



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

A Journey to Excellence

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As ASPAN members journey together in pursuit of excellence, we must take quick, sure, bold steps toward a singular goal. This year, our Big Audacious Goal (BAG) involves promoting excellence in everything ASPAN does. This BAG encompasses ongoing initiatives involving clinical practice, orientation, training, continuing education, clinical competency, research, standards validation, and creating a culture of safety in the practice environment. Excellence occurs when one gives more than is expected. *In Search of Excellence*¹ and *A Passion for Excellence*² provide numerous examples of how a single worker can make a big difference in the workplace. Excellence, demonstrated not by a single, extraordinary act, is manifested in a series of acts creating a consistent pattern of exceeding expectations.

According to the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, excellence is not an act, but a habit. We build on this habit by willingly contributing to and participating in ASPAN's many organizational initiatives. In his book, *Good to Great*,³ Jim Collins published words that shaped my nursing practice. Collins said, "Good is the enemy of great."³ While reflecting on this insight I asked, "Is being good not enough? Should we attempt to achieve far more and to dream bigger than big? Once we dream bigger, how are we going to achieve all that we envision?" The answers came to me in a flash. We need to be more than a good organization; ASPAN must sustain a great organization! We should never settle for less. If we settle for "good" patient care or management skills, we may never know the complete fulfillment of providing excellent patient care. We must be better than good as we promote our BAG to be the very best.

A Succession Planning Strategic Work Team (SWT) will convene this year to assist components with leadership transition and growth. Collins provides a template for achieving greatness by describing five levels of leadership required to guide any organization to the top.³ This leadership vision serves as a hierarchal model for our succession planning:

- **Level 1 Leader** – described as the highly capable individual. To me, this represents the entire ASPAN membership.
- **Level 2 Leader** – described as a contributing team member. This encompasses each of us who work and interact with peers.
- **Level 3 Leader** – represents a competent manager.
- **Level 4 Leader** – represents an effective leader.
- **Level 5 Leader** – described as the executive leader. In this highest level of leadership, the individual moves away from his or her personal needs toward the larger goal of building a great organization.

To promote excellence, ASPAN must continually develop model leaders at every level within local districts, components, and on the national level. Let us strive toward the highest level of leadership as we transform our great organization.

Achievement of the BAG, carried on the shoulders of a team, far outpaces the efforts of individuals working alone. As the expert resource for perianesthesia nursing, ASPAN's journey allows members to explore advances in technology and perianesthesia best practice. Please consider joining one of ASPAN's seven diverse Specialty Practice Groups, which offer the benefit of professional networking and

collaboration within our ASPAN family. Our Clinical Practice Committee encourages inquiries, identifies practice issues, clarifies thinking, and disseminates practice information. I encourage members to use our Web site (www.aspan.org) to post clinical practice questions and to discuss clinical issues.

ASPAN's *Standards of Perianesthesia Nursing Practice* serves as a guide to the perianesthesia nursing profession. This publication documents core ideology, scope of clinical practice, ethical practice, position statements and perianesthesia resources. Some standards will remain current and others will receive validation and as we continue to explore evidence based clinical information. One focus of this year's journey is the establishment of Perianesthesia Data Elements (PDE). As reported in the last edition of *Breathline*, PDE offers standardized and consistent perianesthesia language for nursing diagnoses, assessments, interventions, and care outcomes. Safety is another strategic initiative. Although hospitals and ambulatory centers espouse patient safety, are we truly practicing safely? ASPAN's Safety SWT collected over six hundred surveys from perianesthesia nurses, and based on extensive study results, will prioritize members' needs and develop a manual to guide our constituents in achieving and maintaining a safer and healthier work environment.

The Education Provider Committee is continuously updating and revitalizing ASPAN educational offerings. Our new CPAN and CAPA Review for Certification Seminars, listed on page 12, debut this summer. This committee is a vital part of ASPAN, and committee veterans mentor new members joining the group. The Research and Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Committees are very active on multiple projects that examine hypothermia, PONV and PDNV, voiding, pressure ulcers, and unit staffing. This year, the September Component Development Institute focuses on our "Journey to Excellence through Writing for Publication and Research/EBP." ASPAN's goal is to continue development of members' skills involving writing, research and EBP. This interactive, fun weekend program guides attendees toward strengthening writing and publishing skills and enhances necessary research skills for EBP.

One of my favorite teamwork stories comes from a sermon entitled "Lessons from Geese."⁴ This spring, one might see geese flying in a "V" formation while heading north for the summer. Geese fly in this configuration to make the destination easier for those who follow, because they benefit from an air current created by the leaders. Groups applying this example of teamwork include competitive bicyclers, racecar drivers, and fighter pilots flying in formation. Bikers and racecar drivers could not race at such high speeds without the help of teammates, and fighter pilots flying in a "V" formation enable them to watch each other's back. The geese story emphasizes several benefits of ASPAN membership and of belonging to an elite nursing organization such as ASPAN. Every perianesthesia nurse can embrace passion for and commitment to this wonderful organization.

Our core ideology reflects members' volunteerism in promoting excellence in perianesthesia nursing. There will never be an end to our journey to excellence. Achieving excellence demands that we remember not all roads to success are smooth. Although the road to excellence may be bumpy, each of us must continue to move forward despite barriers and shifts in the wind by anticipating new challenges and transitional change. Together we will reach our ultimate goal through collective professional actions and an inner fire of commitment fueling our passion for ASPAN to excel.

It is a great honor and privilege to serve as your President. I encourage you to join me in this journey and in our BAG to achieve perianesthesia excellence. YOU will not be alone, for WE journey together while reaffirming our commitment to excellence every step of the way! Together, we will make a profound difference in advancing ASPAN's pursuit of excellence.

REFERENCES

1. Peters T, Waterman R Jr., *In Search of Excellence*. New York: Harper & Row Publisher Inc., 1984.
2. Peters T, Austin N, *A Passion for Excellence*. New York: Random House Inc., 1985.
3. Collins J, *Good to Great*. New York: Harper Collins Publisher Inc., 2001.
4. M cNeish R, "Lessons from Geese," Reisterstown, MD: Northminster Presbyterian Church, 1972.