

A photograph of a woman, Chung May-Jing, in a hospital setting. She is wearing a white nurse's cap, a white short-sleeved shirt, and a dark blue vest. She is standing in a brightly lit hallway with other people and equipment in the background, which is slightly out of focus. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

A Naughty Kid Turned Into a Strong Back-Up

Chung May-Jing,

**Deputy Head Nurse of 11A Ward,
Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital**

Article by Lin Shih-Chun

“When Furry was a little kid, if she saw a hole she would always put her hands into the hole to find some ‘treasures’. The treasures that she found included geckos, spiders, even cockroaches, and then she happily gave them to her sisters. She would frequently hear screams to “let them go, let them go!” Her sisters were all scared. They knew Furry was too young and didn’t understand why they were scared, so they gave her 5 dollars to get ice cream to divert her attention. Then the holes in her entire house were all sealed. This kid was not afraid of the insects and was curious about everything . No one would have imagined that this little girl Furry would grow up to become a professional nurse Chung May-Jing.

Gave Up the Dream of Sea Travelling, Chose the Steady Nursing Profession

Living in the Tayuan countryside of Taoyuan, not far from the seashore, she was yearning for a life centering on ocean activities. Prior to graduation from middle school, she heard that being a voyager would earn her millions in salary and offer her adventures in the ocean. Thus her mind was settled to go to the School of Navigation of Kaohsiung. She first tested this intention with her family members. However, her parents and grandma were very worried that May-Jing might be swallowed by the ocean, due to her curiosity and impulsive character.

Knowing her family’s concerns, May-Jing then gave up her dream to pursue a career in the sea, and instead chose a nursing career, deciding to attend a nearby 5 year medical college after her graduation from middle school.

Growing up in a big family, May-Jing was the youngest one among brothers, sisters, and cousins. She always respected them and understood the financial situation of the family. When she received the registration fee from the Nursing School, she realized that the 50,000 dollars was more than the total of her three sisters’ tuitions. She was shocked and told herself, “I will study hard and I will not waste my parents’ money.”

“Even though I am not sure what I want to do, I will learn as much I can. I can then decide what I want to do and seek what I like to do.” During the 5 years she spent in the Nursing School, Mai-Jing discovered the mystery of the human body, experienced contentment during the internship training, and received praise from teachers; thus her school experience was very smooth, perhaps remindful of fish in the water.



Fake It Until You Make It, Relationship with Tzu Chi

After May-Jing graduated from the 5 year Nursing School, she decided to continue her study at the 2-year Nursing Degree at Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology (TCUST). The reason for her interest was because of one lesson from a psychology teacher. The teacher liked Master Cheng Yen and the Jing Si Aphorisms. In order to get the students' attention, the teacher mimicked Master Cheng in a joking way, saying: "Being a human, one should pretend...." The class laughed out loud, but the point was: "Pretend and if you do so long enough, then it will become true." This Aphorism was deeply inscribed in May-Jing's heart and she really agreed with the philosophy. It reminded her that when she first studied nursing, she pretended she was really great, but then it became true in the end.

Because of her curiosity toward Master Cheng Yen and the culture of Tzu Chi, May-Jing entered the 2-year foundation-financed scholarship. During the two-year stay at Hualien in TCUST, her family was pleased with May-Jing's personal changes. May-Jing became more mature, with a softer temperament and personality.

Her internship went well, so she decided to join Dalin Tzu Chi hospital and was assigned to Ward 11A. May-Jing settled down at this last stop of her internship.

Paying Back Scholarship Practice

After entering her practice and operating independently in the field, May-Jing wanted to prove her ability. She set her efficiency target as first priority, and worked tediously, without distraction, to follow her own schedule. This work ethic seemed to distance herself from other people in her social life. She forgot why she went into the nursing field and just wanted to go through these two years to be qualified for free tuition without paying it back, and then she could go back to Taiyuan.

Ward 11A was primarily caring for older patients; "Aging, Illness, and Death" are the normal conditions there. Even though May-Jiang tried to treat this as a routine job, she still felt the patients' pain. She felt nursing duty was very tiresome and was thinking of leaving Da-Lin after two years. Then she started reflecting: "If one day, when I am sick like the patients lying in the bed, will I be sorry when I recall my work here? When I cannot move, will I miss the time I could move? When I am dead, would I feel sorry and regret what I have done?"

May-Jing asked herself these three questions and concluded that she should continue in the nursing profession. She realized that she was fortunate to have work such as she did.



After two years of clearing financial support, through training and practice, May-Jiang decided to remain at the same unit. It's been almost ten years now since she decided to stay.

Funny but Calm, a Good Friend Who Cares About Friendship

The person who had master-student love with May-Jing was the head nurse – Chen Li-Yu, who said: “I also had just taken over the Ward 11A, and May-Jing gave me the impression that she was quirky and interesting; often she said something amazing



and the whole team was laughing over her jokes. Sometimes, clinically there would be many cases that caused depression and anger amongst her colleagues, but May-Jing's different point of view often inspired them or helped them in a positive sense." The head nurse said that as long as May-Jing was around, there was a positive atmosphere.

"Also, May-Jing is very gentle and appreciates the friendship, whenever someone was depressed, she wouldn't be joking around but she listened attentively. Whenever someone needed help, she would always be the first one to offer help," Chen Li-Yu said. "When, one time, the younger nurse had a broken leg because of riding a motorcycle on a slippery rainy road, she was worrying that no one could take care of her because she lived alone. So May-Jing invited her to live with her and took care of her for two months until she was fully recovered". The head nurse Liyu was very impressed and thought she could be a manager in the future.

Family Medical Advisor and Accompanying Her Grandma's Final Days

In 2020, May-Jing took the assignment as deputy head nurse and as an understudy from the head nurse Liyu to unload some of Liyu's administrative responsibilities. This was supposed to be a very promising opportunity, but it was May-Jing's most difficult year.

May-Jing's grandma, who took care of her since she was little, was frequently hospitalized during this time. Thus May-Jing was afraid to receive phone calls from family members about grandma's condition. There were twenty some members in the family, who would keep on calling her for consultations. As soon as she finished explaining, another phone call would come. If she couldn't solve the situation, she had to take the high speed railway back to Taoyuan. She felt sad but didn't complain at all.

Grandma was her primary caregiver when May-Jing was small; her parents were busy at work, so she slept with grandma. But she was really naughty, and caused a lot of troubles in the neighborhood. For example, she cooked stolen yams from other people's kiln, and played firecrackers that burned other's vegetable patches. Grandma had to sometimes apologize to the neighbors. Often one could hear neighbor's yelling: "Older Mrs. Lin, your Furry fell into the smelly ditch." Grandma had to put down whatever she was doing and ran to the ditch and brought her back to bathe her. In May-Jing's memory, grandma never scolded her for her naughty behavior, but always tried to guide her with good advice. May-Jing remembered that whenever she was



Since Chung May-Jing took over the managerial duties, she led the team and went through challenges and grew up together with team.



sick with high fever, she could hear the noise from the kitchen because grandma was making herbs for her. She really wanted to do more to help grandma and make her more comfortable. She didn't mind her own physical fatigue.

The Challenge of Being in Charge, Growing up with the Team

2020 was a challenging year for May-Jing; there were many changes during that year. At the beginning of 2020, she lost grandma, and then the corona virus pandemic happened. She faced a crisis at work and the loss of grandma. In August she was promoted to be responsible for the geriatric hospitalization activities for Ward 11A. All of these were large challenges for May-Jing.

During the years of being in charge of the geriatric business, she saw many different situations and challenges, and gained a lot of experience. Although she was an acting deputy head nurse, she performed all the responsibilities of a head nurse. At first, she felt stressed. She appreciated the support of the team, including the head nurse, the directors of two wards, and her colleagues, and she was able to accomplish all the tasks. She said, "I feel really lucky, I am not alone and helpless, the whole team is like a family supporting each other."



The colleague Nierong was only one year younger than May-Jing and she highly respected May-Jing. Nierong said: “Sometimes when the patient or family members were too emotional, or when the patient’s condition worsened and required emergency treatments, we often were very worried and didn’t know what to do, but May-Jing always calmly managed the issues and prioritized the situations. We asked May-Jing afterwards, she said she was also nervous. However, she had to set aside the emotional reaction, and managed the issues. Her steadiness and good attitude were appreciated and admirable and we should learn from her.” Nierong shared that May-Jing would always help the staff understand the situation: “Nursing business should not be alone, it’s a team effort. We need to be able to help and support each other and seek help when it’s necessary.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic happened, it actually tested May-Jing's ability as a new manager. She demonstrated her competency on the job. In the professional area, she shared and grew with the colleagues. In the past two years, the unit employed QCC methods to improve the quality of medical treatments, participated in the discussions on medical strategies, and received great results. In their daily routine, when the colleagues were too busy to eat, May-Jing would prepare drinks, snacks, and lunches to ease the personnel shortage and share the burden among the team. This circle of love atmosphere positively affected the teamwork, and led to a high quality of positivity within the team.

Extend Her Love for Grandma; She Becomes a Backbone for Elderly Patients

The younger nurses were curious as to why May-Jing would spend a lot of time listening to family members?

May-Jing shared her experience: "A lot of our patients are living alone and taking care of each other. Their children are all working far away and can't take care of them. If we don't spend time talking with them to establish trust, we wouldn't be able to understand their needs. If we can't prepare them before they leave the hospital, then they may come back to the hospital with the same problems." May-Jing hoped that the team would be able to provide good care to the elders, especially in the areas of high density of elder patients. She wished to help them stay in their home towns.

There is always stress in the nursing business, how did May-Jing cope with it? She said that whenever she felt stressful she would listen to music by herself and calm herself. Then she could see things clearly. She described music as being like the scissors used by the beautician; it could change her mood and smooth any disturbance that she experienced.

She recalled that in her own life, she really appreciated the path that led her to know Tzu Chi. She said: "In nursing school, they not only trained us in the professional field, they also taught us how to demonstrate filial piety and how to be kind to others, how to be appreciative toward life, and how to handle the nursing tasks." She felt the warmth she experienced in school helped her practice in nursing and helped her appreciate each patient who she cared for. She is willing to extend the love she felt toward her grandma to all the patients she cared for.