

Liz Doehring

Class of 1975

1. My name is Liz Doehring, I was born in Memphis Tennessee in 1953, the 1st of four children born to Robert and Mary Doehring. I was the 1st to go to college in my family and the first nurse in my family. I graduated from CSU, Fresno with a BSN in 1975. I obtained certificates in OR Nsg while on active duty in the United States Army, Mobile Intensive Care Nurse Certificate in 1982. I obtained an MSN and Certificate as a Family Nurse Practitioner in 1987 from CSU, Fresno and my Geriatric Nurse Practitioner Certification in 1991.

I was commissioned a 2nd Lt in the United States Army upon graduation from CSUF in June 1975 and upon passing the state board exam and receiving my R.N. License went on active duty in the Army. Upon completing my 2 yr obligatory tour, I returned to Fresno and went to work at Kings View Psychiatric Hospital in Reedley CA from 1977-1980. From there, I went to work as a surgical nurse on the Open Heart Team at Valley Children's Hospital, Fresno CA to fulfill a childhood dream of doing open hearts. I was then persuaded to go work at Valley Medical Center's Emergency Room where I was a Mobile Intensive Care Nurse/Shift supervisor and Trauma Nurse Coordinator from 1982-1987. During this period of time I also went back to CSUF where I completed my MSN/FNP and in 1987 went to work with Dr. Ronald D. Smith in private practice in Fresno. In addition to private practice, we managed Sunnyside Nsg Home with 100 + patients from 1990-1995 and provided volunteer medical services to the needy poor at Poverello House in Central Fresno. In 1995, Dr. Smith and I joined as joint partners with 17 other physicians to create Northwest Medical Group on West Herndon in Fresno from 1995-2007. During this 20 year partnership, I precepted well over 10 NP graduate students, taught classes in both the undergraduate and graduate Nsg programs. In 1993 I was selected as CA Region 9's Nurse of the year for Fresno, Kings and Tulare Counties.

From 1977-2005 I remained active in the United States Army Reserves achieving the rank of Full Colonel and retired with 30 collective years of service. Principle duties and titles included Hospital Officer in Charge, clinical and unit Training Officer, Assistant Chief Nurse, Regional 91C Coordinator (LVN) for the 63rd Regional Command of the Army Reserve (CA, AZ, NV), Hospital Commander of a Combat Surgical Hospital, and final Command of the 352nd Combat Support Hospital, Oakland CA, with overall command and responsibility of all 352nd CSH assets which included multiple 20 man surgical teams, the 200 man combat surgical hospital and the 600 man/300 bed Combat Support Hospital after 9-11. While I personally did not deploy to a theater of action in the Middle East, I was responsible for ensuring the readiness and timeliness of deployment of well over half of my assets who deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and Germany.

Upon statutory retirement from the U.S. Army in 2005 and retirement of Dr. Ron Smith, I felt it was a good time to leave private practice and go work for the CA Department of Corrections as a Nurse Practitioner in my efforts to move to the central coast in my final retirement years. I currently at CTF Soledad, just south of Salinas CA.

2. I recall my first Med-Surg experience at the then Sierra Hospital with Stevie Fisher as my clinical nsg instructor, my psych rotation at the VA Hospital in Fresno, along with what I thought was a killer rotation in my Senior Med-surg clinical with Dr. Karen Nishio working in the ICU, OR and

ER areas of both the old and new Saint Agnes Hospitals. I especially remember the painful process of critical thinking and being put on the spot to remember essentials of anatomy/physiology and how I could not remember the term Nucleus Pulposus for a patient that had a lumbar laminectomy and fusion. Seems every time Dr. Nishio would ask me a question, my memory went blank. At the end of the semester during a final counseling session, Dr. Nishio expressed her grave concerns about my lack of knowledge and her doubts about my actually passing her clinical course. In the end though, I wound up with an A from her. I also remember Dr. Selwa Makarem in Graduate school. My first encounter in ever having to contract for a grade, which I set at an A, and then trying to negotiate the "what if" I don't make that A. I recall trying to put into visual terms those abstract theories of the theorists to make sense of what Dr. Makarem was trying to teach us. In the end, you guessed, I got my A. Because of her toughness, I chose her as my thesis chair and came through with flying colors completing my program in just 2 years. In the end, I learned that I along with people in general perform to the highest level of expectation.

3. As a 22 year old nsg graduate, I had no idea how vast the experiences could be in the field of nsg. Everything from 1:1 nsg, managing a ward of 40 surgical patients with just me and 3 LVNs, taking care of the youngest/smallest of patients (preemies at Valley Children's Hosp) to the most frail and very old my oldest patient of 106 years and her many generations of off spring in private practice. The degree of independence/autonomy and responsibility as a nurse practitioner to the interdependent/subjugation of self as a team member and the reliance we have on each other in hospital or field/combat medicine. Nsg provides the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally in a myriad of roles. I have been afforded the opportunity to be professionally, spiritually and patriotically satisfied and moved by the experiences that I have had as a result of my nursing career. Going into the future, nsg will continue to expand its horizons of professional growth and possibility. Every day there is something to be learned in your specific area of nsg and with computerization and digitalization there is still the need for the caring and compassion that comes with the profession of nsg that can never be realized if one looks to just the high tech methods of caring for people.

4.

- a. Change is good--it is what helps us grow personally and professionally
- b. Leaders are risk takers and it is risk takers who get to the top of the heap
- c. It is ok to make mistakes so long as you learn from your mistakes and don't make the same mistake twice
- d. Not everyone is going to like you and you are not going to like everyone and that's ok. Just be professional and you can get through it
- e. Respect given is respect earned--even with the toughest of patients
- f. Admit when you are wrong--in the end you gain the respect of others
- g. As a leader, you are only as good as those you supervise--help them grow in knowledge and experience and you will look better for it
- h. Can't never did anything but could at least tried
- i. Don't tell me I can't do it that way--I'll find another way to skin the cat
- j. While life can brought to an end in an instant, time stops for no one

**Col. Liz Doehring, class of '75,'87  
Army Nurse Corps, RN, BSN, CORN, MICU, MSN, NP, FNP,  
Hospital Commander & Asst. Chief Nurse 352<sup>nd</sup> Oakland  
Army Reserve of 800 personnel in CA., AZ., NV. many 20  
man CSH Hospital Teams deployed after 9/11 to  
Kosovo, Germany, Iraq, Afghanistan**

