



TURNING DISABILITIES INTO ABILITIES-A NOBLE CALLING

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

My brother owns a jacket with the word DISABILITY embroidered at the back. What makes the jacket extraordinary is the way the word ABILITY has been magnified through an (embroidered) magnifying glass and the prefix "dis-" has been greatly reduced to inconsequence. Little surprise in the choice of design, since the jacket was made for physical therapists in their medical institution. Being a young physical therapist, my younger brother has had to help manage the disabilities of numerous patients, not administer massages like many people think. Such practitioners learn to transform disabilities into workable challenges for the patients they work with. I believe that's a noble calling.

Teachers have to turn their students' disabilities into skills, also. With patience, forbearance, and endless encouragement, teachers enable their students to realize their utmost potential and become the individuals that they are meant to be. A teacher needs to go beyond the apparent disability in a student to work with numbers, letters or words and work with the student to empower him to eventually gain expertise. Unless a teacher has the selfless ability to inspire learning, a student never gets adequate preparation to fully spread his wings and fly beyond his horizons. Teachers have a noble calling, too.

Wives and mothers need to have the ability to manage the household. Once a woman enters marriage, she has to be prepared to let go of the freedom to spend as she chooses because she has her family to consider as her topmost priority. Personally, the ability to budget expenses has often eluded me. These difficult times have necessitated a lot of belt-tightening in all quarters, but the desire to have my kids experience at least some form of comfortable living has also meant that the purse strings occasionally come loose and the budget goes any which way. I guess it all goes with the territory, though. What mothers can do is not to get too carried away. Money is so hard to come by these days. Motherhood is a noble calling, too.

Nurses in my country probably carry the most noble ability of all. They have the ability to render selfless service without getting paid for it. Parents of newly-licensed nurses are even more noble: they have the ability to see their kids through four years of academic life only to have them get into medical institutions that either do not pay their children enough or not pay them anything at all. Then, those noble nurses have to spend years of servitude in foreign lands, doing backbreaking work to be able to help their family back home.

Yes, the world abounds with people who work with disabilities to transform them into abilities. We can only pray that their tribes increase while their blessings pile up in heaven.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is your true calling? Do you believe you have the ability to heed that call?
2. Do you feel satisfied with the career that you have? Why or why not?
3. What abilities do you think someone in your career should possess?
4. Were your abilities honed by study or experience? Justify your answer.
5. What other noble professions can you think of? Why do you consider them noble?