

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a blue surgical cap and blue scrubs, is focused on writing in a notebook. She is holding a black pen. The background is a bright, clinical setting. The image is overlaid with several teal-colored circles of varying sizes. In the top left corner, there is a circular graphic made of black dots of varying sizes, with the word 'starting' written inside a white circle.

starting

letter to my newly qualified self

Onahi Idikwu encourages her younger self as she looks back to her first day as a staff nurse

Firstly, well done! You've done it. All those hours spent acquiring new nursing skills has led you to this moment. You stand at the doors of your new hospital on your first day. Now all that is left to do is walk in. Where excitement once sat, anticipation now stands, and you feel dread lining up to take its place. How many times will you get lost in this unfamiliar environment? How often will you have to reach for for the notebook tucked securely in your scrub pocket for the code to the staff room? How many times will you feel out of your depth this week? What if this team doesn't like you?

You feel your breathing quicken and your palms grease with sweat as these questions race through your mind, almost as loud as the traffic that zooms past behind you. Someone honks their car and reminds you that you're no longer in the tranquil childhood town where you trained.

You are now in the Capital. Everyone seems to be in a rush here, which you will be too if you don't walk through these doors now. You feel the gentle presence of your Heavenly Father usher you forward. Just take one step after the other. It's normal to feel intimidated. God is holding you. It's normal to wonder if you will be good

enough. God is with you and will help you. He who brought you this far will not desert you now.

You venture into the hallway. The bright lights, a little harsher than you remember from the open day, reflect off the spotless floors. These pristine hallways that once inspired you to excel when you visited as a student now make you want to shrink back and hide as a newly qualified. What if it's too hard? What if these lights just expose how much you don't know? Imposter syndrome trickles down your spine like the sweat dripping down your back.

Spoiler alert: you will be okay! Yes, it might be very uncomfortable at first, but who grows in their comfort zone anyways? Show up shift after shift, and in due time, that dread you feel in the pit of your stomach will fade, and you will thrive. Yes, some people will be short with you But others will be kind and warm and will spend time teaching you.

You will do great! It's okay that you won't get it all first time around but just keep learning, bending, stretching. That is how you grow.

And never forget, God goes before you. He is beside you. And he goes behind you. He will help you. Lean on him always. 🌟

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