As graduation approaches and the world of professional nursing creeps closer, I become overwhelmed by the technicalities of the job and find myself disconnected from my original call to the profession. I am intimidated by the enormous responsibility of successfully completing each shift—the constant documentation and meticulous organization are stressful for a novice and like many other pseudo-nurses, I become engrossed with learning protocols and managing time.

During my senior year capstone clinical, I have seen how many nurses view their role. I have met nurses who see nursing as a paycheck, a place they have to be 12 hours a day, three days a week, simulations deflated my idealized view of becoming a nursing career.

When I discussed with preceptors and staff nurses my plans to become an oncology and bone marrow transplantation (BMT) nurse, their advice shed doubt on my original plans. Experienced nurses would say, “No, you shouldn’t go into oncology first . . . do some general med-surg for a few years, and then decide if oncology is really what you want.” Others would say, “Well, if that’s what you want to do, great . . . but, do you really want to specialize so narrowly after you graduate? You should do a year or two of cardiology or step down to get a broad education base.” Eventually, I began assimilating those ideas. I thought, “Well, I guess I have to start out doing med-surg . . . but I don’t like med-surg, I like oncology . . . so, I guess I’ll have to be unhappy for a couple of years.” This evolution of thought did not inspire my sense of purpose and made learning skills and completing patient care seem like obligations, not desires.

I was quite disheartened until I started job interviewing. I applied to a few medical-surgical floors and to a BMT unit. While interviewing on the medical-surgical floors, I met many inspiring and passionate nurses and managers, but I still knew medical-surgical nursing was not for me. The moment I stepped onto the BMT unit, I experienced a wave of reaffirmation as I once again felt excited, hopeful, and