

# TZU CHI NURSING CARE

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





# DIVERSIFIED TEACHING CULTIVATES TRUE PASSION

## Tzu Chi University Nursing Education - Diversified Teaching Resources

The Tzu Chi University's nursing program utilizes rich innovative teaching methods to develop student skills. It also features multiple teaching resources, encourages student participation and real-life applications to realize the gratification of helping others. This practice further solidifies students' true passion in the nursing profession and cultivates self-learning, problem solving abilities, and self-confidence.











**Lin Yu-Chuan, Assistant Professor, Nursing Department of Tzu Chi University**

During college exposition and college examinations or on campus, parents and students always ask the following questions:

- Professor, does the Tzu Chi University have an international volunteer service team?
- What are some of the characteristics of the Tzu Chi University teaching resources?
- Do Tzu Chi University Nursing Department students have overseas internship opportunities?

After interviewing some of the Tzu Chi University Nursing Department students, we received responses like the following:

- Joining the Tzu Chi International Volunteering Team for the Philippines helped me rekindle my passion and learn to appreciate life.
- Standardized patient care prior to entering clinical practices helped me respect patients and understand ways to interact and communicate with them.
- Learning at the world class simulated medical center moved me one step closer to my dream of working in the operation room.

Students' positive feedbacks on the development of self-learning, innovation, cross-departmental service skills, leadership and international outlook ability, reaffirmed







**Whether it is on-campus teaching resources, community or far-away free medical clinics, overseas international nursing programs, or volunteering, they are all aimed at helping nursing students to experience the passion of giving as a critical characteristic of the nursing profession.**

the Tzu Chi University's past educational focus on its utilization of teaching resources to develop the next generation nursing talents.

Respect life and people oriented approach: With the abundance of resources and skills development, nursing students are also prepared to have the "heart" of Florence Nightingale. No matter what obstacles or challenges they face in their work environment, they always remind themselves their initial resolve to help others.





# EXPERIENCE THE NURSING PROFESSION IN THAILAND

**Tsai Chuan-Hsiu, Associate Professor of Nursing Dept., Tzu Chi University**



“Teacher, will we have opportunities for an exchange student or a study abroad program when we come to Tzu Chi University?”

The main goal of Tzu Chi University’s Nursing Department is to cultivate both humanistic spirit and professional nursing, and attract teachers and students from all around the world to initiate exchange and learning. Thailand is one of the most frequent student exchange countries because its nursing education resembles the European and American system; yet its national religion is Buddhism. Since there are also international students from Thailand’s Mahidol University, Tzu Chi University’s Nursing Department responded and began an International Nursing Curriculum in 2014.





**Students from Tzu Chi University and Mahidol University are together attending a hospital free clinic for the refugees in Bangkok, Thailand.**

We believe that medical professionals must be sensitive to cross-cultural care in order to develop apprehension toward cultures with different beliefs and religions so as to provide comprehensive care. Currently, immigrants from Southeast Asian countries coming to Taiwan are on the rise; as a result, medical care for the foreign labor workforce is also increasing in hospitals and within communities. When facing medical problems from these new immigrants, medical personnel must be vigilant in understanding culture to provide the best care.

Tzu Chi University and Mahidol University are sister schools. Since Chiang Mai University's Nursing Department is the cradle of care for Northern Thailand where the Northern Thailand Tzu Chi University is situated, our student exchange program mainly constitutes these two elite Thailand universities.





### **Bangkok, Thailand - International Refugee Free Clinic**

Mahidol University, situated in capital Bangkok, is the first university in Thailand to have a nursing department. It is Thailand's premier nurses' producer and also one of the top 100 world renowned universities. Mahidol University created its nursing department in 1896, awarded bachelor degrees in 1956, created the first nursing graduate program in 1977, and established a post-doctorate program in 1989, besides an international nursing curriculum.

Tzu Chi University and Mahidol University became sister schools in 2005. On January 25, 2015, Tzu Chi Thailand started working conjointly with Ramathibodi Hospital of the Mahidol University. Under the assistance of the US State Department, Ramathibodi Hospital provided "Community Medical Free Clinic" to refugees once a month. Nursing students of Mahidol University also participate in the international refugee clinic.

When nursing students of Tzu Chi University participated with community nursing internship at Ramathibodi Hospital, they learned how to combine Thai, Chinese, and Western medicine to provide medical services to the public.



**Associate professor Tsai Chuan-Hsiu led students to practice internship in Thailand.**



Students also learned how to provide care and communication to those with different culture. While at the International Refugee Clinic, students also learned how to implement international medical care, and forming a solid foundation with international capability to take home.

### **Integrating Local Clinic – Chiang Mai, Thailand**

Chiang Mai University is founded in 1964, and has the earliest nursing department in Northern Thailand. Chiang Mai University nursing education focuses on the environment and community care. In addition, it has an international nursing curriculum catered to international nursing care. The institution promotes international academic exchange, and plays an important role in influencing the nursing education and practice in neighboring countries. As a result, it is highly suitable for international health care exchange.

At Chiang Mai University, students can experience multi-national breastfeeding outpatients' service, community home care service, the integration of Thai medical health care in hospitals, and the multiple roles played by specialty Thai nurses.

Northern Thailand's Chiang Mai has a Tzu Chi humanistic school. During the exchange with Tzu Chi University, students may also work with Northern Thailand Tzu Chi Foundation to provide community outreach and student health care education.

### **Not a Native Thai Speaker, English Instead**

Lin Yu-Hua, a junior in the nursing department, shared her learning experience:

"August 23, 2015 is Thailand's International Clinic Day. We arrived at 6 am to assist pediatric education and diabetic prevention promotion. This is my second time participating with Tzu Chi Clinic; however, this time around it is a larger international free clinic. With patients from different countries, translators are in demand. When we arrived, we faced many difficulties such as the communication barrier. We were unable to communicate with patients. However, through gestures and broken English and with translators' assistance, we were able to successfully complete the assignments. Despite the hectic process, it was an opportunity for us to speak English."

### **Experience Medical Differences - Breaking the Stereotypes**

Lin also shared her experience on medical and stereotypes:

"We visited many institutions that allowed us to see and compare Thai social





culture with ours. The myth that Thailand medicine is lagging behind is false. Perhaps in some areas we are ahead, however, I can only admire their creativity. Thailand is a creative and passionate country. Here I saw medical personnel using creativity and ingenuity in places such as the environment and their use of equipment. They strive to take patients' care to the next level. Most of the students have certain understanding of their country's education policy. This reminds us that we should pay more attention to Taiwan's medical education policy so we may provide creative and loving care to patients from Taiwan and other countries."

### **Avoid Prejudice - Enhance International Care Capability**

Hu Yu-Shun, a junior in the Nursing Department, shared her opinion regarding her prior prejudice toward Thailand and the importance of international care capability:



**Learning from Thailand counterparts provides the ability to experience the essence of international medical care.**





“This program changed my negative stereotypes toward Thailand. I used to believe Thailand is an underdeveloped country. However, through this exchange and experience, I learned that it was my prejudice. The actual Thailand and my prior understandings are very different. Nurses treat patients with care and also creativity, which is what we need to learn. I hope that I will have the opportunity to study and intern abroad to further my international care capability.”

Internationalization has become the trend of global care. The 30 days overseas study allows students to have time to experience the medical care differences between Taiwan and Thailand. In addition, it allowed students to reflect on the essence of care from these differences. The experience of participating in international refugee clinics gave students the opportunity to see the health of refugees and the importance of health education. Breaking the stereotypes about Thailand's negatives was another gain. Through the actual observation and participation, students can understand how Thailand uses case studies to facilitate the medical care to meet the needs of its residents.





# TAKING GRANDPA TO CLASSROOM

## Applying Standardized Patient Model to the Assessment of the Elderly

**Hsieh Mei-Lin, Assistant Professor, Nursing Department, Tzu Chi University**



The Nursing Department at Tzu Chi University has been using objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) in conjunction with standardized patient (SP) to teach physical examination classes for many years. Due to an increasing aging population, there is a need to include elderly patients into our curriculum. Educational courses incorporating elderly physical examination and elderly standardized patient allow students the opportunities to interact with patients directly, and to conduct health assessment and provide post-examination consultation. Students can then enhance their assessment skills through clinical trials.

Five standardized elderly patients sixty-five years old or older participated in the third-year college students' physical examination and assessment classes. Prior to the actual





examination, students were trained with necessary materials and lesson plan. Written materials were also enlarged as big print for easy reference during the actual testing. The enlarged print is: “As we age, our body will change and our biological function will deteriorate. For the purposes of this course, please share your medical history, and please relax during your interaction with students and teachers. Do not be concerned with your vision or hearing impairment. We want to thank you once again for allowing us the opportunity.” The elderly patients smiled with relief after reading the passage. Many said, “I was worried that I won’t be able to memorize the full script for the class, now I just have to be myself.”

The course started by describing the lesson plan, followed by an introduction of the standardized elderly patients. The following reports are summarized by the students after completion.





### **Student Nurse Liao Pei-Han**

*When the adorable elderly man walked into the room with a timid smile, we were all excited because it was the first time (aside from interacting with fellow students) we had to examine a live human being, not to mention a person we were not familiar with!*

*The man was hearing impaired so we had to stand very close to him and speak loudly and slowly in order to communicate with him. He said, “My many organ functions are declining because of age, I have pain everywhere.” Grandpa suffered from dizziness, hearing impairment, cataract, high blood pressure, gout, skin allergies and varicose veins, etc. It looks like aging is the biggest enemy of human beings.*

### **Student Nurse Pan Yi-Cen**

*I felt that today’s experience was very special because when we practiced with other classmates it was hard to examine and discover anything unusual. This time we were able to assess patients with developed symptoms. It simulates an environment comparable to a real patient in the hospital.*

### **Student Nurse Lu Pei-Fang**

*To me, this was such an unusual learning experience because I had never been exposed to such a teaching method. This course integrates standardized patients to approximate real-life clinical experience; it reinforces memory. Things can change and can be out of our control so learning how to react and respond to crisis is important. First time I was shy, nervous, hesitant, scared, and concerned but soon after I was able to get a hang of it and carried through.*

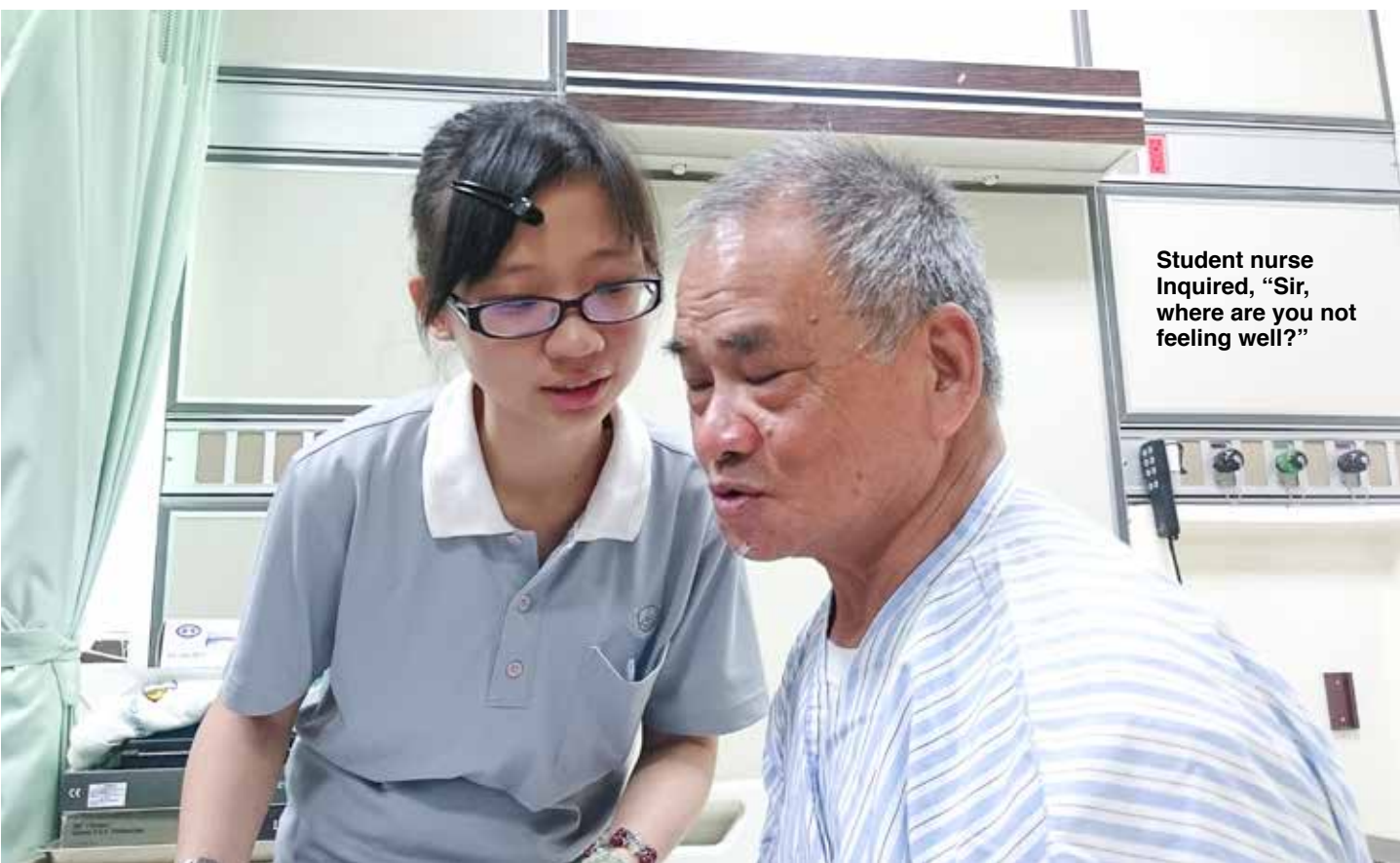
### **Student Nurse Tsai Meng-Ting**

*The elderly man mentioned that he had been bothered by lightheadedness for the past few years. In addition to PQRST study, I confirmed that he had been taking high blood pressure medications. Teacher once said, “You must find the problem in order to treat the disease.” Nursing is not just a skill learned by practicing, we must also be observant. Being able to read and interpret information given by the patients can help with correct diagnosis.*

### **Student Nurse Lee Ying-Zhen**

*My standardized elderly patient is hearing impaired. I seriously re-examined my strategy to interact with the patient. When we practice with*





Student nurse  
Inquired, "Sir,  
where are you not  
feeling well?"

*fellow classmates, we usually speak fast since we already know the steps so the whole process usually doesn't take long to complete. Through interaction with this standardized elderly patient, I realized I needed to slow down my talk to enunciate and articulate. Otherwise, it would affect the downstream examination process. This course is encompassing all the topics for the semester. Through this type of teaching medium, I have a deeper understanding of the patients.*

#### **Student Nurse Lee You-Xuan**

*There are big differences between adult and the elderly when it comes to the physical. Many of the chronic diseases are the result of aging due to deterioration. In addition, the elderly man really loved to share his life stories. Upon examination of his medical history, we also learned his backgrounds and many life philosophies. I think this course is great because we were able to apply book knowledge on real patients in a clinical setting.*



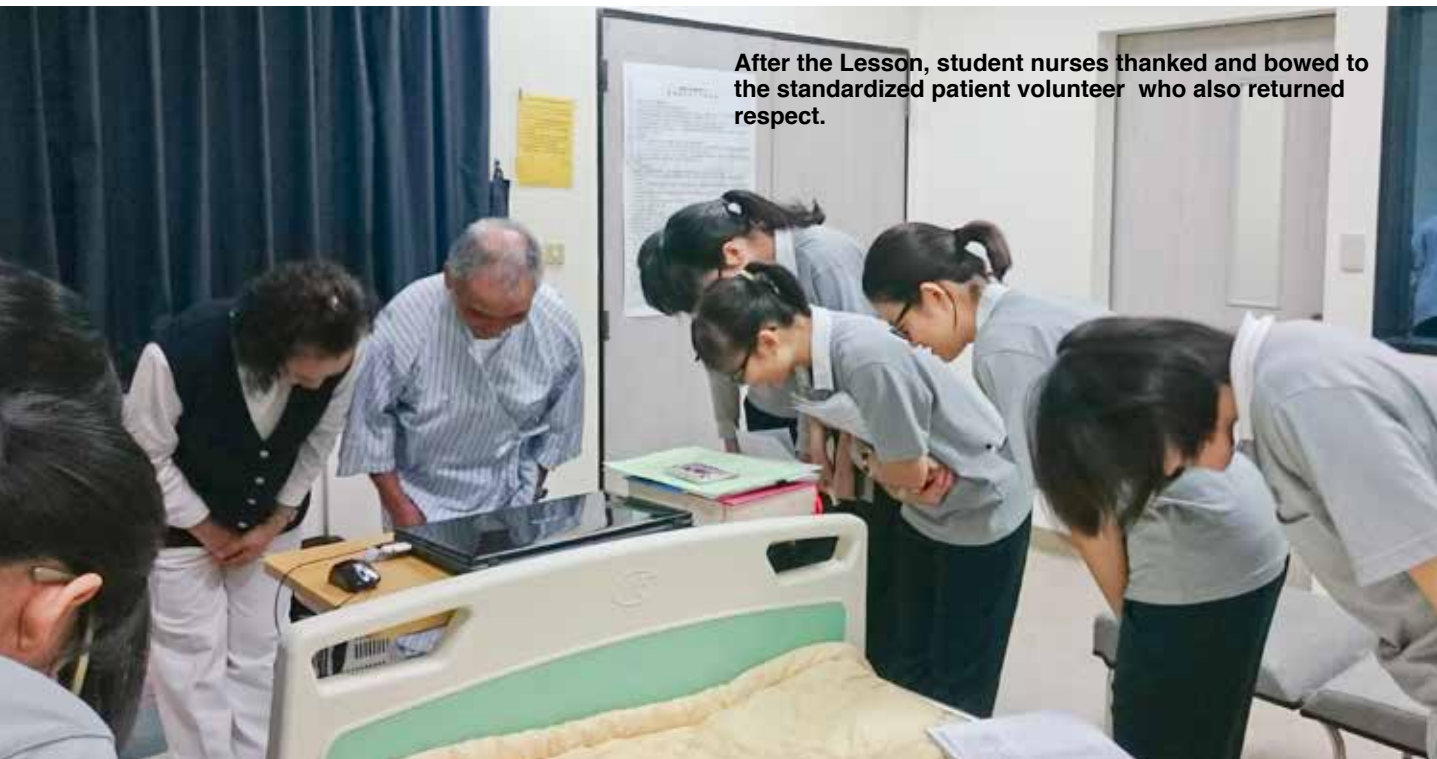


### **Student Nurse Wong Zi-Ying**

*During an examination of his abdomen, the old gentleman expressed discomfort and I was thankful my teacher stepped in with guidance; otherwise I would feel silly not knowing how to proceed. When I examined the man's joints, I saw what gout could do to a patient. Upon reflection, I saw my shortcomings, including the ability to react real-time and paying attention to details which were often overlooked in past practices.*

It has long been the expectation of teachers to shorten the gap between classroom and clinical practice. From the students' sharing, we recognized the positive effect of bringing standardized elderly patient into teaching. It was only through interaction with real patients that students learned to be more observant, and to attend to the need of their patients.

Treating diseases as our teachers: Before ending the lesson, all of the nursing students bowed to the standardized elderly patients to show their respect and appreciation for their contribution. Because of their selfless giving, patience and tolerance, they allowed students an invaluable opportunity to learn and experience.



**After the Lesson, student nurses thanked and bowed to the standardized patient volunteer who also returned respect.**



# SURGICAL SIMULATION AND SURGICAL NURSING

**Lee Li-Hua, Lecturer, Nursing Dept., Tzu Chi University**

Tzu Chi University is the only institution in the world that provides a simulated surgery curriculum designed to provide nursing care in the surgery room. Traditional simulated nursing care education does not provide students a life learning setting in the operating room; only after graduation and working inside the operating room will they begin their actual learning.

In September of 2004, “Surgical Nursing” was established for fourth-year nursing students. The curriculum “Nursing in the Operating Room” was revamped with comprehensive teaching resources, combining University classroom teaching, the Simulation Medical Center facility, and the Tzu Chi Hospital surgical operating rooms and its resources. It is centered on “Students”, a revolutionary teaching concept designed to promote learning, discovery, and team cooperation and communication.







After studying surgical nursing in the classrooms, students visit the Surgical Simulation Center which is identical to the hospital surgery rooms to experience the surroundings and atmosphere. For example, students lay down on the surgery table to simulate patients lying on the operating table, under cold air-conditioned environment; their shock is not difficult to understand. Fourth year student nurse Luó zhāng hóng said, “The operating room is a sacred place to me even after two surgical practices without real patients. This is my first time experience in a real surgical center. The cold air makes me shiver and reminds me the feeling of patients when I put myself in their shoes.”

Under the guidance of the instructor, students became familiar with many instruments and equipment and its operation. They prepared themselves near the operating table to practice the critical tasks to assist surgeons during operations.

### **Public Health and Nursing majors Lin Zhong-Yi shared:**

“Our first stop was the pre-surgery room where we prepared patient by confirming the identity and respective surgical programs. We took time to observe patient’ physical and mental state, and provided assistance as necessary. We then accompanied the patient into the operating room where other students were concentrating their attention on anesthesiologists, surgeons, assistant nurses including scrubbing and circulating nurses to coordinate surgery in a concerted effort. The next time I went in the operating







Surgical nursing is in progress inside the Simulation Medical Center. Teacher Lee Li-Hua (Second Right) is examining the learning result.

room, my fellow students already mastered the art of timing, scrubbing, and the donning of gloves and robes. They looked confident, standing around the operating table and assisting the operation. After completion of surgery, we accompanied the patient to the recovery room and practiced necessary post-surgery care, including vital signs monitoring, administration of pain medicine and anti-vomit procedures.”

Student nurse Li Jia-En shared her unforgettable experience in the operating room:

“After a fascia incision and multiple rinsing of the opening, I can clearly see the different subcutaneous layers of tissue. The doctor called me to his side and asked me to feel the muscle tissues. The 10 cm wound almost swallowed half of my hand. This feeling is really a very special learning experience. Even in the future working in the operating room, I may not necessarily have such an opportunity. It is a lifelong memorable experience.”

This combined curriculum strongly elevates effective learning and future career opportunity. It is like a magic laboratory drawing the attention and curiosity of interest. Our meticulous design of the program is being felt by the students.





# HARDSHIP MAKES ONE REALIZES AND TREASURES THE BLESSING

Student Volunteers Go Overseas for the Needy

Lin Yu-Chuan, Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing, Tzu Chi University



## **TIMA doctors in the Philippines for Services and Caring**

Super typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) hit central Philippines and caused severe damage on November, 2011. Hardest hit areas were in the province of Leyte, particularly in the cities of Ormoc and Tacloban. In order to cultivate the international disastrous relief capability of Tzu Chi University students, we established a "TIMA Medical Volunteers Team for the Philippines" in 2013. The main goal is to continue care for the victims and provide assistances for rebuilding their homes.

In coordination with the Tzu Chi's Philippines Chapter and the Tzu Chi International Medical Organization, we arrived at the Philippines in late July and early August of 2013 in tiers. Volunteers





**Students from the Nursing Department of Tzu Chi University participated in Ormoc and Tacloban of the Philippines for the Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts. They offered free medical services, rice distributions and homes rebuilding for the typhoon victims.**

of each tier stayed in the country for nine days. The relief services included free medical services, rice and food distribution, home visits, and the building of temporary housing, sanitary education, and cultural exchange.

### **Volunteers in Sichuan for Humanity and Caring**

The 2008 Sichuan earthquake devastated the Wenchuan (China) area. In order to inspire students' humanity and care for others, we continued to bring love to Sichuan and care for the earthquake victims. The "Love Sichuan Volunteer Team" was formed in 2010 and started servicing Wenchuan in the summer of 2011.





The four goals of the “Love Sichuan Volunteer Team” are: Self-discipline, Courage, Compassion, and Creativity. The purpose is to provide students the correct direction towards becoming a person of caring for the others. Through promotion of environmental protection, acts of good deeds and filial piety, volunteers team up with the local college students in the relief effort, and also



**Indian children teach volunteers to play local games.**



encourage local students to stay in the disastrous area for continuous effort. While working in Wenchuan, volunteers recognized their ability to contribute and therefore build up their confidence. Through their services, the volunteers also obtained the opportunities to participate in solving local problems as well as viewing the broader global ones.

### **Stepping Out of their Comfort Zone - Accepting the Challenge**

“Overseas Voluntary Services Youth Group” is a team of young volunteers organized and managed by the young volunteers to perform oversea service tasks. Because it’s volunteered based, young volunteers often confront with events that never occurred in their lives before. When problems arise, they must find their own solutions. For examples, finding ways for team building, searching for the right charity organizations in a foreign land, seeking guidance from experienced teachers, fundraising, applying for financial help, adopting local culture, language, and discovering problem solving skills.

Wei Ko-Yun, a third year nursing student recalled: “When I joined the Overseas Volunteers Team last year, I did not have any voluntary service experience. All I had was the courage to accept the challenge. At the beginning, my English was awkward with no leadership training and had never written any course plan. Worst of all, I never had any true feeling for the process of giving. But, after one year of planning, and hand-on services for the street children in Calcutta, India, through the charity organization SMILE, I clearly notice my personal changes and the growth of my teammates.” Another Youth Group member, Tse Pei Wei, a third year medical school student, who participated in the “Medical Relief Volunteers Team for the Philippines” for three consecutive years said: “Anything you do started from a firm resolution. With an initial seed, with a solid beginning, nothing is difficult.”

Chen Lee-Yin, a double major in public health and nursing, talked about the process of confronting challenges, said: “During my sophomore year, I decided to have an unforgettable summer – being an overseas volunteer. Being independent was the real challenge at the time. Details of the plan include finding the proper guidance, the right charity organization, the adequate English course for local children, topics for discussion, etc. Our teammates were from a variety of disciplines, but we got together, set our common goals, encourage each other, brainstorming, recruited a good director, solved their financial difficulties, etc. Eventually, we arrived in India and started our venture.”





### **Compassion needs Wisdom - Giving with Blessings**

It is not a simple task to bring fortune and blessing into a person's life that lasts. Giving requires thorough learning, so that the receiving party feels respected. Wei Ko-Yun talked about the experience of building Da Ai (Great Love) houses: "Under our 'Cash for Work' program, residents of the Da Ai Village worked very hard to build their own houses. I worked with a group of local women under the scorching sun, with streaming sweat, cuts and bruises, but there were no complaints. They taught me how to install doors and windows, and fasten screws. This is for a simple reason: they were building their own houses. They worked with integrity. 'Wisdom of Compassion' was the lesson I learned."

### **Abandon the Myth - Start from the Need of the People**

The overseas volunteers abandoned the myth of planning from their imagination. For example, fourth year nursing student Shih Yu Ching mentioned that she learned a lesson from the street children in India: "I learned from my services in India that you should not prepare the same teaching plan for children with different backgrounds. They all have different needs for education. Therefore, before you plan your course, you should fully understand the local life style and education needs. Based on their needs, you can then set the goals of for maximum benefits to the students. Before we arrived in India, we prepared many teaching plans, with our imagination. However, once we started our volunteer tasks, we realized that only a very few plans actually suited our students. Furthermore, during our preparation phase, we did not realize that English is a foreign language for our students. To further complicate the matter, our team members hardly understand the local language."

### **Life Tenacity - Realizing Sufferings with Appreciation**

Overseas volunteer services remind our members to rethink the meaning of "fortunate" and "real living". As our volunteers departed from their comfort zone and entered into the environment of a fugal yet simple life, we were surprised to find that children and elders there live happily and satisfactorily under their environment, we suddenly realized how lucky we are, and remind ourselves to live meaningfully. For example, a fourth year nursing student Ao Li Chi shared with us: "Away from Taiwan, I found that children in the streets of India live poorly. Yet, smiles are found on their faces. They are easily satisfied. On the contrary, in our affluent society, we see so many stony faces. Should we learn how to live from these happy children?"





**Participating at the overseas volunteering team, to be able to complete it on their own is a big challenge and a precious gift for life.**

Wei Ko-Yun said: "They don't have much, materially, but they do appreciate what they have. In comparison, we take for granted of our abundance, yet we complain. With the experience I gained from these volunteer services, I will spread the smiles of the children and pass the warmth of the Da Ai villagers. I shall always remember the tenacity of their lives. I shall always remind myself to live more seriously. No longer complain, because I am so fortunate to live in a near perfect environment."





PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR HEAD NURSE

# LEARN TO LET GO





## **Chang Yu-Fang, Surgical Intensive Care RN, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital**

In 2015, after graduation from Chung Jen Junior College of Nursing, Health Science and Management, I started working at the Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital. For a new college graduate, I was scared of the unfamiliar environment, especially when intensive care's nurse to patient ratio was 1:2 or 1:3. At the end of every shift, I felt drained and exhausted. Fortunately, with the encouragement of many senior nursing staff, I slowly adjusted. Through caring for the patients, I was also assured of my initial intent to provide help to those who need care!

### **Original Intention Carried Me Through Frustration**

Soon after I started working at the intensive care unit, I encountered an older gentleman on a ventilator who was repeatedly hitting the side of his bed. "Dong, Dong, Dong", the sound echoed through the room. I was changing the dressing of a patient across from him. "Mr., please wait for me, I will be right over", I responded quickly. Before I had a chance to tend to his needs, visiting hours began. When the patient's family found a note "The nurse ignored me", they demanded to see his nurse. Without giving me any time to explain, they scolded me and interrogated: "My husband said you ignored him!" No matter what I said after that, the family members continued to chastise!

Frustrated, I walked over to the nurse station and told the senior nurse how I was wrongfully accused: 'I was doing dressing change. I did not ignore him! The patient was still angry because he thought I did not address his issue immediately. That was not what I did!'

I remember during the last year of middle school, I contemplated between high school and technical school. My Aunt, who was a nurse, advised me, "If you go to nursing school, you will have job security." Mom also agreed but dad opposed the idea. Dad was working at a police station near our house in Jia Yi New Harbor. My childhood memory of him was always directing traffic or dealing with traffic accidents. Dad did not want me to have a job with a schedule like his in which the hours are irregular and can affect personal life. Hence, he had never been supportive of my desire to become a nurse.

Little did he know that I wanted to be a nurse ever since I was in elementary school. One day, I was in fifth grade, I brought my little brother and sister to play in the park. My sister was excited to see my dad working nearby and wanted him to carry her home. When we were about to arrive at the house, dad suddenly leaned against the wall and screamed, "Hurry, call your mom!" By the time mom came to assist, dad was already unconscious from a heart attack. During his one-month hospitalization,





the nurses' kindness and love touched me. It was then I told myself that I would apply to nursing school as my first choice on my high school application. I was inspired to care for patients with severe illness and to help others like my dad.

When I was scolded by the family members of the elder patient, I felt frustrated. However, after some reflection I said to myself: "Wasn't my wish to help others? Under the circumstances, his family members only knew the information at hand. If I was his family members, I would be furious too!" A close friend also comforted me: "Do not ask for return. If you get blamed by the family members, just thank them." When I thought of the proverb "Happiness is to give without expecting return", I felt a great sense of relief.

### **Loving Care Earns Response**

In 2016, a young patient named "Xiao Bo" was admitted to the emergency room (ER) from a serious car accident. He was severely injured from the chest down to his legs, including internal bleeding. After treatment at the ER, the hospital staff finally stabilized him. Along with three other nurses, we oversaw his wounds dressing. I was in shock when I lifted the gauze and saw his exposed intestines and bones of the legs. "Isn't this something you only see in medical text books?"

At that moment, I felt so helpless. Before dressing change the four of us gingerly turned him over to clean. I held on to his head and chest to protect the wounds. During dressing change, even with some local anesthetics, we still saw Xiao Bo cringe with tears in his eye from the pain! After dressing change, I whispered to him: "I am sorry about that, but it's over now. We know you are suffering!" The pain I saw from his eyes lingered in my mind long after the procedure.

After multiple skin grafts and a gradual reduction of sedatives, Xiao Bo was becoming more alert. His family also showed signs of delight from the earlier sadness and cries. It seemed that things were turning around until I heard from other senior staff: "Although he is more aware of the surrounding, he refuses to listen to music or watch movies that his family brought him. He always stares at the ceiling and never responds to us. He even withdraws all of his savings to give to his family members." Even though we saved his life but he no longer wanted anything in life and showing signs of depression. There is a saying, "To cure one's body is to cure one's mind". So what else can I do for Xiao Bo?

Therefore, once I clocked in every day, I would visit him to say: "Hello! Good Morning. How are you feeling today?" During my break, I would visit and greet him with: "Hi, Xiao Bo, I am here! Look, the weather is gorgeous!" Unfortunately, no matter





**The Head Nurse and senior nurses reminded Chang Yu-Fang to self-adjust when experiencing death in the ICU where one may be emotionally attached.**

what I said, Xiao Bo always just stared out the window and ignored me. Occasionally, I might get him to shake his head - a sign of refusal. Many times, I was going to give up but when I thought of the pain he was going through, I was determined to show him I cared. At the end, visiting him turned into my daily chores!

One day, he needed some additional debridement procedures. A senior nursing staff informed Xiao Bo that we were going to the operating room in a bit. While lying on his bed, Xiao Bo started to shake his head violently and refused the procedure, then continued to stare at the ceiling with a sad face. I went over and touched his head gently: "Xiao Bo, don't be scared. I know you can get through this. After your procedure, you will be back at the ICU and we will be there with you together, okay?" Xiao Bo finally nodded his head and everyone let out a sigh of relief.

After Xiao Bo returned to the ICU after the operation, I asked him in the morning when I was changing his dressing: "Hi, good morning, Xiao Bo! Are you okay?" He nodded his head, gave me a smile and gestured a thumbs-up to show he was alright! "Are you saying hi to me?" He nodded his head again. "Can you make something even sillier? Like put a "victory" next to your eye!" Surprisingly, he obliged and I could hear a faint giggle through his breathing tube. This image brought tears to my eyes. For the longest time, Xiao Bo never responded to anything but now he finally turned around and responded enthusiastically. How could that not touch anyone's heart?





### Spread Love Through Stories

When Xiao Bo received the news that he would never walk again, he went from denial to acceptance. During his dressing change, he wrote on paper: “One week? One month? Half year?” “Senior nurse responded that the wound is quite large, may take a half year to a year before you can go home.” Hearing that, he felt hopeless and gestured me to leave!

To encourage him, I went to the store and bought some drawing papers to make a small bindery cards. I saw how excited he was when turning the pages so I teased him: “Are you so touched that you are about to cry?” He looked up with tears in his eyes and nodded. “My goodness, are you so touched that you are about to shed a gallon of tears!” We both started to crack up. Later I heard from other senior staff that Xiao Bo would not let go of those cards even during dressing changes. That meant a lot to me.

On my day off on Sunday, I would still visit Xiao Bo. He would write: “Did you not go out?” I replied, “I need to complete reports and attend some meetings at the hospital so I can’t go out to play.” Xiao Bo then pointed at him and me. “What are



you trying to say, I don't get it." He then wrote, "You are like my little sister. When I am better, let's go out together!" "Of course, but... since when did I become your little sister?" I questioned. "Was it when I gave you the pink cards?" Xiao Bo nodded with a smile.

In the intensive care unit, Xiao Bo could only stare at the clock every day. Concerned that he might develop "ICU Syndrome", I decided to make a calendar to provide him with some sense of time orientation. I bought a notebook, used my after-work hours and created a daily calendar. On each page, I included a phrase of Master Cheng Yen's Jing Si Aphorism as encouragement. I hoped that this would provide Xiao Bo some hope and anticipation for his future. Little did I know that when I delivered the calendar the next day, he would no longer be able to wake up?

After reviewing his medical report, I was shocked to discover that he suffered a stroke due to bacterial infection. Despite the effort from our medical team, they could not resuscitate him! It was difficult to accept the facts. With tears, I wrote on the calendar: "Xiao Bo, please get well soon. Didn't you say that you would take me out to play? I am here for you!" I stopped by his bedside whenever I could to pray for him!

One night during my swing shift, a senior nurse told me: "I wanted to advise that you have to be prepared. There will be many cases like this in your career. You have to learn to let go otherwise it will affect your work." After hearing that, I broke down in tears and realized that I had grown emotionally attached to Xiao Bo and treated him like my brother. I was affected by his emotional states. Looking at the message board on the wall filled with blessings and prayers from others, I was praying for a miracle.

On August 6th, when I was still sleeping, a senior staff messaged me: "Xiao Bo had left. Please don't cry. This may be a relief for him!" Still in denial, I called to verify the news and the heart-broken facts. When I arrived at the ICU, I saw that Xiao Bo's tubing had been removed. I held his cold hand, "I come to see you. Are you going to take me out? Although you can't really be my brother in this life, you must be my brother in the next life. Are you listening? You better not let me down again!" When I thought of how he waved at me to now a dead body... Xiao Bo is really gone!

The senior nurse comforted me: "I know you have gone beyond your duty for Xiao Bo. You used your own time to make him cards, a calendar, encouragement and support during his last moments. He is well loved. You are his angel!" After experiencing his death, I had a deeper level of appreciation for nursing. "Yes, I was helping him!" When my dad was in the ICU, the nurses not only cared for his physical health, they also tended to his psychological state. I shall exemplify this story to realize the spirit of "Saving life, guarding health and love", to help more people.





**From Head Nurse:**

# MATURED GRIEF AFTER A PATIENT LOSS

**Kang Fang-Yu, Head Nurse, SICU, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital**

When I graduated from Tzu Chi Nursing College (now Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology) in 1999, I chose to start my career at Yeezen Hospital at Yangmei. The decision was mainly based on the fact that Yangmei is close to my hometown of Chungli. During my internship days, I constantly reminded myself the motto I learned from school. That is: “Take care of your patients’ body and soul with your selfless Great Love (Da Ai)!” This principle of nursing was carried out in my daily chores in the hospital ward. One day, a senior nurse was so puzzled and asked me, “Why do you tend your patients’ nails and clean their ears?” I answered, “Their nails are getting too long and they cannot listen clearly without cleansing, I just try to help them live more comfortable. I don’t expect to get any reward by doing such things.” I just wanted to develop my style of nursing with the knowledge I gained from school.

## **More Praise and Encouragement**

I returned to Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital in February of 2006. I applied the same standard to my junior colleagues. One day, a nursing supervisor reminded me, “You should not be so serious with the juniors, or you will scare them away from their jobs.” I discussed the event with my husband that evening and said, “In the past, our seniors



always treated us very strict. And, we always thought that was because we didn't do a perfect job." My husband replied, "Don't expect everybody work in the same way as you do. Sometimes, you think their performance is only 80% of your standard, but your juniors may think they have reached 100%."

The conversation with my husband made me recall my childhood experience. When I was small, my mother was very busy working. I had to stay in my uncle's house and was cared by my grandmother. My uncle was an educator and very strict to the youngsters. However, I was like a hard to tame wild horse. Quite often, I was the leader among my cousins for mischievous activities. So many days, I would play outside till dark and went home unwillingly until the urging voice of my grandmother. Because of these habits, I was often behind in school work. My uncle would punish me for the poor performance at school. But, that did not push me to study hard. To avoid punishment, I improved my school work just enough to satisfy my uncle's standard.

When I started in Tzu Chi Nursing College, I often was confronted with homesickness and depression. When I felt homesick, I would call my grandmother, just to say hi, and just to hear her soft voice. Grand mom's miracle voice time and time again turned off my negative attitude, and encouraged me to go on. Besides grandma,

**Becoming a Head Nurse is the career goal of Kang Fang-Yu (left). She changed her style along her career path from a strict leader to "analytical, encouragement and expectation" management.**







**Kang Fang-Yu discovered that smoothness is the key for professional performance and source of harmony.**

my loneliness away from home was dissolved by many of my Tzu Chi parents (Yi dé father and mother). Even though they are not my relatives, but their advice, their accompanying, their encouragement, and their expectation provided the power for me to become a good nurse.

In 2015, I was transferred from the 8B ward to SICU. On the 27th of June that year, the famous incident of 'Pa-Hsien Dust Explosion' occurred. As the head nurse, the burden of caring for more than ten severely burned patents fell upon my shoulder.

It was a difficult time. But I remember the words of Dharma Master Cheng Yen: "To change others, first change yourself." These words taught me to treat my patients with kindness and communicate with their families with sincerity. Furthermore, I also learned that to be a leader I must encourage and praise my junior nurses often in order to build their confidence. This way, my leadership would be much smoother and my expectation would be easier to fulfill.



### **Calm Analysis - Empathy**

When Junior nurse Yu-Fang was blamed by a patient's family members, she complained to me the incident, "Ay Chang (nickname for the Head Nurse), I did tell him that I will be there soon as I finish the dressing here. But the patient insisted that I ignored him. And the family member kept complaining." The incident clearly indicated that both my junior staff and the patient's family need emotional support.

I told Yu-Fang, "I understand that you have done your best, I saw it all. But the elder patient is in the bed all by himself. A one minute delay on your part would be a whole hour in his mind. When the family member of the patient had the feeling that his care was ignored, can you blame him for their reaction?" As Yu-Fang pondered, I added, "Your performance is excellent all these times. But today, you suddenly forgot that you are a nurse and became emotional." My analysis first calmed Yu-Fang down. This way she was able to carefully figure out what she did wrong during the incident. I then added my words of encouragement, so that she would not give up nursing because of a temporary setback.

### **Caring like a Family Member, The Power of Love**

In 2016, a traffic accident victim, Hsiao Bo, entered our emergency unit with severe injuries. His internal organs were exposed and his life was in danger. With the expert care of our medical team, his life was saved. However, the first thing he said after awakening was, "I want to die!" We first gave Hsiao Bo a series of psychological treatments to calm him down. Then, I asked a family member to bring him his cell phone. We hoped that in doing so the interaction with friends and from viewing videos, we could divert his attention. Hopefully, that would arouse his desire to live.

Yu-Fang treated Hsiao Bo like a family member. When she learned that Hsiao Bo was depressed and lost his will to live, she was affected emotionally. One day, when a nurse was dressing Hsiao Bo, she noticed that he was holding on the cards. The nurse thought that the cards must be sent from his girlfriend. It turned out that it was signed by Yu-Fang, and was hand made by her. I was so moved by this act of Yu-Fang. Because Yu-Fang's father had been hospitalized and she realized what a patient's need lying on a hospital bed.

When Hsiao Bo inquired about his release date, Yu-Fang asked me, "What else can I do for him?" I suggested that she could design a personal calendar for him. This way he could record on the days when someone gave him a special treat; and also record some encouraging words said to him. These would provide him a purpose to survive.



Yu-Fang made a diary style calendar with a big red heart on the front cover plus the words 'We Love You'. When it was delivered to Hsiao Bo, he was in a coma because of a stroke due to bacterial infections.

When Hsiao Bo awoke from the coma for the first time, the whole nursing staff was very excited; his family was also very joyful. Yet because of his abdominal and legs wounds were too huge, and without the protection of skin, bacterial infections gradually invaded his entire body. He fell into coma again. He never woke up again! The turn of event was very hard to accept by the family. Hsiao Bo's mother is a Tzu Chi Commissioner. It was heartbreaking to see her son passing. Fellow Tzu Chi volunteers comforted her and told her, "Let go of him, let him go free and easy." With tears, the mother finally signed the agreement to stop all life-supporting devices. This way, Hsiao Bo would leave and reincarnate, and come back as a lovely little living bodhisattva.

At the last moment, the entire nursing staff was doing our best for his terminal care. When we sincerely blessed Hsiao Bo and deeply gave him a final bow, Yu-Fang rushed into the ICU ward crying and in tears. I fully realized the feeling of a fresh nurse confronting a sudden death. At the moment, I offered my words of wisdom to her, "Life is impermanent. He leaves at a young age. Hopefully, he will return fast. You did what you could for him, both physically and mentally. It's not because of your poor performance that caused his death. You should have no regret. He should appreciate your care and your support. As medical personnel, your duty is to comfort the family of the diseased. We should learn from what happened so we will do a better job next time when facing similar situation, so that patients will be better served."

### **Pleasure seeing progress, teaching with motherly love**

Being a mother of two, one in the third grade and the other in the fourth, sometimes I am too busy and have no time to take care of my own. I would recall the days when my mom was too busy to take care of me. I would ask myself, "Do I have to do what my mother did to me? Do I have to send my kids to their uncle's home?" Then, the words of Dharma Master Cheng Yen came to my mind. She said, "Take good care of your family before you do anything else. This way, your job is more acceptable to your family." So, I would spend as much time as I could with my children. Besides, I would give the kind of love to my junior nurses and watch them mature.

The job pressure is tremendous working in the Tzu Chi Hospital because of the extremely high demand and expectation from the general public. The younger nurses all come from different families and having different views of career growth. Also, it is very





**Kang Fang-Yu (left) witnessed the hard work of Chang Yu-Fang opening the mind of patient Hsiao Bo. Kang wish Yu-Fang can transfer her grief into a source of energy as Hsiao Bo departed.**

difficult to satisfy all the patients and their families. Young nurses are often frustrated when they think that they have done their best, but the other sides are still not satisfied. The only words I could offer would be to try to think the way the patients and their families do, and do not forsake the principles of nursing.

Soon, I will complete 20 years of nursing. Whenever I am down, I always recite the words from Master Cheng Yen's Aphorisms, "Medicine Buddha Sutra", and "The Sutra of Infinite Meaning". The experience Yu-Fang gained from Hsiao Bo let me witness her professional growth. I see her maturity in interacting with patients and their families. I am so proud to see her change.

As for my own growth, I keep reminding myself to spend more time with my children and treat my junior nurses with motherly love. I would patiently transfer my nursing experience to them so they can perfect their nursing careers.



# Inseparable Fate

**Ku Chi-Chia, RN, Ward 8A, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital**



My father passed away when I was in the first grade. Immediately after this misfortune, the family was in financial hardship. This was how we started to contact the Tzu Chi organization. When I was growing up, I constantly had a negative attitude, just because I was in a single parent family. My mood swung from the peak to the bottom so frequently, but more often in the negative side. All this changed under the guidance of Tzu Chi volunteers. They provided me with love and positive energy. Slowly, they turned a negative thinking child into a positive and energetic young person.

**Ku Chi-Chia (right) met Mummy Chen Li-Fen (left) during the Water Repentance Sutras program.**





**As a student Goodwill Ambassador participating in the Water Repentance Sutras program, Ku Chi-Chia appreciated all the care and guidance of the Tzu Chi volunteers.**

I was blessed to start a happy life, because I discovered Tzu Chi.

As I entered Tzu Chi, and got familiar with the organization, I spent most of my time in the Jing Si Bookstore and Café where I worked and studied as a volunteer. I stayed there whenever I was in a high mood or in a low mood. I found love and care in the Bookstore & Café, and it smoothed my rebellious days during my junior high years.

Maybe it's my Buddhist fate; I entered Hualien Tzu Chi College of Technology (now Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology). I was not comfortable with it at the beginning, and insisted to go back to my home in Fengyuan. The elder Tzu Chi volunteer who provided counseling to our family for a long time found out the situation and contacted the Director of the Humanity Department. The Director is a very sharp person. When I was in a bad mood, I often go to the Humanity Department and looked for advice from the elder sisters. When the Director noticed my sad expression, she would first lecture me for a short time and then delivered positive advice for my improvement. She knew that I was timid, lacked self-confidence, and seldom interacted with friends. Based on these observations, the Director assigned me the role of a goodwill ambassador. As a goodwill ambassador, I must participate in children's play in Malaysia, sign language performance, international culture exchange activities. The assignments really opened my mind and entered a new world of life.



Once I opened up, my participations were not only limited to school activities. I joined volunteer groups for community services to enrich my personal life. The first year when I started my community services, Tzu Chi also started the performance of Water Repentance Sutras. This was a wonderful opportunity for my personal growth. Through my participation in the program, I had a true realization of the Buddhism and dharma. I also met many elder volunteers and among them I got to know my “Mom”, as I am now call her.

The goodwill ambassador program opened up my mind. However, I still could not let-go many complaints concerning my family. At times, when I was bothered by my personal problems, Mom would patiently listen to me. Until one time, when she had enough of my repeat complaints, she said to me angrily, “You must change yourself; you must let-go your problems from inside your mind. If you still resist solving your own problems, please do not call me again.” That was the first time somebody talked to me like that. That was a severe warning that no one can solve my problem, but myself. That advice forced me to change, to be independent. From that time on, I decided to change the way I face my family problem. Now, the only thing I would do is just to wish my family members well.





After my graduation from college, I was assigned to start my career at the Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. It was a totally new environment with unfamiliar assignments, which involve the issues of life and death routinely. At the beginning, I felt tremendous pressure from my job. Luckily, there were many senior Tzu Chi volunteers around me. They offered timely love and care to relieve my work pressure and warm consultations to adjust my work altitude. One of the senior staffs once told me, "When you are confronted with problems, you should view things from a different angle. That way, you may see totally different things. A good nurse takes good care of her patients and releases them in good shape, which is the perfect situation. However, if she could take good care of a terminally ill patient and ease the patient's passing, she is doing the real nursing." This advice changed my thinking about nursing and had become the source of my energy to go on my nursing career. Now, I have no regrets in my nursing profession. I enjoy it.

Now that I have my happy life and sweet family, I can't stop looking back. I remember all the help I received from all the noble people. I can't stop thanking all the elegant persons that made footprints in my youthful day. I can't stop thinking to pay back through serving my patients and through enthusiastically participate in volunteer services.

Now, whether I work as a nurse or as a volunteer, I will serve people with all I have just to make people happy and safe. I like to see families grow prosper, patients smile happily. As I become more mature I have grown from a recipient to a giver. I enjoy the current feeling of a fortunate, happy and satisfactory life. Life may not have started with an easy pitch; however, an experienced batter can hit whatever ball he (she) gets. I hope to contribute to everyone development.



**Ku Chi-Chia and her "Mom", Kao Yang Ah-Kuan.**





PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, DEAR TEACHER

# A LIFE TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE NURSING CLASSES





“The dust explosion at the Formosa Fun Coast turned my life upside-down in an instant, messed up all that I have planned for myself. Was it a melancholic song of lament, or was it merely an odd note in my life’s movement, been overturned like that. With a change of thought, I understood that the only way to pass this class on life education was by facing this impermanence head on with adamant resolution, to be a phoenix reborn in the midst of fire. I wish to compose a inspirational chapter in my life to dedicate it to all those who saved me, protected me, cared for me, and supported me along the way.”

When impermanence in life befalls, no matter how many whys, ifs, and buts cannot change anything. That is what I have learnt about life, the insignificance of human beings. Although I was fortunate to receive a second chance thanks to the ceaseless effort of the medical team for over a month, the loss of limb functions, impairment in physical performance, and the endless waves of overwhelming pain and itch all made me realized of the merciless tests that lies yet ahead, and that I have to face them one by one. After having some time to contemplate, I finally thought it through. Instead of enduring the torment helplessly, as a nursing student, I should cherish the opportunity of role reversal, examine myself as if I am my own mentor, concentrating on the suffering, strengthen my belief, to overcome whatever challenges that lie ahead and complete the mission I have been given.

### **First-hand Experience of Burn Treatment**

Rinse, remove, soak, cover, send are the five-step treatment for burn patient that is so fundamental that all nursing students should know by heart. However, at the time of the accident, I was so concerned with the risk of bacterial infection and viral transmission that I surrendered the chance of soaking myself in the only pool in the theme park with water. In the two hours of waiting for an ambulance, I rejected the cooling measures of the medical responders, because was in such a pain from the burns that any slight contact is devastating. A radical decision that defied the very essence of burn treatment was perhaps the reason why my wound was so serious.

I shall always remember, particularly once I begin my nursing career, to strictly abide by every single medical protocol, to provide the best and appropriate medical care to my patients.

Chamber syndrome requires tendon resection, a surgical procedure I had read in textbooks once and did not completely understand as to what it entails. After this injury, I remembered how my hands and legs swelled like balloons, and the doctors performed this surgery to reduce the swelling. I only learnt way after the fact that a delayed resection may lead to amputation.



## Coming to Terms with Who I Am

I had just finished my internship in the plastic surgery ward of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital before the accident. I remember that a classmate of mine had a burn patient under her care. Although the patient appeared to have no significant impairment in terms of physical function, only a bit depressed. I thought at the time that burn injuries were limited to the skin, regularly dressings was all it need to recover.

Only after the accident, did I come to a painful realization that there was nothing simply about it. I could tell when the dressing round began in the ICU by listening to the screams that shook the room, and that was when fear began to grip my heart. The textbooks did not teach me much about burn injury, so I had no grasps of what it entails. Removing skins from head to patch up skins on limbs was something I had never heard of, ever. I only knew that a piece of skin is removed to patch another, wounds has to be rinsed over and over, and that pain medication has to be administered on daily basis just to relief that pain by a little. I never knew the profound consequences of burn injury. I thought it was just like all the minor burns I have endured in the past, where a simple dressing would suffice, and the skin would recover over time. Only after the accident did I realize that the scars on my body caused by the explosion will never return to what it was before. In future, my skins may be rid of the scars, but it would be wrinkled and inflexible. Skins that have endured serious burn injuries may not be able to perspire, which can lead to poor regulation of body temperature. I feel as if my limbs are insensitive to outside temperature; on the contrary, my body is often fairly hot or cold. I am a frequent victim of heat stroke in summertime, and my body freezes during winter days. As hard as it is, these are difficulties that I have to get accustomed to.

## Regain Mobility Through Rehabilitation

I always thought that syringes are tools to inject medication and draw blood, not knowing the range of its application is so much wider, like draining annoying blisters, for example. After skin recovers, there is a period of blistering, and rehabilitation also causes blisters to appear one after another. That was when I discovered that syringe has a addition function to the ones described in a textbook.

I did not know that, after a burn injury, rehabilitation is required to regain the physical activity of a normal person. It seems only natural that one would regain mobility once would recovers. And now, I am in constant struggle with scars, constantly rehabilitating. I still recall my first rehabilitation session. I could not believe all these simple actions can be so grueling and painful. I felt weak and pathetic, not knowing how long it would take for me to regain my mobility. A year has gone by, I am satisfied that I am capable of completing most of the daily







**Peng Wen-Yu resumed her academic life, and shared her experience with new nursing students on Sept. 8, 2016. Group photo taken after the sharing.**

chores. And I know, even after I pushed myself to the limit with rehabilitation, I still have to face reconstruction surgery.

### **Empathetic Towards Suffering of Disease**

“Be empathetic towards your patient” seems to be a point that is emphasized in the first year of nursing school. I still remember the days laying inside the ICU. The stomach discomfort was so excruciating that I often cried out in pain and cursed those around me. That was when I understood why patients can be irrational under extreme discomfort. The nurses who took care of me, however, always consoled me patiently, finding ways to ease my stomach ache. Such a empathetic attitude soothed me almost instantly. However, I was also deeply troubled and conflicted for a long time because of a line someone dropped on me: “you studied nursing yourself, so why are you so uncooperative?”

The experience reminded me of a patient assigned to me who required primary nursing during my internship. He ignored me completely at first, but after he grew familiar to me, he began to vent his emotions, and even curse at me. At that instant I was perplexed, mixed with anger, thinking who gave him the right to throw a tantrum. I pretended to calm his rage, while underneath I had my own fair share of curses. This role reversal gave me insight on how to be empathetic towards those tormented by illnesses.

### **Treasure Every Moment**

The pressure I endured during my internship left me sleepless. I had to accept heavy criticisms from my seniors and instructors during the day, and wrapping up mountains of



papers in the night. My body was practically in a constant state of fatigue. Every time when I saw a patient lying on bed, I was envious. "How wonderful it must be to be able to rest comfortably on a bed," I thought. I could not be more wrong. No one would want to live out their lives bedridden unless they were forced to by some conditions. The discomfort and helplessness caused by illnesses is beyond mere fatigue. So, I have to cherish every moment, and to face the rest of my life with positive thinking.

I was quite dissatisfied with the way I look before the accident. I often told my friends and families that "I would definitely go have a plastic surgery when I save up enough money, to elevate my nose and slim my cheeks." With my face partially burned, I had gone through several rounds of painful scar removing treatments. As effective as it may be, deep down inside, I could not be more satisfied to regain the look I once had. We should cherish the look our parents gave us, and instead working on cultivating our inner self that will manifest as beauty and elegance.

### **From Courage Comes Faith**

I was rebellious once, always questioning the group's mainstream values, and even more so while I was studying in TCUST (Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology). I have learnt a lot since then. Before the accident, my instructor Kao Hsia-Tzu was protective and tolerant towards me; after the accident, she took every opportunity to visit me at Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital by traveling all the way from Hualien. I know, judging by the look her face, that it pained her dearly when she saw me in my condition.

After the accident, instructor Lo Shu-Fen, who had a background in burn care, came to my side right away, accompanied me on the ambulance, helped me with the transfer, and



**In the middle of July, 2016, volunteer Lin Chia-Li from the performers' association invited Peng Wen-Yu to encourage a patient in Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital to overcome the disease.**





*Life is a Journey* <sup>Pitu</sup>  
 停留\*呼吸着不同的空气



Peng Wen-Yu expressed her gratitude to Kao Hsia-Tzu, Lo Shu-Fen, and Hsueh Ting-Yuan for their love and care, and to her parents for their unconditional support and company. The photo showed Peng Wen-Yu's sharing a photo of her parents and Sister Lin Chia-Li on Facebook. Before the accident, Peng Wen-Yu was dissatisfied with the way she looked. Now, she understand the importance of pressure garment, and is in no rush to remove the scars.

was there for me as I transitioned from critical acute phase to the painstaking rehabilitation phase. She told me that she would be by my side for as long as it takes. She drove my fear away.

As I waited helplessly in the ICU for dressing, instructor Hsueh Ting-Yuan appeared in a familiar Tzu Chi uniform and drove away the coldness in the room. When I began to learn to walk again, she took my cane away, forced me to take steps on my own, and that is how I am able to walk steadily today.

I have felt the care and concern from the Tzu Chi family, so I have been thinking about how to reciprocate the second chance this society has given me. In a fateful encounter, I am invited by Sister Chia-Li from DaAi T.V. to serve in the hospital as volunteers. By sharing my experience after the ordeal with those who are in the middle of their suffering and struggle, I hope to bring them a little bit of courage and support, to show them that withered flowers can bloom again, if one would only try and never forfeit.

**On June 27, 2015, one Saturday night, 508 young people were injured when fire ripped through crowds at a party at an amusement park outside Taiwan's capital Taipei. Peng Wen-Yu was one of the burnt victims.**





**From Teacher Kao:**

# A BETTER YOU

**Kao Hsia-Tzu, Instructor, Dept. of Nursing, Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology**

The Wen-Yu I know has always been positive, cheerful, and courageous. Rehabilitation after burn injury is long and difficult, but Wen-Yu tackled it valiantly. She is always persistent in her conviction, no matter how painful it may be, all to become “a better Wen-Yu.” As a matter of fact, I have already seen the “better” her when she stepped out of her room to cheer every single burn patient in the ward and soothe their anxiety, and doing this while enduring an immense pain of her own. After she was discharge, she spread that same positivity by sharing her personal experience to anyone and everyone who is willing to listen

In Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology (TCUST), the instructors take care of their students as if their own. Seeing Wen-Yu in her condition pains the entire school. Surprisingly, however, it was she who comfort the grief of those who came to cheer her up. This incredible mindfulness of her, I believe, partly came from an actualization on life from the traumatic experience, and mostly because of the influence her parents gave her as members of Tzu Chi.

After going through the pain and agony of been a patient herself, Wen-Yu wishes to pick nursing as her career choice and to use her empathy on every patient she encounter. The will she possesses is admirable. Wen-Yu, you are the best!









**From Teacher Hsueh:**

# BLESSING TO A NEW LIFE

**Hsueh Ting-Yuan, Instructor, Dept. of Nursing, Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology**

I first met Wen-Yu when I arrived at the ICU of Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital to lend an extra pair of hands. I had rehearsed many times on what to say to her when we meet. When I saw her wrapped in gauze, leaving only eyes and lips visible, I could only but smile at her, hoping it would bring some comfort. On the very next day, Wen-Yu was transferred from the ICU and to a general ward.

Burnt skins or transplanted skins will produce great number of scar tissues that are inflexible and constantly tightening. To preserve the golden time for rehabilitation, I visited Wen-Yu every afternoon to get off her bed and start rehabilitating. That eventually grew into an unspoken understanding between she and I.

All I could do was to provide companionship and encouragement day after day, stand by her as she overcomes sleepiness, endures the inconvenience and discomfort from the pressure garment and splints, withstands the tremendous pain and itch from her wounds, and exerts herself to always take that extra step. Throughout the entire ordeal, not only did Wen-Yu kept her optimism intact, she encouraged other burn patients to rehabilitate with her, so that everyone could be discharged early and return to their lives and dreams. That tremendous positivity inspired others to face the challenge of the tormenting rehabilitation, and heartened families with complex emotions and us medical staffs who cared for them.



Although the time I spent with Wen-Yu lasted only 10 days, I was truly impressed by her bright and sunny disposition towards life. I believe that this extracurricular activity and the challenges that came with it has given her an opportunity to summon enough strength and courage to turn a tragic accident into a rewarding experience. There is no doubt in my mind that she will one day light the world in her own ways.







**From Teacher Lo:**

# DECIPHER THE CODE OF LIFE

**Lo Shu-Fen, Associate Professor, Dept. of Nursing, Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology**

A set of numbers, 0627, is a password that Wen-Yu and I shared, a set of numbers that had intertwined our fates that would otherwise be parallels.

## **First Intersection - Immediate Care and Companionship**

On the night of June 27, 2015, reports on the dust explosion accident at Formosa Fun Coast flooded the T.V. channels. I thought at the time as just another incident similar to the gas explosion in Kaohsiung, an industrial safety incident. On the 28th, I was overwhelmed by a sense of uneasiness out of nowhere, and decided to end the ISBI (International Society for Burn Injury) conference early. On the way from Kaohsiung to Hualien, an emergency alert from the nursing staff group popped up on my phone, notifying me that a student was injured in the accident and was transported to the Chung Hsing branch of Taipei City Hospital. I was closest to Taipei and had many years of experience in burn injury, so I volunteered to visit Wen-Yu, the injured student.

When I arrived at the hospital, many of the Tzu Chi volunteers were there to accompany the family members waiting anxiously outside the ICU. I was discussing Wen-Yu's condition with her and the possibility of subsequent transfer. I am grateful to the hospital for allowing me to visit Wen-Yu in the ICU, so I can base the decision on her condition. At first glance, I noticed that her injured sites had swollen to 1.5 times its normal size; the dressings were detached due to the excruciating pain and discomfort; and the charred hair covered with rainbow-colored clots. "Do you recognize



me? I am teacher Shu-Fen,” I asked. “Can you change my dressing for me, teacher Shu-Fen, it hurts so much,” she cried in pain. I calmed her down with the nurses while realizing that immediate transfer was necessary for her to receive the best possible care. It was then I received the news that Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital was willing to arrange a bed for Wen-Yu even though the hospital was practically full. This dharma kinship among the Tzu Chi family, I believe, is the perfect nourishment for major trauma.

### **Second Intersection: Hospital Transfer**

“You cannot leave,” Wen-Yu’s mother said to me. “Can you accompany us in the ambulance to Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital?” “I looked at Wen-Yu’s







parents as they suppressed their stress and grief, standing strong for Wen-Yu in the midst of this tragic accident, and decided to undertake the role of the ambulance nurse to communicate the patient's condition and status to the receiving hospital. When Wen-Yu saw her father for the first time after the accident, she said naively, "it hurts so much, I want a cosmetic surgery after I recover." "Just rest for now, I will take you when you are well," said her dad. As laborious as rehabilitation may be for burn patients, a strong family support is the best formula to overcoming predicament.

### **Third Intersection Serving Burn Patients**

Because of Wen-Yu, my thought on servicing burn patients rekindled. Due to the fact that very little information on burn rehabilitation care were available home and abroad, Wen-Yu's parents allowed me into their home to bath and dress Wen-Yu and gain firsthand knowledge the predicament they were facing, so I could moderate the care model in accordance to empirical data. With a profound experience of scar prevention in wound care, I co-led 30 nursing students with instructor Tseng Chiung-Chen to the New Taipei City Chapter of Sunshine Social Welfare Foundation and serviced over 100 patients over half a year. Not only did our service relief the pressure of the foundation's staffs, it allowed the patients' wound to recover rapidly.

### **Fourth Intersection E-Books and Training**

With the experience of caring for Wen-Yu and her family combined with the care model I developed at the Sunshine Social Welfare Foundation, I was placed in charge in the production of the professional and the public version of the electronic book on burn rehabilitation care. With empirical theory as foundation, combined with the nursing experience of intensive rehabilitation for burn care, the e-books can improve the quality of burn care in the future and reduce stress on family caregivers.

The code 0627 has tied many lives together. We have watched you from fearing of pressure garment, fearing the gaze of others, to innovate the design of pressure garment; from fearing crowds and sharing with crowds; from facing the tragedy alone to working close with others on healing the mental wounds. The code is something that we cannot reverse, so why not take this code and turn it into strength to raise awareness on burn patient care!