



## Priceless Life with Love

--A brief introduction to the Chou Ta-kuan Cultural and Educational Foundation

The Chou Ta-kuan Cultural and Educational Foundation was established in 1997 by Ta Kuna's parents, Chou Chin-Hua and Kuo Ying-lan, with the help of Caho Tsui-hui and other benevolent individuals from Taiwan and overseas.

Chou Ta-kuan, a young poet fighting cancer, had great enthusiasm for life. The spirit he lived on was "love your life and live it happily." To spread Ta-Kuan's spirit, his parents and those benevolent people established the Foundation. The notion they have been spreading across the world is "be nice to yourself—love your life; be nice to others—respect their lives; be nice to nature—protect the life of earth."

For the past three years, this Foundation has had various activities to propose its belief to the public. The Foundation held workshops, seminars, conferences, and camps to communicate Ta-kuan's belief to the public, and even provided private counseling to help people who were in need. They visited children with cancer, people with rare diseases, the mentally ill, the physically ill, and those who are fighting for their lives. To stand by them, to persuade them to love their lives, though that is exactly a life of defects, to help them to live it happily, though they are actually suffering from the defects of their lives, the Foundation takes all these as its duties.

The Foundation gathers domestic and overseas resources, and constructs its skeleton with love and wisdom. Though the Foundation has a business-like operation, it operates its business with humanity-oriented management. The Foundation has successfully achieved its goal. By the end of December 2000, more than two hundred and ninety thousand people have volunteered for the Foundation. They effectively propose to the public Ta-Kuan's belief in life. That is, "love your life and live it happily".



## **Plant Trees**

**Since that spring we knew about the tumor on my right leg,  
We started to plant a tree every day—  
At hospitals,we planted a tree of health.  
At churches,we planted a tree of love.  
At schools, we planted a tree of hope.  
Some day,  
We are going to plant ourselves as trees,  
From One generation to another,  
Trees grow to be a forest of health,  
Trees grow to be a forest of love,  
Trees grow to be a forest of hope.**

**Chou Ta-kuan**

### **I. Sowing—making something out of nothing**

**Cho Ta-kuan, a young poet and cancer fighter, left at the age of ten. Though he left peacefully, it was still great anguish to the people around him. His life is too short for him to leave behind any valuable deeds. However, his fortitude, the purity of his spirit, and his touching poems will sure be cherished forever by people who love him and who know him. And that is something he left behind to the world, some valuable momentum.**

**Ta-kuan’s crystal-clear eyes seemed to be able to see through the so-called disease monster’ greed for human bodies and the extreme torture human bodies have been through under the disease. This thorough understanding made him fearless, brought him positive thoughts, and gave him courage to fight back. He said, “I still have one leg. I want to move on happily.” The story of Ta-kuan teaches us that no matter how miserable one’s life is, they should have courage to fight back. More than that, we learn from him that we, human beings, should care for each other.**

**After Ta-kuan left, we shifted our love for him to children like him. We donated Ta-kuan’s saving, four hundred and ninety-five thousand NT dollars, to be the initial fund of the Foundation. The other funds were profits from Ta-kuan’s books and books on Ta-kuan as well. Ta-kuan had two books published: “I Still Have One Leg” and “Ta-kuan—The Wishes of A Child Fighting Cancer” by Yuan-Liu Publishing. There are two other books on Ta-kuan, “The Glory of Life—Chou Ta-kuan” by Yuan-Lin**

Publishing, and “ The Wish of A Little Star—Chou Ta-kuan’s Story” by Wen-Gin Publishing. We sincerely appreciated those who directly and indirectly helped us set up the Foundation.

**Ta-Kuan is still with us, because the world is full of love.**

To fight against the wind and the rain on the journey of life, we recruit people to set up a group called “Love Papa”and “Love Mama”. We provide our love and help to whoever needs it, especially the family having seriously ill children.

To fight against the monster of disease, we recruit people to set up a group called“Love Brother”and “Love Sister”. We provide our love and help to whoever needs it, especially the seriously ill children at hospitals and schools.

Ta-kuan’s story opens a window to the brightness. Even if he has only one leg, he still wants to move on happily. We have two legs. Why should we waste our time mourning for something in our lives?

At the moment you open Ta-kuan’s books, at the moment you take part in our activities, you help continue his life and continue your own as well.

## **II. Rooting—digging deeply into the ground**

The ever-changing life consists of birth, aging, illness and death. To ease the pain resulting from this uncertainty, we bring music and joy into hospitals, especially the intensive care wards.

To help the public grow and to give them chances of life-time learning, we arrange speeches to inform them of the philosophy, “love your life, grow your life and live it happily”.

To help the mentally ill and the physically ill to remove the obstacles on the road of their lives, we encourage them to paint, to carve, to sing, and to make music. We hope their love for all these can help remove their gloom and make them move forwards towards a brighter future. Therefore, we hold Art Fairs every year to provide them chances to exhibit the works.

### **III. Sprouting—Giving Birth to New Lives**

**Life is infinite; love is borderless. To prove this, we initiate public welfare services across national boundaries. We have public welfare organizations from Germany, America, Japan, Hong-kong, Korea, Canada, Panama, and so on responding to our call. We set May 25 as “A Global Day for Loving Your Life”. We propose the notion, “be friendly to yourself—love your life; be friendly to others—respect their lives; be friendly to nature—protect the life of earth.” The reason we choose May 25 is that in Mandarin that date sounds like “I love I”.**

**Life is precious; life is for us to learn from others’ good deeds. We want to find whoever can be our models. Therefore, by holding a global screening activity to select among organizations and individuals, we give out the annual”Global Loveing your life. We try to find those having wonderful movements in caring for lives, and we reward them for their contribution to the world.**

### **IV. Irrigating—Continuing with perseverance**

**It seems true that a happy life can guarantee you everything. Therefore, to help people live happily, we hold various outdoor activities every year. We invite seriously ill children and their family to have enjoyable outings. The aim is to lead them to see the beauty of nature, to appreciate the value of life and to live it happily.**

**Once life takes off, everything will be fine. Every year the activities we hold together with the circulation of Ta-kuan’s books in editions of different languages spread love to all over the world. We hope to take everyone’s life to fly with us.**

### **V. Blossoming—Moving on with the heritage**

**Music can always comfort our souls and bodies. Therefore, we promote the movement of donating used musical instruments to schools in remote areas and to people in devastated areas. We hope music can help ease people’s mental pain and physical pain. We hope music can help create a happy environment for people to live in. People respond to our call enthusiastically. Thus, we set up a center to be responsible for this movement. We even think of sending used musical instruments to underdeveloped countries to help people over there. Any support of international transportation for these instruments is much welcomed.**

Young children are our hopes. To help our children, to nurture our hopes, we plan to set up a center called “Sweet Home for Children”. We are to provide to seriously ill children clinical psychological counseling, consolation, therapy in games, and so on. Moreover, we are to construct a hospital with the design of Disney World. Then, children won’t be afraid of going to the hospital. We are to provide to these children comfy rooms in the Sweet Home and the Disney World Hospital. So, they can enjoy their stay there. We are to provide to these children the most humanistic care, including physical examination, medical care, hospitalization, surgery, counseling, schooling and so on.

Doctors are the ones who give birth to our life and can save our life from being taken. To help with our lives, we need good doctors. Therefore, we set up a scholarship to grant funds to doctors for studying cancer and rare diseases.

Literature on life is always praised for thousands of years. Therefore, every year we invite literature works on life from all over the world. We screen the works and reward the excellent ones. Our aim is to invite more people to see the bright side of life. Doing this, they may encourage themselves and encourage people around them as well.

To be friendly to nature, besides respecting the lives of people around us, we also have to respect the lives of other animals on earth. Therefore, we set up a research center to protect and research on Taiwanese Black Bears. Starting from this, we are to protect all the lives on earth.

Sowing, sprouting, irrigating, and blossoming, the Foundation has been through all these and has accomplished so many things. The Foundation sees the limits and the infinite of life. We may not be able to decide the length of life. However, we are the ones to decide how colorful and how rich our life can be. Carrying the belief in love, the Foundation visualizes its duties in people’s needs. This is the spirit the Foundation holds.

What the Foundation has done for the past three years won it an award for the public welfare services, that is, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Public Welfare Award. The Minister of Education also awarded the Foundation, the Development of Community Education Award.

Here, we have the pleasure to share with you the story of the Foundation. The foundation will move on. And, we hope to have your encouragement and support.