

# Empathetic Intelligence

**Written by: Hui-Ling Lai, editor-in-chief**

According to the 2014 data of population statistics given by the Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan population density is as high as 645.8 each person per km. Compared with the population density of all the countries in the world, Taiwan population density always ranks very high.

According to the report of the Central News Agency, Taiwan population density in 2011 ranked second in the world. Under such an environment of so many people living on scarce land, the living space for people appears narrow, which theoretically is favorable for people to communicate with each other face to face. Interesting enough, in crowded Taiwan the use of cellular phone “LINE” APP has become popular because of instant messaging.

A student arrived at the front door for a scheduled appointment. The only thing he had to do was to knock at the door to notify his teacher of his presence. Instead, he used the APP to inform his presence. Why should the use of cellular phone instant message take the place of such a simple action? In Taiwan, the attraction of such instant message cannot be neglected. With the exception of being instantaneous and free of charge, the reason for the APP’s high utilization rate is worth studying. There is another reason to explain why the utilization rate of the APP is so high that it ranks first in the world. When a person cannot express clearly his or her complicated emotion in words, a simple way of cut-and-paste or smiley face images may serve as substitute. It is not hard to understand why it has become so popular.

In Taiwan, to show one’s emotion is comparatively conservative, and by simply clicking an abundant emotional expression symbol in the APP, one can transmit that instant emotion. It is one of the reasons for its popularity.

Because of this, over ninety percent of nursing personnel prefer APP to show their moods. However, traditional ways of communication such as message boards are still available. Many hospital nursing departments are still using them.

In 2011, the members of the surgery ICU at Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital cooperated with the team resource management of the hospital to promote the measurement of message boards of the nursing persons under the leadership of the head nurse, Li Juan. Everyone can simply post a smiling face or long face on the message board to express their mood. The head nurse can understand everyone's mood of the colleagues and thus the director of the organization is able to care for and pacify the feelings of colleagues in their heart, thus putting together all the fellow workers like a family. At that time, it was really an initiative, later on TRM won second honor award.

With the popularity of APP's, the frequency for the nursing staff to use message boards has dropped. There are still message boards at some organizations but few people use them. However, people from all over the world coming to visit the college much appreciated the message boards. It is a pity not to have recorded the effect at that time or we could share it with our company

In September 2013, Fu-Mei Chang, Director of Educational Development of Tzu Chi Foundation, Nursing Directors of Dalin, Taipei, and Taichung Tzu Chi Hospitals were invited to Xiamen (China) to make an exchange visit. In the beginning of 2013, Xiamen public health bureau cooperated with Tzu Chi to set up 13 regions of experimental human care of the sick in its local hospitals. The local instructors of the experimental regions were all distinguished nursing directors. The purpose of the experimental regions was to provide patients and their family with more humane medical nursing service.

Xiamen City Women and Children Health Care hospital and Xiamen City Second hospital set up the same message boards as those in Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital's. Through the message boards, the distinguished nursing persona could care for the moods of the fellow workers. After it had been tried for a short time, the nursing staffs of the unit proved that their impatient mood became normal. Not only the nursing personal but also the medical treatment departments use them. At the nursing station, setting up such

similar message boards can let the patients post smiling faces on a magnet board of the name list of the nursing persons to show their gratitude to the medical nursing workers. After a long period of time, the atmosphere of the whole medical ward became very harmonious. The medical persons and the patients became a family. The dean of Hsia Men Second Hospital on the mutual informal discussion meeting held on the last day said, "Originally, I wanted to do something as a sample to turn over my duty to city public health bureau. Much to my surprise, after practice, the activity changes from official to substantial. Medical and nursing persons become more and more satisfied with it. In such a short period of time, the effects were beyond expectation." Apparently, the message boards at the nursing station cannot be substituted. Either interchanging message face to face or through all kinds of Apps to express emotions requires understanding and being able to offer response appropriately.

A few days ago, early in the morning, walking by National Art Gallery, on the silent, empty street, I found two women in their eighties or so walking across the street. One of them, hunchbacked, pushed laboriously a recycling car twice larger than herself. The other woman by the side, said, "On the first day of the Lunar New Year, why do you need to work? Take a holiday for yourself; otherwise people will regard you as an unfortunate person." Having finished the talk, she left, completely ignoring her human dignity in a difficult position. Judging from the appearance of the scavenger woman, it was not hard to understand her living pressure and difficult position. Above all, the talk was a criticism without concern and comprehension. After the comment, she showed her entangled face. I shouted across the street, "Only the blessed can be devoted to the work." She nodded continuously, and her face filled of smile. She insisted to refuse my help to push the car, but her face beamed as bright as the sunshine.

Human interchanging behavior requires people to look into things from a different view point. Whatever kind of ways you take, a little more understanding, inquiring, changing the atmosphere must be of great help to improve the nursing working environment. The seniors' sincere care deeply influences the willing of the practice students to take part in the work. Thus, as a nursing person, we all need to pay more attention to care for one another in the team.