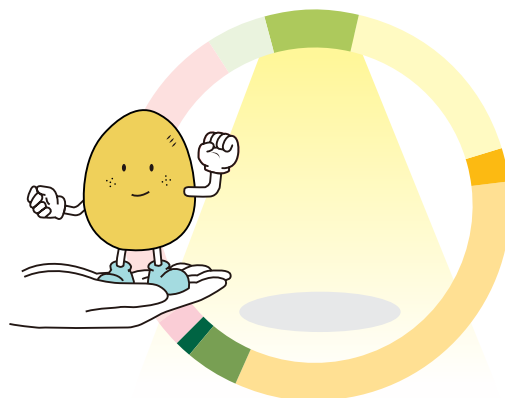




# Be Brave for Your Loved Ones



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

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

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

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





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

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

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

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

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

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

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