

Life experience



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

We all have experiences in life that can easily cause us to become discouraged, depressed, or disappointed. It's natural in the moment to have a lack of perspective and encounter inconsistencies in self confidence, or feelings of insecurity and lack of self esteem. Acknowledging the fact that there will be times in our life that are difficult to handle, it seemed especially disconcerting that I was having these feelings on a continual basis. I understood that sometimes to overcome life's challenges, we need inspiration and motivation from someone we respect and who has experienced similar circumstances in their own life and has prevailed. I recognized that I needed a mentor or role model that exemplified those characteristics, but I just didn't have the good fortune of finding one to which I could easily relate.

In my earlier years, I dropped out of high school then ultimately obtained a GED so that I could pursue my dream of going back to school and study to become a nurse. I started in a college program, but dropped out. I'm sure my feelings of inadequacy about not being smart enough to do well in school were attributable in part to not completing high school. Additionally, I had gained more responsibility and as a result, less time to work on my own goals and objectives. I had gotten married and had children to care for, so the responsibility of managing a family and home along with making a commitment to a significant academic goal was difficult to imagine. Initially my husband was who I counted on for support and motivation. He and my children were my life and I was happy until circumstances ultimately led to a divorce. The life change and trauma of that event further reinforced my thoughts of inadequacy and I struggled with my "failure" in dealing with life. Of course, that was a foolish thought since the experience ultimately

demonstrated I had the strength to continue and to thrive regardless of his involvement, but that realization came much later.

As a result of these events in relation to where I am today, the decision to write about a woman who has influenced my life in a positive way, was an easy one. This person is my mentor and teacher, Mrs. Wong. I first met her in February of 2008 at Harbor Occupation Center. Mrs. Wong was my facilitator for a Health Unit Coordinator program I was enrolled in. She soon recognized in me an inner strength and will to succeed, but also the lack of confidence and the frustration I must have projected to everyone around me. Over time those characteristics I admire most in women were exemplified by her demeanor and her caring approach to human interaction. Without even trying, she seemed to demonstrate such attributes as a strong sense of individual self worth and a positive and success oriented outlook on life. She found out that I had been working for Delta Air for over 12 years, and although it was a good job it was not what I really wanted to do with my life. I honestly thought that there was no better future and that I was incapable of doing more. These feelings were reinforced when I became injured and was required to retrain. I still wanted to pursue my interest in nursing, but thought that a nursing degree was out of the question, so I enrolled in occupational school at Harbor Center in the Health coordinator program. That is where I had the good fortune of meeting Mrs. Wong.

After getting to know and understand me as a person, my background, and most importantly my goals, Mrs. Wong related that she had a very similar set of experiences in her life. She struggled in school with dyslexia and never thought that she was very smart. As a result she didn't pursue her college dreams until she was in her 30's. However she overcame her feeling of

inadequacies and finished her nursing degree. Initially I thought that was fine for her, but I'm in my mid 30's, have 4 children and I'm a single mother, I could never do such a thing. However, she never stopped encouraging me and helping me recognize the value of individual goals. It seemed that indeed our experiences, emotions and views of life were almost identical, so it was natural to relate to her success and value her judgment.

. As a result of her wonderful encouragement and inspiration, I am currently in a nursing degree program and working part time in a doctors' office. Mrs. Wong ultimately instilled a new confidence in my approach to life and made me feel as if I could achieve anything. She has been the single most important influence on me and I have totally embraced her enthusiasm and her positive outlook on life