



The Precious Companionship of Tzu Chi Parents

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For a long time, “volunteers” have been a major characteristic of Tzu Chi Hospital seen by the world. Tzu Chi volunteers regard Tzu Chi Hospital as their home and take turns to “go home” to do their duties. My first impression of Tzu Chi was not the blue shirts and white pants, but Tzu Chi volunteers in blue shirts and “blue” pants!

That was August 8, 2009, the Morakot 88 Typhoon, and I still remember it vividly. Two days of heavy rain caused serious flooding in the south, and aboriginal villages were severely damaged by landslides. Fortunately, my hometown was flooded only to one story high, and our entire home was not destroyed. When flooding receded, everywhere was covered with mud as far as I could see. The original gray asphalt road was covered with mud overnight. This disaster had deeply affected the hearts of the local villagers. How could such a home be restored?

Immediately, a group of Tzu Chi volunteers in blue shirts and blue trousers appeared, and I felt the thousand hands started moving! Walking in the muddy soil, one could not lift the feet out. These volunteers are all older than me, some of them are old enough to be my grandpa and grandma. Even as they struggled, they worked for several days during the clean-up. They came to the disaster-stricken areas to give not only their dedication and labor, but also to comfort people in the disaster-stricken areas. They said, “We are all just raising our hands and feet to do one thing. These two hands can reach out to hug people, to comfort the world, and to embrace the



suffering: “Don’t be afraid, don’t be afraid.” This is my first impression of Tzu Chi “volunteers. Wherever there is great difficulty, there are Tzu Chi volunteers.

During my job search, I visited Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, and I saw beautiful figures of volunteers wearing vests throughout the hospital, serving seniors who arrived at the hospital with tea and snacks to people in need, listening to patients for their pain, and gently comforting with words and smiles. The most impressive thing is that a sister said: “Don’t worry about coming to work far away, you are all my children. Don’t be afraid of being wronged in the outside world, we are your parents, and we are your strongest support.” These words



soothed my heart. I chose to take up a career at Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital, which is close to my home, because of these words.

Due to fate, I went from surgery to internal medicine ward, and I faced the same patients in the oncology department, but I felt that every cancer patient who came to the internal medicine department all had to face and endure painful treatments. In their process of fighting cancer, we must provide the most attentive care. But the time pressure could sometimes cause friction because we did not understand the intentions expressed by the other party. Whether it was between medical staff, and patients or family members, all were possible. Fortunately, we had a group of medical volunteers who understand the emotions of the patients and accompany them. They also understand the needs of our medical staff. They accompany us to grow and provide selfless care. With their backing, we can continue to provide warm-hearted care.

I have always been thinking about leaving. And now I have entered my 7th year of nursing career. Perhaps as mentor parents often say, “Giving a little more love will make hard work no longer hard work. Our love will sublimate into an invisible driving force, allowing us to face all kinds of clinical trials bravely and fearlessly.”

Recently, due to the pandemic, medical institutions have strictly controlled personnel. Medical volunteer services have also been suspended. At Tzu Chi Hospital, I have become used to the existence and the interaction with mentor aunts and uncles. They have become our right hands and left hands. Now they suddenly disappear due to the pandemic, which made us hard to adapt.

But the enthusiasm of the volunteers cannot be quenched by the pandemic. Even in the cold winter, the resident volunteer mentor aunts would visit us and ask if we eat well and warm enough. Like a mother, they worried that we might be hungry. They served us hot fragrant noodles and fruit. In such busy work, we could feel the love of mentor aunts; the most often said by the mentor aunts: “We are family.” For me, who worked away from home, such words brought me great warmth. Sometimes I felt big pressure and could not take more, I switched my thoughts. Fortunately, there were a group of medical volunteers who contribute silently. They warmed my heart and motivated me to continue working in Tzu Chi.