

Now at the start of 2021, it is more important than ever to be Resilient as we embark on the Right Path going into the future.

Tokyo Medical and Dental University (TMDU)

Yujiro Tanaka, President

Happy New Year. I am truly grateful to all for your unstinting work last year and also during the New Year holidays.

In 2020 so much of our time and energy was sacrificed in the fight against COVID-19 that many of us have wondered whether we were really doing the right thing.

I myself have wondered the same thing. In Japan there is a deep-rooted idea that we should act the same way as everyone else, so I have a tendency to compare us with other hospitals.

I think, however, the right way for us as medical professionals is to continue to accept COVID-19 patients, offer high-level medical care to patients, and disseminate new research findings. Of this I am convinced.

If we were to abandon this path, we would never be able to fulfill TMDU's vision to "Cultivate Professionals with Knowledge and Humanity".

While it is true that effective university administration is necessary, even more critical is making ourselves--our research and clinical care--indispensable to society, for that ultimately is what gives meaning to the work we do at the university.

The importance of having a university like ours, which has confronted the pandemic from the very start, is clearly reflected in the tangible and intangible support expressed by the general public and on social media.

While viral infections will no doubt continue, I believe the key for us now is “resilience”--the strength to recover from adversity--not only at the personal level but the institutional level as well.

How then can we develop “resilience”?

I believe the very fact that you and I are working at the university at this time should be seen as a mandate from heaven, that is, as a job given from heaven. By this expression I mean a vocation. Let us then think of the work we do here at TMDU as fulfilling our own personal mandate from heaven.

If everyone shares that feeling, no matter what adversity comes our way we will have the strength to overcome it.

I think that our experience from last year really serves that purpose. Evidence of this is when we were able to immediately suppress the spread of infection when it was first detected.

What can we do at the personal level? There are times when it doesn't go well even if you try hard. It is important to take a break, regroup and go back to work. That change of pace is essential.

To all employees involved in medical care, research, education and administration, whether full-time or part-time, please be aware of the needs of others around you and remember the two R's: Right Path and Resilience.

I am confident that if we can do that, no matter what adversity we face there will always be a hopeful future awaiting our university.

Heading into the new year, I ask for your cooperation in “forging the future together” and “protecting patients and colleagues from COVID-19.”