursting out.

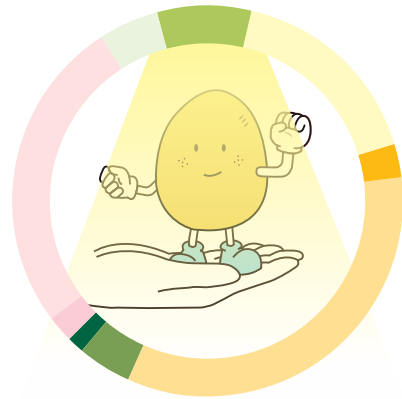
All my colleagues in the ward carry with them genuine empathy for patients that is evident in their act. Every execution of every technique is in accordance with the harshest standard to bring no harm to their patients. In terms of spiritual healing, essential oils and music are used to facilitate physiological and mental relaxation. The thing is that this time, I, a patient's family, is the recipient.

When I was finally able to relaxed my tensed body, I followed the instruction of the head nurse, imagined the teddy bear in front of me as my father, and apologize to him, and express my love for him, just as how I wanted it but could not. I cried uncontrollably for the first time throughout the ordeal. Head Nurse Ching-Yi told me, "Hsiu-Feng, your father has not left you. He is always with you. Through the blood in your veins, you will always be your father's daughter." It took me some time to calm down and ponder the meaning of those words, softening my grief and the impact of my father's sudden passing. I promised him this, "I remember your words, 'there are not fire I cannot quench,' I will do my best no matter what the circumstances are, for I am your daughter. I have made it my mission to fulfill my promise to you: I will look after your mother, my mother, and take good care of myself as well. It is the only way I can keep my promise and look after my family."

I am grateful for all the people who stayed by my side and encouraged me along the way. There is no me without all of you. Thank you for surrounding me like my guardian angels, constantly showering me with love and encouragement.

No matter how tired we are, the words of gratitude and encouragement from our loved ones are enough to carry us forward. The time I spent dealing with the loss of my father seemed a tough one, but it also revealed to me how blessed I was. The love of my colleagues, friends and families filled me with love as well. Let us pass those love forward to anyone who needs us.

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.

Huang Wan-Di,
Registered Nurse,
General Internal Medicine Ward,
Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital



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.



PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR HEAD NURSE

Patients Moved Me to Become a Better Nurse



Words could not describe the emotional impact and impression I experienced during my nursing internship at the hospice ward. After graduation, my first choice was to work at the hospice ward when I interviewed at the Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital. However, I was assigned to the oncology department where I was adapting to the clinical load while trying to find my way back to the hospice ward that I had always longed for. It was not until recently that I discovered that life could be taken from any room at the hospital. It is up to me to be prepared to provide for palliative care.

Hard Work Was Futile; I Only Wanted to Escape Reality

About half a year working there, I was caring for an elderly woman suffering from end stage lymphoma. I watched her, as someone who could joke and laugh with the nursing staff, as her condition took a sudden turn for the worse, despite my diligent care in attending to her medication, new regiment, and blood infusions. I felt like a robot repeating the same chores daily and watched the patient slowly withered away before my eyes. I hated going to work, started to doubt my professional abilities and was so emotional that I wanted to quit.

I ran into the head nurse's office and informed Head Nurse Hsu Chi-Chen (now Nursing Dept. supervisor), "Head Nurse, I don't think I can continue to care for this patient! I feel so stressed. I would like to have someone else care for her instead." Head Nurse Hsu Chi-Chen told me that I should not let this defeat me. The more challenging the case is, the more I would learn from it. She also asked then senior nurse Chiang Feng-Yin (now Head Nurse) to be my mentor.

Understand the Inevitable, Carry Out the Nursing Responsibilities

Senior Nurse Feng-Yin would discuss the patient's health status with me. She also volunteered to stay behind after work to help me research disease progression and how best to care for patients suffering from such illness. She literally and figuratively held my hands while I do my rounds. Because of that, I finally felt that I was more than a robot. I came to peace with the fact that there would be times when the medical treatment was not enough, and life would still come to an end. Under her guidance, I learned how to carry out my responsibilities professionally. When I heard praises from the patient's family, it further boosted my confidence.

The morning when the elderly patient passed away, I was agitated. It was Senior Nurse Feng-Yin who practiced palliative care to guide the family members on how to



complete the “Four Expressions of Life” - Express your Appreciation, Express your Love, Express your Repentance and Bid your Farewell. She showed me how to care for the patient cadaver with respect so that there was no regret about life versus death. I frequently reflect upon this experience in the middle of the night and wished that I could have done more for the patient at the time. Finally, I decided that it was time to enrich myself professionally.

Enrichment in Palliative Care; Appreciation of Support

I have seen other senior nurses taking classes to accrue nursing credits and enhance their knowledge. I wanted to follow their footsteps. After two years working at the ward, I approached Head Nurse Hsu, “Head Nurse, I was thinking about my development in the future. When I was caring for patients in oncology, I felt that I wanted to do more for them. I felt I didn’t have enough experience...” I brought up my concerns and suggested the idea to enroll palliative care classes for continuing education. I was surprised that Head Nurse Hsu agreed to my idea without hesitation and even recommended some additional resources.

Then the first thing that came to my mind was to invite Senior Nurse Feng-Yin to classes. I figured if I have her as a partner, I would have less trouble passing the courses. To be certified as a palliative nurse, one must enroll beginning, intermediate and advanced classes and intern for five days at an outside hospital. In addition, forty extra credits must be accrued before one can qualify for the interview. I am grateful to Senior Nurse Feng-Yin for changing her vacation schedule so that we can be in the same classes and internship together.

Touched the Inner Most Soft Spot; Accepting the Beauty of Nursing

After a series of courses, I encountered a lady who was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. From the minute she was hospitalized, she had been hopeless, anxious, and scared of death with the uncertainty about death. In our first interaction, she hugged me and cried. I knew that it was time to “activate” my nursing skills. I established a good rapport with her and convinced her to cooperate with medical treatment. The most memorable incident was the brief lucid moment before her death. She held my hands and thanked me for taking care of her during her last moments. That struck a chord in my heart and I vowed that I would be a nurse for the rest of my life! Soon, she passed away. This time, I was no longer depressed. I walked the family members through the final four expressions of life, showed them



Although newcomer Chang Pei-Yu (middle) demonstrates high interest in palliative care, she is unable to face death. Under the mentorship and guidance of Senior Nurse Chiang Feng-Yin (left) and others, she can now handle clinical work and is capable of training new nurses.

how to care for her body so that the patient can complete her life journey with dignity. It was not as hard as I thought it would be if I was willing to take the first step.

I have been working at the hospital for almost five years. I have been able to apply relevant palliative care and techniques when I encounter terminally ill patients in the hospice ward. I am now able to mentor new nurses or interns with proper values



so that they are prepared for their jobs. Through my interaction with them, I also learned valuable lessons and attained a sense of accomplishment. I become more confident and content with work. Senior Nurse Feng-Yin, now Head Nurse Feng-Yin, I want you to know: “Thank you for letting me grow with you and helping me understand that palliative care is not just waiting for death. Palliative care can also be practiced at places such as the oncology ward. Even general hospital ward patients would benefit from the clinical practice of palliative care. This means that I should improve myself regularly. Thank you for taking the classes with me so that we could grow our knowledge together. Let’s hope we can pass the certified palliative nursing exam so we can both work at 9B ward together.”



From Head Nurse:

Accompanying Juniors to Be Prepared

By Chiang Feng-Yin, Deputy Head Nurse, 9B Oncology Ward Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital

I joined the Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital in 2009 when I graduated from nursing school. My days as a newcomer to the ward were full of anxiety, fears and even tears. Right after work, I would prepare notes from the internal medicine to surgical textbooks and carried them with me in case a senior staff asked me questions the next day. I was shy and introverted so I was afraid to ask the senior staff questions and did not know how to interact with them. I was scolded countless times due to my poor communication skills. Fortunately, there were colleagues to guide me along the way and helped me learn amongst the most stressful situations. Miraculously, the thought of quitting never crossed my mind even in the most challenging days.

Don't Want to Be the Pushover nor the Monster Mentor

There were many organizational changes at the beginning of the hospital opening period. Soon I was supervising junior nurses and associate managers. Remembering what I went through as a newbie, I tended to be the “nice mentor” to the junior staff and cleaned up after them. Then I realized that this would only hurt their chance of growth and delay their independence. Therefore, I changed my method and decided that I would let them finish the tasks, so they could learn from their mistake while guiding them along the way.

I saw my younger self in many of the newcomers. Of course, when things were stressful, I sometimes lost control and blamed them for incompetency! Until one day, I realized that the junior staff was scared to interact with me for shift changes. I started to examine myself and realized somehow I turned into a monster in their eyes!



Current unit Deputy Head Nurse Chiang Feng-Yin Chiang (right), is developing junior staff independence while cultivating self-growth.

New Generation of Counseling; Be with Them Every Step of the Way

My experiences informed me when people are afraid to interact with you for fear of being scolded, they would not open to you. Therefore, I had to adjust my perception and control my emotions. For the new generation, it was not enough just imitating the format I was taught. I have to be their classmate, their friend to know what they are thinking. I need to learn their language in order to get their honest feedback about their hurdles so I can address them accordingly. From my interaction with Pei-Yu, I saw a confused newcomer growing into a professional nurse who could handle the full palliative care all by

herself with motivation to discover issues and resolve them before they surface. Honestly, I felt a sense of accomplishment to be part of her journey!

When Chang Pei-Yu was a newbie, she was one of the junior nurses I almost asked her to quit considering nursing as a career. I remember the incident when a patient was suffering from indigestion, but Pei-Yu did not take that into consideration when she asked the family member to feed the patient with milk, which caused patient to vomit. I was very angry because I considered the ability to evaluate patient's digestive function be one of the basic practices of nursing. She also put the patient at risk because vomiting could also cause coughing and induce aspiration pneumonia. Although Pei-Yu responded that she only asked the family member to feed some milk but did not realize that the family member was also learning how to care for the patient and didn't think to check digestive function before continuing; or perhaps the family member misunderstood and thought they needed to feed her all of the milk... the more I heard, the more seriously my thoughts became. Nevertheless, I repeated the training once again to emphasize the important points.

Accompanying Growth; Activate All Potentials

Since my promotion, I have been the Head Nurse of Oncology for two years now. Mentor Head Nurse Hsu Chi-Chen at the time left me an important concept – helping coworkers in individual development planning, nurturing talents, and promotes self-improvement habits. Therefore, when I grew professionally, I also wanted my coworkers, like the junior staff, such as Pei-Yu, to grow with me. Watching her mature, both professionally and personally, she had since gotten married and became a mother, she was very clear about her goal of becoming a palliative care nurse. Hence, I worked with her to develop a plan to obtain the required nursing credits.

Pei-Yu's self-motivation, hunger for knowledge and self-discipline inspired other nurses at the ward to become better. In order to demonstrate that nursing is not just about caring for patients and doing the monotonous work, I had to let everyone experience the journey themselves. It was through mentorship, promotions or career changes that people at the unit witnessed the outstanding developmental opportunity to help set direction and the standards. We continue to have nurses asking for outside opportunities for school credits or to be certified as oncology or palliative nurses. This not only ensures the highest quality of patient care, it also allows the unit staff to grow as a team. Often, I use my own experience to encourage them to always be prepared because you never know what life will bring you next.



Figure Map Narrative Competition for Six Tzu Chi Hospitals Nurses

By Chang Chu-Fen

In order to promote figure map utilization for the six Tzu Chi hospitals nurses, a figure map narrative competition was held. The purpose of the competition was to inherit the Tzu Chi medical philosophy of human centered services. The style of this competition was to share the results of story-telling using patient figure drawings with oral presentation and popular votes.

The “Figure Map” story-telling style is informal and can be performed at any location with any format. The key is to tell the story of the patient you’re caring with pictures. It is a case by case presentation of nursing services, centered in people. Through presentations of nurses from the six Tzu Chi hospitals, the event achieved the goal of improving clinical services.

Highlights of the oral presentations are presented below.

Application of Clinical Review and Detailed Illustrations

Following the examples of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, the Nursing Department of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital adopted the figure map narrative approach since 2015. The following year, a training team from Hualien came to help Dalin staff started the program. The team was led by assistant professor Kuo Li-Chuan from the Medical School of Tzu Chi University. During that time, core personnel of the new program was also assigned. In 2017, the program was expanded to all nursing units of the Dalin Hospital. All nurses involving in the program are invited to the current meeting.

On December 8, 2017, Tzu Chi University Medical School Associate Professor Kuo Li-Chuan was a guest speaker to this “Six Tzu Chi Hospitals” Nursing Conference. Her talk entitled ‘The Application of Clinical Review and Illustrations’. In her talk, she emphasized the power of listen to and observed from the patients. She also pointed out the importance of cumulating knowledge from each single case of practice for professional growth and to achieve the nursing goal of patients centered humane care.

Variability and Receptivity of Figure Maps

A stage play describing a couple’s story was shown by our nurses. The husband said: “How did I get such a disease?” The wife answered: “I can’t believe that you are suffering from such a disease.” “But I want to live, I don’t want to go through the terrible procedure of dialyses ...” This was the oral presentation of



Six Tzu Chi Hospitals nursing representatives get together at Dalin for oral presentation of figure map narrative competition.



the first poster, presented by two Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital nurses. Through such a theatrical presentation, the husband finally accepted the kidney transplant. The story presented the hesitation of the patient and the care of the nurses.

Chang Yu-Fang from Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital shared a story of a 32 year old organic tea farmer. The farmer was involved in a serious car accident and entered the hospital, unconscious. He could not talk, unable to step down from the bed. With ruptured intestines, was not able to be feed. From the prolonged hospitalization, he was depressed. Yu-Fang tried every approach to encourage him and keep him accompanied in order for him to find himself. Finally, she opened him up and Yu-Fang added a brother. Unfortunately, this brother passed away. Tears dropped from her eyes as Yu-Fang presented the story.

Wang Ai-Lun, head nurse of Kuanshan Tzu Chi Hospital in Taitung, worked for the hospital for 16 years. Because her hospital is located in the rural area, she has to update her nursing skill from the internet. She is eager to learn new story telling nursing technique from live presentations. Representatives from the Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital shared a case of head and neck cancer patient. In addition, other



Kuanshan and Yuli Tzu Chi Hospitals are well represented

hospital all sent their specialists for presentation. There were a total of eleven story telling presentations.

Colorful Posters and Emotional Presentations

Other than oral presentations, colorful posters were displayed around the hallways. There were a total of 45 posters from each of the six participating hospitals. Popular vote was also conducted to select the best poster.

Telling Stories of the Patients and Advancing Professional Skills

Best Story Telling poster was won by Dalin TC Hospital. Head nurse Tseng Fang-Ling from ward 5A was their representative to accept the award. Fang-Ling said: "In our unit, we divided our nurses into small groups of two to three persons each. Each group selected their case studies and plans their figure maps. We made our posters once a month. Initially, we all felt pressure for planning and making of our posters. However, after a period of time we all mastered the skill and felt free to do the work. Of course, there were different opinions in the format

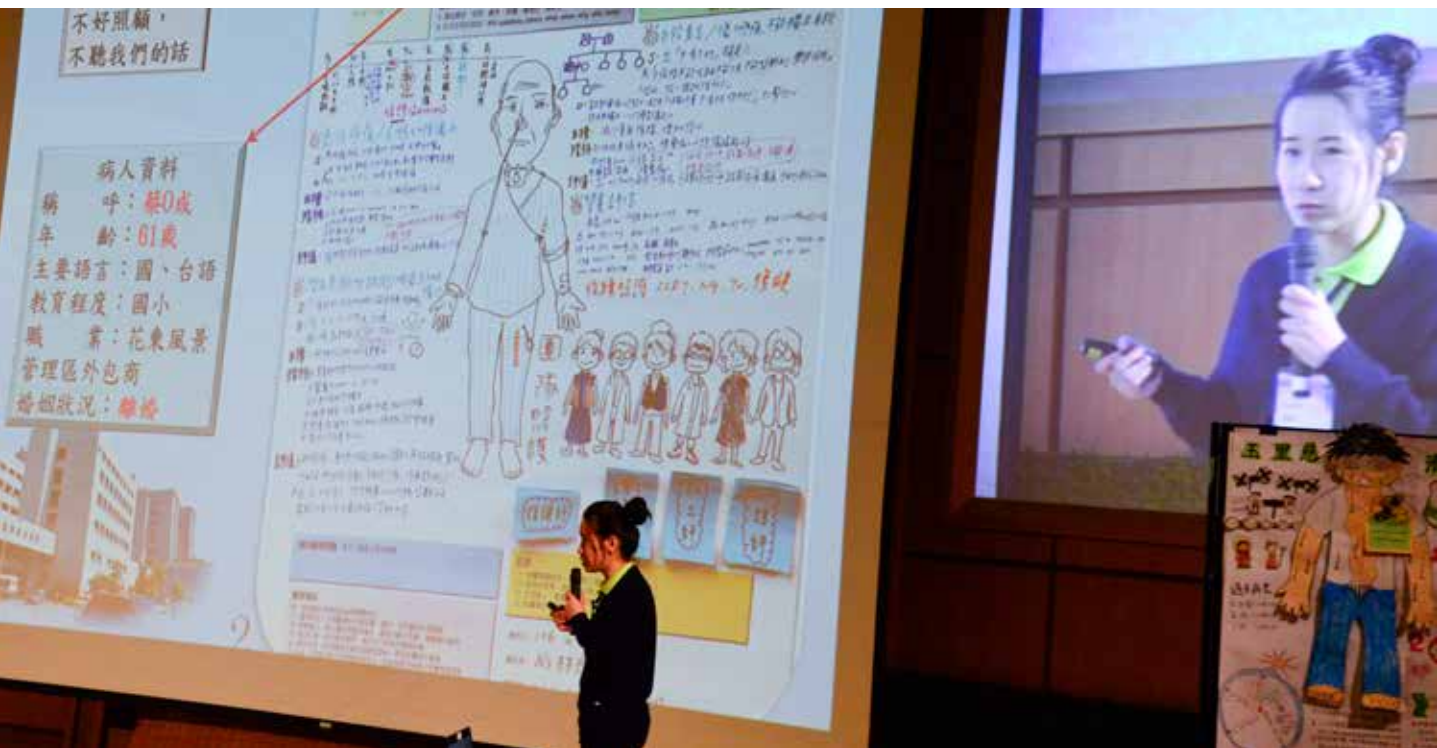


and style. Some thought presenting the nursing procedure of the case is of foremost importance. Some preferred the artistic presentation over other aspects. Of course, the personal taste of the judges has a certain weight, too. All the factors, contents, artistic outlooks, personal flavor, count in the final selection.”

Fang-Ling also discovered that figure map presentation enhanced the presentation techniques of her colleagues. It presented the flow of the nursing procedure, from a patient entering the hospital, to diagnosis, to the treatment of the illness, all the way to the release of the patient. By going through the procedure step-by-step, no doubt will improve the patient care skill of our nurses.

Hold their Hands When the Patients Are Suffering

Yang Chuan-Yu and Liao I-Hui from the Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital presented a case study in the meeting. The case was for a patient with esophagus cancer complicated tumor repression. The two nurses planned the way to help the patient to go through his first chemotherapy. They also utilized multi-department resources to help the patient through the post therapy challenges. Finally, they





Through the storytelling figure maps, nursing has more depth and is more human.

arranged a palliative team to help the patient peacefully fulfilled his journey in front of his family.

Yang and Liao did not understand the logic of storytelling nursing before. However, after a year of training and practices they realized that with such a procedure they can review their nursing experiences step-by-step. Therefore, the figure map procedure is actually a teaching tool. The pictures are easy to understand, they not only help the caring nurses, they actually expanding the nursing care to the patients and their families.

Finally, Teacher Kuo Li-Chuan summarized the participation of the six hospitals by saying:” The story of the patients presented in the figure maps, reflects your nursing experience. They are the professional paths you went through. However, it is more important to remember that the profession of nursing is to care for the patients. From the stories we presented in this meeting, we need to think back that the utmost mission of our profession is to hold our patients’ hand when they are suffering.”

Six Tzu Chi Hospitals figure maps lively exhibits





Volunteers Are Partners in Dementia Elderly Community Outreach

By Tseng Yu-Ling, case manager in Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Dementia Care Center

I still remember the spring two years ago, I went from Geriatric Psychiatric Day Care Center in Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital to the Dementia Elderly Community Outreach, transferring from familiar traditional medicine to community medical service. Fenglin dementia elderly community outreach is located in Fenglin Jing Si Hall (Fenglin Township Hualien County) and started undertaking the care center plan planned by Ministry of Health and Welfare on September 21, 2015. Although I had many things to adapt when I first came to the community, the outreach service went smoothly because of the support and affirmation from volunteers.

With the company of Sister Wu Ren from the north Hualien region, I drove 20 miles from Hualien two days a week to provide service to the elderly and their families. During the outreach, Wu Ren helped to receive the elderly. From the way she interacts with the elderly, we feel her affability. Although I am experienced in taking care of elderly patients with dementia for 15 years, I still encounter some difficulties when I began my service in the community outreach. Inside a hospital, we have well defined



Fenglin Dementia Elderly Community Outreach, thanks to volunteers' companion.



responsibilities among each other; such as administration managers handling with administrative affairs, clerks handling with paper work, janitors handling the cleaning. However, we had to do everything in an outreach; thus, we tried hard to adapt to different roles. Whenever I face challenge, Wu Ren always inspires me with her life experience which encourages me very much. Sometimes when I am caught up in things, she would reach out to me and ask, “Is there anything I can help?” which is really heartwarming.

In addition, I want to say thank you to the local volunteers in Fenglin. They accompanied me during my stay and helped us achieve the outreach goal. Without their help, our service couldn’t finish successfully.

Lai Li-Zhen was the first person I met when I came to Fenglin Township two years ago. I still remember it deeply the first time I met Li-Zhen when she shared with me the local cultural character enthusiastically. With her help, I learned the majority of people in Fenglin are Hakkas. Understanding the local educational culture and its history helped me master the cultural background of the local dementia elderly and their families in a short time. Every time when the administrative affairs needed promotion, Li-Zhen always tried her best to recruit volunteers. Li-Zhen also shared with me her experience in Tzu Chi; her kindness impressed me and affected me.

I am also grateful to these two Tzu Chi sisters: Tsai Su-Mei, our multi-media volunteer, and Xiao Chun-Ying, also called teacher Xiao. Su-Mei always took photos during our community outreach services without any complaints, catching the most precious moments of the elderly on camera. Chun-Ying is our culinary volunteer, she is mindful for the food for the elderly, and brings seasonal food items. She cares so we can eat healthy and fully.

There were so many people supported us during the two years. Without going into the details to thank each one of them, I am thankful to all Tzu Chi volunteers for their companionship in serving the dementia elderly. They not only helped patients with dementia but contributed to the society in bringing happiness to the elderly and their families. Working in the outreach program is full of ups and downs. Volunteers here gave us energy and they influenced us deeply. We learned the beauty of the Tzu Chi humanistic culture.



Male Nurse Diary

The Narration of a Thai Male Nursing Student in Hualien, Taiwan

**By Chonlatee Takhum,
a senior student at
Department of Nursing,
Tzu Chi University**

Sa-wad-dee-krub (Hello,) I am Chonlatee Takhum from Thailand. I am a senior nursing student at Tzu Chi University. I spent my elementary and high school years in Ching Mai Tzu Chi schools. I came to Tzu Chi University after graduated from high school and received scholarship from Gold Jubilee Medical Center Mahidol University.

Growing up with Tzu Chi Volunteering Spirit

I grew up in Tzu Chi for more than ten years. The most impressive Tzu Chi's humanitarian culture is "being a volunteer!" Speaking of volunteering, it may not be so special in Taiwan, however, in Thailand, Ching Mai Tzu Chi school is the only one that offered volunteering opportunities at this time. At the end of each month, the school led students to various places to distribute foods, clean the environment, help the poor building homes or hold activities at nursing centers for the elderly, etc.

By participating in the volunteering activities, I have seen many people suffering. There were many cases involving children my age who had an elementary education. Every day they work at farming, weeding, and harvesting fruits. There was an older woman who had to take care a bedridden paralyzed child. Through volunteering myself, I realized how lucky I am after visiting so many people suffering. I realized that we are living happily every day. Every



Chonlatee Takhum thought, being a good nurse is something he feels worth doing and meaningful.

day my father would take and pick up us to and from school, and my mother would cook delicious meals for us. We ate well every single meal. At the same time, there were many people hungry or had to work overtime at night. They just wanted to make some money to feed their families. I witnessed some patients whose physical and mental conditions were worse because of their living habits, culture and lack of education. At that time, I thought if I had some medical knowledge, I could help.

Acquiring Time Management and Planning Skills Instead of Joining the Military

Although I like to volunteer, I planned to be a soldier when I was in middle school. I was attracted by the image of a person in military uniform. Therefore, I registered for the entrance examination for an army school - Taiwan Chung Cheng Armed Forces Preparatory School. During the third year of my middle school, I woke up at 5 o'clock every day to study and continued my physical training after school. I also helped my mother selling sausages at a night market and I had my books with me. The family was in need of help so I learned driving with my father. I would take my two little brothers to help my mom selling sausages on holidays and my books of course. On weekends, I attend tutoring school in Ching Mai. My friend and I spent time in Ching Mai because of the commuting distance, three hours of public transportation each way.



Chonlatee Takhum spent his elementary and high school years at Ching Mai Tzu Chi schools. He studies nursing at Tzu Chi University, graduated from high school and received scholarship from the Golden Jubilee Medical Center Mahidol University.



In the end, I failed the examination. Worst, I could not try again the following year because of age. I felt sad thinking the other classmates spent their holidays on the internet or video games while I stayed home studying for the exam.

When I was older, I found I was different than others my age. I realized that I was able to manage my time. I was able to walk out of my comfort zone, make decisions and plan for my future.

After graduating from high school, I obtained a scholarship to study in Taiwan. It was a precious opportunity to experience life in a different county, challenge my own capacity, and without burdening my parents for support. I would have job opportunities upon returning to Thailand. Therefore, it was the best decision I had made in my life.

Helps from Parents, Friends and Teachers During My First Overseas Study

However, this journey of studying abroad was not so easy! At Ching Mai airport, there was another student with me on the day I was flying out of the country. She received scholarship from her school for studying Communications. At that time, I was excited as well as nervous and worried what would happen in the future. We met a senior Tzu Chi member who happened to be heading to Taiwan to attend floral lesson. After greeting and talking to him, we both felt relieved. With the company of the senior, we both were at ease and enjoyed the view of the sky on the airplane. When we arrived Taiwan, another Tzu Chi senior member picked us up and sent us to Taipei Train Station. We were two nervous foreign kids who felt relieved and touched as well.

During my first year, I was very nervous. The environment, language and culture

were stranger to me. When I had classes with other classmates, I dared not speak to them. When I introduced myself, the nervousness I had experienced was beyond imagination. My Chinese failed me and I did not know what to say. Not only because there were not many words in my head, but also because I was afraid would others understand me.



Chonlatee Takhum (left) participated in the performance for Hudang Reward during the first year. It allowed him to practice Chinese and interact with other students.



Chonlatee Takhum loves traveling with his backpack. Studying in Taiwan was his first adventure.

I had learned Chinese two months before the school started at Tzu Chi University Chinese Center; there was not much opportunity to put it into practice. At the center, everyone was a foreigner who spoke broken Chinese. However, we seemed to understand what the other side trying to say.

During most of the first year of school, I understood what the teachers said so I guessed at most part of it. Although I had learned the basic medical subjects in high school; chemistry, biology etc. where all the terminology was in Chinese, it was very tough for me during the class. Even I reviewed all the materials, I still found it difficult. Regardless of all the difficulties, I tried my best to learn while on scholarship so I worked hard.

Sometimes, when I was too tired to continue, I would find a quiet place to relieve my stress. The most efficient way to let go of my stress was calling home. At that time, my parents did not know how to use the Line App. I would call them by phone regardless of the cost. The first time when I heard the voice of my parents, I could not help crying. I was at the Daxi building, and talked to my parents. I did not expect I would cry like a baby. After hearing the encouraging remarks from my parents, I continued my journey.

Besides my parents, I also received an encouragement from my teachers and classmates. They encouraged me to try out different activities. In my first year, I participated In a Hudang Reward performance. I played the main role along with the other three students. This activity affected me in a great way. It was during the process of practice, I could at the same time practice my Chinese, as well having more chance to interact with classmates. We became closer and I did not feel so lonely anymore.



Stressful Clinical Practice; Being a Nurse with Empathy

From sophomore to senior year, the challenge was clinical practice. During the practice, I faced stress from either the patients, teachers or assignments. The stress from the patients was from communication. When I opened my mouth and started talking, they knew I am a foreigner. Some patients were willing to give me a chance; some were totally rejecting and had no trust on me. However, the seniors at the clinical practice program would accompany me and interact with each case. When the patients saw there was a senior with me, they would feel at ease, and then gave a chance to practice.

Speaking of the stress from teachers and clinical practice assignments, although my Chinese has improved yet my writing needed more improvement. One can recall when in elementary school, you might speak very well but not write well. My level of Chinese writing is equivalent to elementary school. I remember when I did my clinical practice at the medicine and surgery departments, my assignment was full of red correcting marks from the teacher. The funniest thing was the teacher asked my teammates to help me to correct my assignments. Although my teachers were exhausted after reading my work, they all tried to teach me wholeheartedly. They encouraged me to work harder. I appreciated all the help from my teammates.





Chonlatee Takhum (right) wishes to return home upon graduation. He wants to appreciate nursing work more, work for the goodness of patients, and enjoy the work!

I want to be a nurse who can truly understand the needs of patients. At school, the teachers always taught us to put our patients at the center, standing in their shoes. However, in reality, we might be unconsciously neglecting patients' feelings. Therefore, after changing the shift, before facing the patients, I would quietly think, "If I was this patient, what kind of care I would expect from the nurse? What kind of attitude I am expecting?" I believed taking a few minutes to think, I would get different feedback from the patients. In the long term, people might pay more respect to nurses. I believe spending few minutes to think before acting, we can change others' perspective about nurses. After I graduate and go back to Thailand, I work for the goodness of patients, do nothing to harm fs and make myself enjoy the work!

Daily Contemplation Before Sleep; Do Something Meaningful and Bring Joy

Being a good nurse is something I feel worth doing and meaningful. A Nursing job can make me money that can afford me go travel vacations, touring around with my backpack. Not just taking traveling as the center of your life. This June I will graduate from Tzu Chi University and go back to Thailand. I am grateful for the guidance from my teachers, patients and their family, as well as, my classmates who grew with me. I wish that I classmates experienced the joy of their beautiful and meaningful nursing journey to different corners of the world. Thank you!

A 60th Birthday Surprised Present

**Wang Jia-Ling, Deputy Head Nurse, Subacute Respiratory Critical Care Unit,
Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital**



In July of 2017, Dharma Master Cheng Yen's address while she was in Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital touched my heart deeply. She explained the "Conditioned Dharma", meaning one must use a mindful but steadfast heart to view things. A steadfast thought is invisible and untouchable so how do we achieve the "Conditioned Dharma?" The key is to do it. I remembered an incident occurred in 2015.

There was a 60-year-old patient named Chen transferred from another hospital. He was diagnosed with an abdominal infection. His condition was stabilized after an operation. However, three weeks later, he had an acute

Head Nurse, Wang Jia-Ling (right) coincidentally gave Mrs. Chen (left) a bowl of noodle on her 60th birthday at Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital. The heartfelt gratefulness and warmth made Mrs. Chen wanting to give back.

septic shock and was transferred to critical care unit. Once he was stabilized, he was transferred to a regular hospital bed. One day, he was again returned to intensive care unit after an emergency. This time around he was not conscious. There were several unsuccessful attempts to wean him off the ventilator. After three weeks and relatively stable medical condition, Mr. Chen was transferred to our subacute respiratory critical care unit.

After receiving him, we pondered upon the challenge facing Mr. Chen's long term care. So the doctors recommended tracheostomy with family approval.

I remembered it was in the middle of winter with a storm coming. Since Chen was the first in line for surgery, his wife arrived at around 7am. However, the operation was delayed because of his blood work result and other problem. We had to wait almost 3 hours. I explained to Mrs. Chen who was accommodating but refused to leave the OR waiting room. I said, "You still have time for breakfast." However, she was worrisome and did not want to leave.

The weather was so cold and Mrs. Chen had not had anything for breakfast. She would have to be consulted all day long for post operation and related care matters. I worried about her condition. So I heat up my sesame oil mushroom noodles in a microwave. Afraid that she would not accept them, I invited her into our conference room and said, "Aunty, it's really cold today. Please have this noodle to warm-up."

Hearing what I said, she started to cry, and continuing crying for a while. Fortunately, our hospital's volunteer comforted her, "Don't cry. Why are you crying? It's only a bowl of noodles. You should enjoy it happily." After calming down, Mrs. Chen responded, "Do you know why? Today is my birthday, my 60th birthday."

She continued, "My children are all grown up and have their families; however, I have yet to celebrate my birthday at home, let alone a bowl of noodles. How did you know today is my birthday?" I smiled and responded, "I don't know. I'm just afraid that you might be cold or hungry so I want you to warm up your stomach." While continuing crying, Mrs. Chen said, "What a coincidence? I'm really touched...." To lighten up her heart, our volunteer quickly added, "Yes! It must be because you are very kind, very merciful, love your family a lot so the God did this for you. It's serendipity." Mrs. Chen said, "I am wondering why the nurse knew my birthday..."

During Mr. Chen's surgery, other colleagues quickly prepared a happy birthday card and a bowl of porridge as present. Representing the colleagues, I presented to Mrs. Chen in the waiting room. It was a surprise. Mrs. Chen again teared up. While holding my hands tightly, she said, "I only knew that nurses care for patients.

I'm surprised for you to care for family members as well? It's unbelievable! I'm too touched to say anything..."

The night after the surgery, I visited Mr. Chen at around 7 pm, thinking that he should be awake. So I said to him by his ears how much his family love and care for him. I even used Mrs. Chen's name to sing him a song, "Mr. Chen, Mrs. Chen really loves you! Your grandchildren often asked about Grandpa? They all miss you dearly. Do you understand?" Mr. Chen nodded in response. I was surprised and felt my heart tugged but grateful. I whimpered, "Mr. Chen, when your wife visits you tomorrow, please respond to make her feel at ease." Mr. Chen again nodded. Suddenly my eyes were filled with tears.

The following morning, Mrs. Chen, as usual, gently held Mr. Chen's hands and mercifully gazed at him, unwilling to wake him up. I greeted Mrs. Chen and waited with her. Then I moved closer to Mr. Chen. After a while, he woke up and gazed at his wife for a long time. I said, "Mr. Chen, your wife is here to see you. Do you know?" Mr. Chen smiled and nodded, Mrs. Chen reacted happily in surprise. She said, "It's amazing! How did you do it? He's awake! My husband is awake and smiling!"

For the following week, Mrs. Chen came daily, filled with tearful eyes. I asked, "What happened? Why are you tearful?" She responded, "When I am alone at night reminiscent what had happened lately, I cannot help but cry while feeling touched." Later, Mr. Chen was stabilized and discharged from the hospital. Prior his discharge, Mrs. Chen's condition was worrisome so I gave her my telephone number and said, "If you need anything in the future, you are always welcomed to contact me, even if it is to complain or share your joy." I did not hear from the Chen's for nearly a year. Then one week prior Mother's Day, she called...

She said, "Six months after his discharge from the hospital, Mr. Chen passed away. But I still remember the care he received at Tzu Chi Hospital and the memory of warmth and gratefulness. I am sad of his passing but I gained solace from these memories."

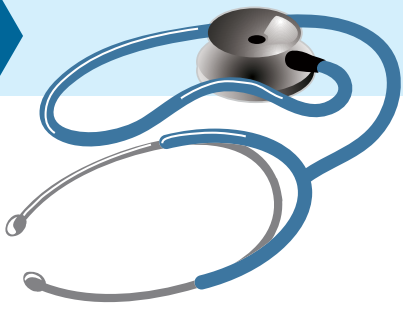
I was truly happy. She gave me her address and expressed that she wanted to visit me. But of course I wasn't going to let an elder to come; so I visited her. Mrs. Chen wanted to return the favor and became a community volunteer at Feng-Yuan Jing Si Hall. She participated in a book club every Monday. Twice weekly she volunteered at school to read books to the students. She also volunteered as crossing guard to ensure children's safety. After listening to her, my worries went away. I parted



Mrs. Chen volunteered at school, reading stories to students. Wang Jia-Ling takes spare time to visit her.

with a card and flowers, “Wishing Mrs. Chen a Happy Mother’s day and pray for your health and safety forever.” Mrs. Chen whimpered, “You are always so thoughtful and kind, providing everyone with warmth. Thank you very much.” Our meeting ended with a big hug.

Being in nursing for 23 years, I have seen many life stories with its climax and finales. The more I feel their pains, the more I am unable to leave my career. I developed a sense of responsibility and mission to protect lives. With these teacher-liked patients crisscrossing my memories, I could not help but cried with sympathy, responsibilities, unable to let go that gratefulness and gratitude. I must say a special thank you to these teacher-liked patients and family members. They use their pains and sufferings to demonstrate, remind and encourage me not to give up or relinquish. Their expression, tears and smiles affirmed my persistence and determination in the path of nursing. They provide me with comfort and reassurance which allows me to draw energy. That is the power of “Conditioned Dharma.”



Nurses and Physicians, Best Partners

By; Dr. Kao Sheng-Po, Vice Director of Obstetrics and Gynecology Department & Standardized Patient Center Host, Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital

When I was invited to write something about nurses, the first image came to mind was “the best partners”. As a doctor, the most frequent contact people are the nursing staff. Moreover, after years of medical practice and playing different roles, I learned more about my partners – the nursing staff.

More than 20 years ago, doctors and nurses were treated differently in our society. Perhaps because of my personality, I respect all the nursing staff and learned a lot from them. Since then, I have always respected their professionalism and their importance in the medical field.

After I became an attending physician and with increasing clinical caseload, I came to appreciate the importance of our nursing staff in the medical field. Whether they are in the frontline or other specialty fields, their nursing knowledge and analytical ability always provide a source of positive energy. Their tender loving care towards patients is often neglected during medical treatment. Yet it is vital in the care of patients. They may look weak but in reality are firm and strong in the fields of caring for patients.





2017 Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital participated at Burkina Faso’s “Pregnancy and new born infant health care improvement plan” Dr. Kao Sheng-Po and pediatric nursing teacher training session.

Perhaps it is very hard for people to imagine that there are many demands or complaints from patients or their families that the medical teams have to face other than the medical care. The nursing staff has to face these challenges and resolve them. The issues may seem to be trivia or unimportant, but they actually reduce the conflict between patients and medical team and prevent many medical disputes. Of course, other than these issues, their professional training which includes medical knowledge and rigorous nursing care are critical part of patients’ recovery.

Other than the experience in medical practices, through teaching medicine, I have a lot of opportunities to work with the nursing staff. Therefore, I have learned more about their abilities and roles.

More than 10 years ago, after I learned from abroad about “standardized patient (SP)”, I came back to Hualien and establish the SP Center of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital and started all related matters including faculty training. I held many workshops and training sessions. At the same time, other hospitals also invited me to give speeches and trainings. In two years, I attended about 50 speeches and workshops. I realized this is not a one-person’s task; we need more people to join the team so we can keep up with the volume at the center. I believe if we don’t have a selfish mind, we naturally have blessings from Bodhisattva. In one occasion, Assistant Professor Hsieh Mei-Lin from Tzu Chi University Nursing Department joined our team. Her professionalism had added a powerful reinforcement to our team. After that, we had Head Nurse Chiang Ju-Ping, Nurse Practitioner Tseng Pao-Huei, senior nurses Huang Bo-Jun, and Tao Pei-Yu, joined us and assisted us in many tasks such as teaching and assessments. We saw their rigorous attitude and professionalism in nursing through this process of cooperation. These excellent nursing staff demonstrated their efficiency and effectiveness. Because of their participation and assistance, we were successful in promoting standardizing patient care. Their professionalism as well as their energy was truly eye opening.

In 2017, I participated in the Burina Fasa's conference on "Pregnancy and Infant Care Improvement Plan". I witnessed the involvement of our nursing staff on two different occasions, especially the one planned by Nursing Dept. Supervisor Cheng Ya-Chun and assisted by Chen Chien-Yu in pediatric care and lectures. I was very impressed by their whole hearted devotion on training the staff. Moreover, at the beginning of October, 2017, I and Ya-Chen as well as Chien-Yu visited Burina Fasa, I learned a lot of precious information regarding Burina Fasa's public health system. During the process, I realized doctor's knowledge is still very limited, and was glad that I was accompanied by two experienced nursing staff. Thus I was able to obtain completed information for this visit. Therefore, after returning to Taiwan, I was able to tailor a training program for students and contribute to the International Cooperation Development Foundation by means of written reports.

Whenever I recall these years of practices and teaching experience, I feel the treatments received by our nursing staff as unfair. The profession of nursing is not just superficial tasks like administrating the medicine, I.V. injection or measuring blood pressure, etc. Their professional knowledge and skills are no less than medical doctors. Nurses are definitely doctors forever best partners.



Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Standardized Patient Center regularly holds workshops, certain nursing professionals are necessary helpers to the center host Dr. Kao Sheng-Po. Photo depicts the 2017 new standardized patient volunteers training camp.