

An Alternative Goal for Coming to Taiwan

By Chen Ching-Hsiang & Liu Chen-Chen



Wang Sung-Han (right) presents a thank you note full of gratefulness to her Vietnamese Savior, Nguyen Ching Hon (center). Wang's mother Liang Yu-Ting on the left.

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, there are only three pairs of donors and recipients participating in the “Meet and Greet” event of the 28th Anniversary of Buddhist Tzu Chi Stem Cells Center.

The event is held on October 2021, and the venue is in the photo studio of the Da Ai Television in Guandu, Taipei. The Program Master of Ceremony is Chen Chu-Chi. Besides the donors and the recipients and their family members, only the Da Ai photographer and a few Tzu Chi volunteers are present. All other interested parties can view the program remotely.

“I imaged that the donor is a gentleman,” said Wang. When Wang Sung-Han is asked about how she thinks of her donor, she answers without any hesitation. Surprisingly, when she steps to the podium, she sees a lady from Vietnam. Her name is Nguyen Ching Hon.

For many years, Wang Sung-Han imagined that a strong, healthy, and outgoing gentleman donated his blood-making stem cells to her. Sung-Han’s mother also firmly thought it as a truth. Surprisingly, standing in front of them is a smiling lady. More than their surprise is their gratitude which is more than any words can describe.

It was in the year of 2015, simply with a big heart of Nguyen Ching Hon lifted the eighteen years old Wang Sung-Han from the bottom of her ill fate to a new life. Now, Wang and her mother step toward Nguyen and hug their savior without hiding any of their gratitude.

Sink to the Bottom of the Valley at Young Age; Accomplish Brave Task in Life

It was in January of 2015. Wang Sung-Han just finished a test at school and went home for a short nap. When she woke up, she felt numbness in her legs. However, she could still manage to walk. That evening things got worse, she felt severe pain in her back. The next morning she had difficulty walking, and then she went to the hospital to seek medical help. Later that day, the condition became out of control. She could not handle her own bowel movement and urination. The hospital diagnosed her case as “acute myeloid leukemia” accompanied by a 15 cm spinal cord tumor.

Sung-Han was just 18 years old, a sweet and happy high school senior. Yet, in a span of just two days, she’s like sinking from heaven to hell. She



desperately needed help! After the tumor surgery, she went through chemo and radio therapies. During the lengthy medical process, Sung-Han set a goal for herself. She wanted to participate in the graduation trip and be a part of the graduation ceremony. These goals became the source of energy for her to suffer medical hardship.

Sung-Han still remembered telling people: “During the treatment period, my white blood cell count was just over

a thousand. But the urge to join the graduation trip motivated me to keep exercising. Even though my appetite was low I could not eat much, but I kept walking, and the staff in the hospital were all aware that my goal was to participate in the trip. As I returned to the hospital from the trip, people would ask, ‘Did you go?’ I was so proud that I accomplished a grand task in my life.”

She also remembered that the doctor told her to go and don’t worry about anything until returning from the trip. “My doctor said to me, ‘You will not regret to accomplish your wish.’” The doctor’s encouragement was deeply in my heart. After the trip, I was happy and peacefully accepted all the treatments,” said Sung-Han.

Temporary Blind and Strong Hope for Recovery

In September of 2015, her stem cells transplantation went well. However, by November of that year, because of being allergic to the medication, Wang Sung-Han was diagnosed with Stevens-Johnson syndrome. This was like a thunder stroke in addition to her misfortune. It was the darkest time of her illness. She suffered burning-like pain on the skin. She needed morphine to kill the pain every time to change the fresh dressing. In addition, her cornea was



Liang Yu-Ting(right) says because of her daughter’s illness, she has no time to panic but to face the problems. On the contrary, she is very nervous now that her daughter’s savior is in front of her.

also damaged. For three days, she was totally blind. Loss of her vision induced great fear, Sung Han almost collapsed.

Sung-Han recalled: “The fear of not seeing things spread over every corner of my heart. Even after my vision resumed, I still hesitated to move around. That kind of feeling was like an unescapable sunken swamp. That feeling was around me no matter how I struggled. Until my attending physician, Yu Yuan-Bin, told me to think about what I still can do, and don’t think of what I have lost. Then I gradually started to move around, and then started to talk. I started to think that I am still alive and I want to continue my life.”

Strong Will to Fight - Nervous to Meet

Besides Dr. Yu’s kind advice, the most important support came from Sung-Han’s mother, Liang Yu-Ting. Liang says: “During the first year of Sung-Han’s illness, she was in the hospital for over three hundred days, and I slept there for just the same number of nights.”

Liang also says that when her daughter suddenly failed to move, there was no time to panic but to face it. She says: “Sung-Han’s chance of survival was almost zero at the beginning. The sudden change of her body movements within one day gave me no time to be



Wang Sung-Han was not knocked down by the sickness. At every stage of the treatment, she would establish a goal for herself. For example: to attend her graduation ceremony, to take a trip to Japan.

nervous but to confront the conditions. Day by day, I could only follow the doctor’s direction and wish for the best. I was very calm at that time. However, I am so nervous now as Sung-Han’s savior is in front of me.”

Liang feels very grateful and thinks she is a very fortunate person. She thanks the medical team that provided the best service to help her daughter. She also appreciates the support from all of her relatives and friends. Liang says: “I told my daughter that I am fifty-two years

old now and cumulated a broad network of friendship over the years. Now, you have consumed all my resources. When my daughter was in the hospital, no matter what I requested, someone from the network will prepare it for me. Thank heaven, with all the support and love; my daughter could go through her suffering.”

Do What a Healthy Person Do - Determine to Help the Needed in the Future

Liang Yu-Ting knows her daughter well, her girl is a strong will person. Once Sung-Han set a goal for herself, she would do whatever needed to fulfill her wish. After the successful transplant, Sung-Han’s first goal was to take a trip to Japan. Against the opinion of many friends and relatives, Liang accompanied Sung-Han and flew to Japan. Sung-Han felt very well the kind of pressure her mother endured because of the trip. Just to express her gratitude, she made up her mind to continue improving her health.

“A trip to Japan is to prove that I am on my way to recovery. I wanted to tell all my relatives and friends not to worry, I am fine and I can take care of myself and will return to school healthy.”

Before her illness, Wang Sung-Han loved drawing. During her time in the hospital, she started to plan for her

future. She thought of her suffering of sickness and the painful experience of those patients in the hospital wards. She started to consider one of the scout’s important tasks is helping people. Therefore, she decided to major in social work in university. She says: “You witness people suffering in the wards. Even though they don’t show it on their faces, most of them are under tremendous pressure, either mentally or financially. They all need help from the society.”

A Simple Heart to help People - Be Cheerful Everyday

When Nguyen Ching Hon was donating her peripheral blood stem cells, she wished that she could also transplant her optimistic nature to the recipient. Now that she heard Wang Sung-Han decided to become a social worker to help other people. She feels that she had made a worthy decision to donate. Nguyen Ching Hon came from Vietnam. She married and moved to Taiwan for seventeen years. In the family and among her friends, people call her “Ah Hon”. Her elder sister-in-law, Chen Chung-Mei, a Tzu Chi Commissioner, encouraged her to take a blood test to register for voluntary stem cell donation. In fact, when Ah Hon received a phone call informing her that the matching recipient was located, her husband was

against her with the donation. It was because he did not fully understand the donation process and worried about the consequences of Ah Hon's donation. They finally agreed to go ahead with the donation after a detailed explanation by

the Tzu Chi Bone Marrow Donation Care and Support Team, as well as the advice of Chen Chung-Mei and her husband, Tzu Chi Brother Pai Chou-Chin.

Ah Hon was afraid to take injections and also scared of seeing blood. But, for the sake of saving a life, she stood up to conquer these mental obstacles. Tzu Chi volunteer Wang Pao-Chu, who accompanied Ah Hon during the donation process, is also in the "Meet and Greet" event. Pao-Chu says that Ah Hon kept inquiring about Sung-Han's condition after the procedure. The volunteers also recited the name of Buddha for the wellness of the recipient, daily.

Under the pandemic situation, Ah Hon is very happy to see Sung-Han doing well. Wang Sung-Han handed a well-prepared thank you card to Ah Hon. Ah Hon says to Sung-Han smilingly: "I just figured out that my other purpose of coming to Taiwan is just for you." Ah Hon also reminds Sung-Han that "we cannot predict our future, so be happy and cheerful for every healthy day".

Wang Sung-Han encountered many rugged obstacles at a very young age. Through her experience of leukemia, she met Nguyen Ching Hon and they established a bone marrow karmic affinity.



Nguyen Ching Hon (right) migrated from Vietnam to Taiwan and saved a young lady's life. Photo taken on World Marrow Donor Day.