



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Renew Perianesthesia Passion: Start with Self-Determination

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It's hard to believe that it has been three months since coming together in San Antonio, Texas, for the 34<sup>th</sup> ASPAN National Conference! Year after year, attendees gather to learn, network and explore our changing practices. These gatherings are a testament to the strength of our collective desire to invest in, and fulfill our educational needs.

I recently read an article about a woman who is a highly paid consultant. Her success, in part, is due to the nature of her unique attitude that she brings to her job. She has the luxury of working with people she likes and respects. Scanning through the article, I realized this woman is in this enviable position because she was willing to identify and nurture her personal strengths. Her acknowledgment of her particular passions opened the doors to a rewarding profession that optimized her distinctive abilities.

#### **The Uniqueness of Perianesthesia Nurses**

Nurses, especially perianesthesia nurses, are unique. Perianesthesia nurses are fortunate to work in a distinctive work environment. The nature of perianesthesia practices and the specialized environments in which we work make it difficult to replace the perianesthesia nurse during times of high patient volumes or staffing shortages. Many perianesthesia nurses have acknowledged their passion for this specialty and have embraced the practice that makes our work 'enviable.'

#### **What Motivates You?**

Psychologists Ryan and Deci developed a theory of motivation<sup>1</sup> which suggests that people are driven by a need to grow and gain fulfillment. Growth, personal and professional, is the first step towards self-determination. Intrinsic motivation describes one's need to gain knowledge and independence. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation occurs when one is inspired by external rewards like money, recognition and power. Three concepts related to self-determination are critical steps for one to achieve growth:

**Competence:** People need to gain mastery of tasks and gain different skills. ASPAN's Practice Recommendation 4, "Recommended Competencies for the Perianesthesia Nurse,"<sup>2</sup> supports the notion that perianesthesia nurses have both the belief and the attitude to continue to learn, gain knowledge and remain at the top of their game.

**Relatedness:** People need to have a sense of belonging and attachment to other people. As perianesthesia nurses, we share a privileged practice. Each day we become involved in our patients' lives. Often, our first contact is the preoperative phone call. As a pediatric nurse, I feel attached to my patients, who, through no fault of their own, are often in difficult or scary situations. Perianesthesia nurses care. Caring is what makes us great nurses. Perianesthesia nurses demonstrate their attachment to patients in many ways, such as ensuring patients have everything they need on the day of surgery, or making sure they have a responsible adult to take care of them after surgery.

**Autonomy:** People need to be in control of their own behaviors and goals. This is true for all nurses, but especially for perianesthesia nurses. The 2010 Institute of Medicine (IOM) reports that "Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education."<sup>3</sup> ASPAN encourages members to continue learning by participating in ASPAN's quality educational seminars and taking

advantage of ASPAN's numerous educational scholarships. Hospitals, Magnet hospitals in particular, fully support staff to seek post-graduate education and they support the masters prepared nurse to function at the bedside.

### **Moving Forward with Self-Determination**

Renew your perianesthesia passion by following this self-determination theory. Most of us in this unique specialty continue to work based on our own intrinsic motivations. Continue to seek competence, uphold the unique relationships between nurse and patients and preserve the autonomous choice to work in this specialty.

It is only when we think and do things outside of any material compensation that we can embrace what Florence Nightingale once said, "You do not want the effect of your good things to be, 'How wonderful for a woman!' nor would you be deterred from good things by hearing it said, 'Yes, but she ought not to have done this, because it is not suitable for a woman.' But you want to do the thing that is good, whether it is 'suitable for a woman' or not. It does not make a thing good, that it is remarkable that a woman should have been able to do it. Neither does it make a thing bad, which would have been good had a man done it, that it has been done by a woman. Oh, leave these jargons, and go your way straight to God's work, in simplicity and singleness of heart."<sup>4</sup>

### **REFERENCES**

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