



PLEASE LISTEN TO M.G. DEAR HEAD NURSE

SA I CE LEN (All-Out),

Kaliting !



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In the legend of the Amis tribe, “Kaliting” means a hard working girl. My aboriginal name is Kaliting, which is inherited from my grandmother, a blessing from my family. I am a 21 years old nurse and my name is Lin Yu-Mei in Han’s language. Since my graduation from the Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology (TCUST) nursing school on August, 2016, I have been working in the Internal Intensive Care Unit over 5 months.

The reason I chose nursing as my career is because of my junior high classmates and family. I had vague ideas about nursing. I felt nurses are nice people and their jobs simply give patients injections and do not deal with difficult issues. After I entered this field, I realized how difficult it really was.

I had a very good friend who was admitted into TCUST nursing school. I decided to follow her. I registered to take the examination under my own will. I didn’t consult with my family but they respected my decision. I did not get in the first year but was successful the following year. My family always said to me, “Kaliting, wherever you decide to go, then go there. We support whatever decision you make, SA I CE LEN!” SA I CE LEN is our tribe’s phrase meaning “Going All-out”. To me, those were the simplest and strongest encouraging words.

My brothers also said, “Kaliting, you chose the right path. At least, you have stable and steady income in comparison to our family members.”

After graduating from the required five years study and vocational training, I chose to work at Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. My school internship at Hualien TCH were all in the external medicine departments. So while being recruited, my first priority was the Surgical Intensive care Unit(SICU) or Medical Intensive Care Unit(MICU) as the second choice. Because of the increasing need of MICU, I was asked to transfer to the unit.

Leaning by the Loose-Leaf Method

“Are you used to it?” I was asked often by my seniors during the first five months. I really didn’t know how to answer this question. My biggest problem is my poor memory. Often, I forgot what they had taught me and couldn’t recall a thing. Since my graduation, other than suctioning to rid patients’ phlegm and administering medicine, I didn’t remember much regarding special attention to different diseases. In addition to the new medical information system, severe illness training, there was so much to learn. I was not used to this environment.

Moreover, I always spoke my mind without thinking. For example, I had “A” in my



mind, but I would say “Y” or “Z”. Thus, they often asked, “Do you really mean this?” I really didn’t mean it, but I couldn’t organize my thoughts clearly. To express what’s really in my mind and how to react faster are my biggest challenge.

Finally, I improved under the guidance of Head Nurse Chen Huei-Lan “loose-leaf learning method.” The “loose-leaf learning method” starts with recording all of the patients’ information on a loose-leaf paper: from a patient’s admission to the hospital, the IV situation, the condition of that day, the medicines administered; and then reviewing and correcting the information afterward. I would add the new information on another loose-leaf page, review it daily, and add new information as necessary. This method helps me tremendously. Whenever I encounter similar patients, I could review this loose-leaf notebook. It is my secret weapon.

Be a Standardized Nurse

In these five months, other than practicing, I became a standardized nurse. It was a pure coincidence. I remember one night watching TV in the dormitory. Since the next day was a holiday, so I decided to watch TV shows all I wanted. Unexpectedly, I received a phone call from the hospital: “Yu-Mei, are you free tomorrow?” “Yes,” I answered. So, I became a standardized nurse without knowing what it means. I only knew they needed someone to role-play. Therefore, I participated without hesitation and a half-hearted feeling.

I am no stranger to acting, I love acting. When I was in school, I participated at a service club called “Youngman rocket dream team.” I was in charge of the show and wrote a series of plays. When I was the host, I knew exactly what I had to say and was able to react in ad-hoc situation. The club also performed for the children and I was a screen writer assisting the other team members in acting. Thus, I was comfortable and not stressed to act.

Later on, I realized that a standardized nurse has to act like a junior staff to role-play with senior members in the SICU. When I was doing the play, it was the lowest point of my career. Thus, it helped me to understand myself, express my feelings. I really acted how I felt in my real life. The senior members gave me a lot of positive feedbacks that helped me later in patient-care.

“What were my difficult encounters back then?” I actually had forgotten most of them. I only remember something like, “I am leaving the unit. I don’t want to do it anymore.” I was miserable for a period of time. During that time, there were five of us who left the unit because of extreme stress. They were unable to adapt the environment and heavy study at the same time. I constantly had the thought of leaving the unit.



When I first joined the unit, I was often questioned with these comments: “Why do you do shift change this way?” “Is this your attitude coming to work?”

I was really hurt. I know attitude determines how I do things. But I did my best to take care of patients. In the end, I was always criticized with these sharp words: “Too random, with no good attitude.” I was defeated. I started to have doubts about myself. “Is nursing for me? Should I do something else? What do I really want to do?” I had many unanswered questions. I was very puzzled.

Then, one day, I told myself, “Ok, I can’t be like this again, I am going to challenge myself today. If I fail again, then I will quit!” Actually, it was only a month since I started my job, I was always stressed and I didn’t know the challenge ahead of me.

However, to my surprise, that day went unexpectedly smooth. Since then, I told myself, “I want the challenge, I want the challenge! Go all-out, Yu-Mei!” I challenged myself every day and completed all my assignments.

Probation Extended

When the two-month probation period was nearly over, I discussed with Head Nurse Chen to extend my probation because I felt like I wasn’t ready to be on my own. I was scared to cause harm to patients. Four months later, I began to work



independently. I was really nervous at first but that day went smoothly. The patient’s condition was not too serious and didn’t need intubation. The patient’s condition was stable, and I gained confidence to strike out on my own.

Prior to that time, I always had senior colleagues to lean on. Being independent, I had to do everything myself with no one to discuss issues. Luckily, when I did have questions, they were more than happy to help. I have poor memory. I would hesitate first and asked myself if I should ask them. After they realized my dilemma, they told me, “Even if you are scolded, you should still ask. You are still very junior. So, don’t be afraid to ask questions!” Therefore, it gave me great confidence to ask questions.

The Power of Charging

Some patients gave me strength because of their good intention. I remember one day I was yelled at by a hysterical family member. Suddenly, this family patient was behaving erratically, waving his hands and legs so I had to immediately attend to him. As soon as I came to him, this patient became normal. He just wanted to distract his family member giving me an earful. After a few days, his breathing tube was removed and the first thing he said to me was, "I know it's hard on you, but stay positive, go all-out." I was really touched.

I felt lucky to know my native tribal language, because I could converse with those patients who speak only the Amis language. They all called me "Kaliting". Some old grandmas would ask, "How come you haven't eaten? Where are you going to eat?" I answered, "Yes, we have food over there." Some of them were not giving up, and would say, "Please eat my food." I would say, "Oh, no." I felt so warm from these gestures of patients.

When I first started the job, everything was strange to me. I went to work at dawn from 7 am, and finished till dark for two months. With the nurture of my superiors and colleagues, I can now control my time and progress. Thus, I could go home by 6 pm. I feel my improvement. I remember one day when I opened my cabinet and found a stamp carved with my name. It was a gift from a clinical senior member. I never forgot that joyful feeling - an appreciation. I smiled that whole day.

Coming home is my biggest source of energy to recharge myself. I like to ride my scooter running against the sea breeze with a view of the blue Pacific Ocean. It normally takes an hour of biking to get back to Fengbin, my home tribe. As soon as I see my family, I feel all is worthwhile. It is worth it to be back and forth in a day. At least, I go home and see my grandmother. She is already 90 with a hunchback and walks with a cane. She is in good health, and can yell at us loudly.

I talk in my native tongue with mom and grandmother. All my stress is gone that day. Grandma never speaks to me like a parent. She always listens to me quietly and says, "SA I CE LEN". To me, these are the simplest yet encouraging words.

I am a Kaliting, every morning when I get up, I say to myself "SA I CE LEN!" Stepping in the work unit, I say "SA I CE LEN!" This sounds silly, but I believe I can challenge myself and conquer this nursing job by working hard. SA I CE LEN, Kaliting!