

A Kind-Hearted Tzu Chi Volunteer Father, Baking Cake with Blessing

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A patient visited our unit recently. To us, he is a special patient. How should I start?

He is an Yi-De Parent of our unit. (Note: I-De Parents are volunteers that take care of staff and students within the Tzu Chi organizations.) We call him Cake Dad. Cake Dad owns a bakery and provides free desserts and cakes for our gatherings. None of our medical staff could resist his sweet treats. Even though we are conscious of our bodies, everyone makes an exception when it comes to his desserts.

The day before the scheduled gathering with I-De Parents, Cake Dad was hospitalized.

Cake Dad insisted to be discharged in order to attend the gathering. Our nursing staff thought he was confused and did not mean it. After much insistence, we realized that he was serious. He would like to keep the promise even though his condition required hospitalization. He wanted to leave the hospital to dress up for the gathering and bring treats to us. His heart is always filled with selfless love for serving.

Rather quickly, his illness worsened and required a liver transplant. Unfortunately, our surgeon Doctor Yin was on leave so we decided to transfer him to another clinic for an urgent operation. The day of his transfer happened to be our I-De gathering day. Cake Dad wanted to attend the I-De gathering

before leaving our hospital despite of his worsening illness. His eyes filled with tears when he realized his conditions would not allow him. The staff and I-De Parents were all in tears. There was nothing we could do but to send our sincere blessing.

Luckily, with blessings from heaven, Cake Dad's operation was successful. After an extended rehabilitation period in the hospital, he finally recovered and was discharged from hospital. Everyone was so happy for him after hearing this good news. Cake Dad quickly resumed to his role in the I-De 9A team. During our





first gathering, he had not only recovered his strength, but appeared even more spirited than before, bursting with energy.

We are so happy that Cake Dad can join us again. He brought a box of cakes for each of us. We believe the cakes are to celebrate his rebirth, and it felt fitting to sing happy birthday to Cake Dad. The lyrics and melody stay with me even now.

Because of Cake Dad, we appreciate our lives more deeply and treasure each and every day we are together. In our mind, he is a gracious person who we respect and adore. Even when his own life was in danger, all he could think of was his promise to be with us.

It is difficult to retain new nurses, especially those who are away from home. Unfortunately, I am unable to care for them like their mothers. However, I do have an even stronger and more energetic team of I-De Parents behind me. They not only take care of our nurses' stomachs, but they also care for their hearts. Even the interns in the 9A Unit enjoyed the wonderful food provided by I-De Parents.

The monthly gathering with I-De Parents has never once stopped over the past few years. I-De parents carefully prepare every dish, dessert, and plate of fruit. They keep trying new dishes and changing the decorations, in hopes of creating a feeling of home for us. We feel so much love and are amazed by their unending compassion and perseverance. We strive to serve our patients in the same way, and hope that their love and warmth is translated into our workplace.

Looking at these busy volunteers serving the patients, many people would call them fools for not spending their time enjoying themselves and buying luxury items. However, I believe the foolish ones are those who are still immersed in the pursuit of personal gain; in reality, volunteering is where true happiness lies. Those who are wealthy but do not know the joy of giving are indeed the poorest among the poor. To the I-De Parents, we are thankful for your hard work!