

Learn through Doing and Awaken through Learning

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It's been 21 years since I graduated from the National Defense Medical School. During these years in addition to practicing medicine, I also devoted myself to the research of "The mechanism of infection by drug resistance bacteria and septicemia treatments". After obtaining my Ph.D. degree from the National Defense Medical School in 2017, I then went to Japan's Keio University in July 2019 as a visiting researcher in the departments of Emergency and Critical Care units to promote the international medical research exchange and patient care.

During my first year as a resident in the hospital, the outbreak of SARS occurred in Taiwan. So I decided to specialize in infectious disease. After 17 years, the world again is in this pandemic. In the year 2020, COVID-19 first appeared in Taiwan, and I was the chairman in the negative pressurized and isolation ward in the Tri-Service General Hospital. Luckily, those COVID and severe patients all recovered from the hospital. Our colleagues were able to survive this ordeal.

In March 2021, I switched to work in Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital. Two months later, the New Taipei City became a disastrous area with COVID-19 patients. Located in the New Taipei City, Taipei Tzu Chi



Hospital set up five specialized wards for the COVID-19 patients and I was assigned to look after them. Frankly, there were so many patients that I felt I couldn't take good care of them at all. Among the first batch admitted, there was one elderly patient with chronic disease from Won-Hua area, his condition changed rapidly. The most difficult and invisible condition of COVID-19 victims is the lack of oxygen, so-called "happy hypoxia". As a matter of fact, these patients were not happy at all and seemed like suffering from a lack of oxygen for a long time and were not comfortable for a few days. But they didn't realize that their lungs were seriously infected. If they didn't go see doctors or were treated in a timely manner, they would become those "sudden death" cases as people learned in the news.

During this pandemic, we the infectious disease doctors could only

devote our best to fight with the virus. Among those patients, there was one pregnant woman who impressed me the most. She was 32 weeks pregnant when she was sent to our hospital with serious pneumonia. It was 2 am after midnight, I and Dr. Huang Su-Cheng, Vice-Chair of OB/GYN, rushed to the hospital, but her condition deteriorated too fast, we had urgent cross-team meetings of infectious disease, OB/GYN, pediatric, and OR held an emergency meeting, and also communicated with her husband via video conferencing, and reached the consensus to perform a cesarean section.

With corporation from everyone, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital successfully performed the cesarean session. After the surgery, the new mother was admitted to the intensive care unit with intubation, the premature baby was sent to negatively pressurized incubator for observation. In order to encourage the new mother, the nursing staff recorded her words to the baby prior to the operation to play for the baby later. They also recorded the baby's movement in the negatively pressurized room on the computer and played for the mother in the intensive care unit. These showed how this team's caring for the patients. After a while, the mother and baby left the hospital. When they returned for checkups, they brought the special products from their hometown to share with the hospital staff to celebrate the baby's one-month-old birthday.

Although, we have seen so many separations between loved ones in life or



death, the feeling of saving this COVID-19 infected mother and tiny baby's life was very touching and gave tremendous encouragement to our team. I have been in this hospital for more than half a year, As a doctor, I felt not only we should plan and devise a good environment to be zero tolerance for infection, also should have more self-expectation – like being merciful and giving kindness to provide better care to patients.

The situation of the COVID-19 pandemic was very severe, but I felt the contentment, appreciation, consideration, and tolerance from this experience. Everyone is equal when it comes to the disease. In Taiwan, we have the great epidemic prevention system and with cooperation of people, our medical system remains intact, and our daily life is returning to normal gradually. Master Cheng Yen had constantly reminded us to be “cautious and sincere” which is also what I have learned during this pandemic. As a front line doctor, I often reminded myself with these words. On the other hand, it also reminded me about the relationship between human and nature, and to face daily life and environment with respect and appreciation.