



Nurturing the Heart-Brain Connection

Dr Keith Goh — best known as the neurosurgeon who separated young conjoined twins Ganga and Jamuna in 2001 — shares his thoughts on what motivates him in his medical practice.

When you get to know him, it becomes clear that Dr Keith Goh indeed has a special soft spot in his heart for children. This explains his interest in paediatric neurosurgery, and his role as one of the early founding directors of the Singapore chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

“Children have a whole life ahead of them, with so much potential. If a child falls seriously ill, the emotional and social impact of that has a ripple effect on the whole family, and sometimes the entire community”, reflects Dr Goh. He says that seeing a child pull through serious illness to lead a normal life is the true reward for what he does. “I have operated on babies who’ve recovered and are now going to school. I’ve treated an 18-year-old girl with a spinal cord tumour and when she married at 25, I was able to share in the festivities. All this gives meaning to my work. In life, we need to have purpose and direction in what we do, not just to working to earn a salary”.

Enriching the lives of children with severe life-threatening illnesses is foremost in his personal pursuits. As Chairman of both the Singapore chapter of Make-A-Wish and Make-A-Wish International, Dr Goh leads a global charity organisation which is now in 32 countries and whose mission is to grant the wishes of these children. “These kids go through a lot, living with the spectre of a serious medical condition, and yet are incredibly brave and resilient. Make-A-Wish is a wonderful way of bringing happiness and hope into their lives, helping to relieve the awful pain and suffering that they have to endure. As I always say, we need to bring more JOY to the world!”

Such a heartfelt approach has shaped his success in his career. “Medicine is all about human relationships. To be a successful doctor, one must be able to relate well to patients and their families” says Dr Goh.

Make-A-Wish Foundation®

The Make-A-Wish Foundation began in America in 1980 when a boy with leukemia had his wish of becoming a policeman fulfilled for a day, with the help of the local police department. He died soon after, but the spirit of the efforts to make his dream a reality lives on to this day. Make-A-Wish Foundation is a global organisation today, with a presence in 32 countries worldwide. The Singapore chapter was launched in 2003 and fulfils about 100 wishes every year.

Upcoming events

June 2009 7th Annual Golf Tournament,
main fund raiser

Late 2009 Black-Tie Champagne & Music Evening
at Grand Hyatt Hotel, fund raiser

For details, please contact Make-A-Wish Foundation
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