

# “Everybody needs a hobby”

by Dr Aaron Sohan Singh, Punggol Polyclinic



“Everybody needs a hobby”, said Tony Stark in the movie Iron Man 3. In perhaps no other branch of medicine does this hold true than family medicine. Our job as family practitioners is to look beyond the patient’s medical issues and appreciate them as a whole person, including their social history or hobbies. Therefore it goes without saying that family practitioners should themselves appreciate the role of hobbies in their own lives to ensure a well-balanced mind.

Or maybe I just made all that up to justify buying action figures.

My name is Aaron and I am a SingHealth Family Medicine Residency graduate. During the day I manage patients as holistically as I can in Punggol Polyclinic. But after hours, I collect Iron Man suits of armour. This is not



an uncommon hobby in Singapore – Singaporeans are collectors by nature and our little island tends to be a haven for fans of the late armoured superhero.

But Iron Man has always been my favourite Marvel Cinematic Universe superhero for a special reason – rather than relying on brawn or superpowers, Tony Stark’s biggest weapon has always been his brain. He’s a nerd – obsessive, studious, constantly working to improve himself, his colleagues and his vocation. Sound familiar? In Iron Man 3

he also refers to himself as a mechanic – his passion is fixing things. I can relate a lot to that - I’m sure every doctor can.

(Or maybe I just like buying toys. We’ll never know)

# The Dancing Doctor

by Dr Quah Yan Ling, Punggol Polyclinic

I am Yan Ling, family physician currently based in Punggol Polyclinic. I am extremely honoured to be invited to write about my passion for dance and choreography.

## Dance exposure since childhood days

I was first exposed to Chinese dance at a mere age of 4 years old, and have fallen in love with it since then! I was a member of a local renowned dance troupe and performed for events all year round, which excitingly included performing for MediaCorp variety shows and starring in music videos produced for festive seasons such as Chinese New Year to be aired on TV. My dance instructor was an inspirational figure to me as she not only had to juggle running the entire troupe



single-handedly, but also had to choreograph multiple items throughout the year, design and hand-sew our costumes and hand-make our props by herself!

In secondary school, I was selected to join the Rhythmic Gymnastics school team due to my strong background in dance which introduced me to a totally new set of skills! The 4 years of intensive training back then also trained up my stamina and resilience which proved to be useful for the many years to come, including helping me tide through the tough year of housemanship!

I was again involved

in Chinese dance in Hwa Chong Institution where I got to hone my technical skills while training with a group of very disciplined and cultured dancers.

During my university days, I spent a major portion of my school life dancing and choreographing for events for both the medical faculty and King Edward VII hall. As one of the resident choreographers and dance chairperson of KEVII hall, I had multiple opportunities to work with many talented and experienced choreographers, many of whom are professional dancers and dance instructors now. It was a pleasure to be able to broaden my experience by being exposed to other genres of dance such as contemporary, lyrical jazz, hip hop, lindy hop and I even joined the cheerleading and wushu teams when I stayed on campus. Dance offers me an avenue to express my creativity and enables me to unwind and destress after a long day at school and work and at the same time allows me to keep fit.

I currently volunteer-teach dance in the community to dance interest groups.

## Teaching dance at my workplace

SingHealth Polyclinics recently organised a 'Fit-Nurse' aerobics competition during nurses' day

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which provided me an opportunity to put my many years of honed- skills to good use! I was blessed to be able to lead an enthusiastic and committed multi-disciplinary team to represent Punggol Polyclinic to take part in our inter-polyclinic competition, for which my team emerged champion! We have also been invited to perform for the upcoming 'SingHealth President's Challenge 2019 Grand Finale' which will be held at Oasis terrace, our second home! I am thrilled that I can continue to share my passion at my workplace! I am also fortunate to have a supportive boss who allows me to bring my hobby to my clinic, and occasionally joins in my training sessions too! There are ongoing plans to conduct regular aerobics sessions in my clinic after work due to the demand from my colleagues. I do hope the upcoming classes will bring joy to many more colleagues at work in the years to come!

■ CM



CHALLENGE TO CARE  
CHAPTER 2.14

## FOREIGN DOMESTIC WORKERS

*Embarking on a life as an overseas worker... means entering a seemingly endless cycle of longing – forever reaching for your dream abroad and pining for the home you've left behind.*

— Aurora Almendral

*Many FDW's leave their home and their family to work in Singapore out of economic necessity.*

### Leaving the Children Behind

The drawing shows a woman cuddling a baby, with tears streaming down her face. The woman is probably the child's mother. Her bags are packed and there is an airplane in the background. This is a FDW going to work in a foreign land, leaving her young child behind.

For many people in developing countries, working abroad provides an opportunity to earn much more than they would earn at home, and therefore affords them the possibility of lifting their families out of poverty.

No mother would choose to leave a helpless child behind if she could do otherwise. This woman is leaving her baby and heading to a strange new family, a different culture, and an uncertain community in a foreign land.

Will her child be well? Would the baby know her after two years? Will her husband take on a mistress? Will the money she sends home be wisely spent? Will she be exploited by her agent or her employer?

- Dr. Lily Aw

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