

# Narrative: what area of service have you chosen as your pathway to greatness

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



A Step toward Greatness Martin Luther King Jr. said, “ Not everybody can be famous but everybody can be great because greatness is determined by service... You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love” (Foss and Foss 103). This statement supports the adage that it is not important if your great qualities do not make you famous; what is more important is acquiring greatness through sincere, compassionate service. A profession that is truly service-oriented is nursing. Nursing is all about empathy, care, and service. It deals with human aspects. Its outcome or performance is not quantifiable; it can only be measured through kindness and consideration. I am a nurse, and this is my service to the people. I agree with what Martin Luther King Jr. said. I have personally achieved this greatness through my nursing service to the elderly. I have a specific experience that I consider my first step toward greatness. This happened five years ago, when I was only an apprentice nurse. It happened in a small health facility for the elderly. It involved an old woman who was totally abandoned by her family. I was assigned to take care of her. I took care of her for almost 3 years, until the day she finally succumbed to her terminal illness. She has breast cancer. For years I have witnessed her struggle to overcome her illness. She did not lose hope, even once. She maintained a sunny disposition and inspired other patients along the way. But behind this happy facade was a resentful, disgruntled woman. She did not hesitate revealing all her frustrations to me. All our conversations were filled with anger toward her children and her husband. This old woman was a great mystery to me back then. I am surprised to see her getting along well with other people and showing cheerfulness in everything she does. All the

people around her, excluding me, knew her as a jolly, optimistic person. Little they know what really runs in her head and in her heart. She told me that she often dreamed of slaughtering her own family. Her heart was filled with revenge. She even told me that she wanted to become well again and fully recover from breast cancer so that she can get out and confront her family. This thought, according to her, kept her motivation to continue fighting her illness. But, unfortunately, she did not get better as time passed by. She only got worse every passing day. The other nurses were baffled by this outcome because they believed that she will be cured due to her positive outlook in life. I did not tell them about our conversations. I kept quiet and simply did my job. But I eventually became concerned about her, especially when I saw that her condition was really getting worse. She became bald and emaciated. Still, despite her worsening condition, she did not let go of her revengeful thoughts. I then decided to go beyond my mandated duties as a nurse. I decided to become a friend, a confidante, and an adviser. I realized that as her nurse, I have the duty to do all the things necessary to make her well again. And so I scheduled special conversations with her. I started to read books on counseling. During these special conversations, I intently listened to her ramblings about how she loathes her family, especially her children. I encouraged her to say all the things that were bothering her, especially those thoughts that she cannot overcome. After hearing all her thoughts, I encourage her to help me analyze all the bits and pieces of her negative thoughts. I asked her to reflect on these thoughts. Before ending our special conversations, I always ask her: “ What do you think is the reason why your health is getting worse?” She gives me only one

answer every time: “ Because of my ungrateful children”. After seven consecutive special conversations, I finally told her what I believe was making her condition worse. I told her my honest, sincere opinion. I told her that pretending to be someone that she was not, harboring negative, unforgiving thoughts against her loved ones, and refusing to let go of these detrimental thoughts were the reason behind her deteriorating health. As soon as she realized that I am correct, she began trying to change her point of view. She began reliving only positive memories. She began remembering all her happy experiences with her loved ones. After committing herself to this routine, we started to see positive changes in her health. She lived the remaining days of her lives with happiness and forgiveness in her heart. Nursing is not just about mindless, detached caring. It is about empathy and encouraging positive changes in people. From then on, I continued my ascent toward greatness. Work Cited Foss, Sonja and Karen Foss. *Inviting Transformation: Presentational Speaking for a Changing World*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2011. Print.