



## Message from the President

### New Year's Resolutions

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There are many traditions associated with start of a new year. Some involve customary parades, football games, celebrations of the first born baby, family gatherings, and the preparation or eating of special foods.<sup>1</sup> For about 4000 years, since the early Babylonian era, the most popular start-of-the-year ritual is the making of New Year's Resolutions. A resolution is a promise, or a pledge to oneself, to make a change in one's life path. A Babylonian gentleman commonly resolved to "return borrowed farm equipment."<sup>1</sup> However, as time evolved, the intent of resolutions changed. Today, most New Year's resolutions are focused on personal growth and health, eliminating a bad habit or establishing a healthy habit such as losing weight or stopping smoking. A 1998 study reported that the top three most popular New Year's resolutions included initiating an exercise program, improving eating habits, and reducing the frequency of consumption of alcohol and other drugs.<sup>2</sup> According to this same study, 67% of individuals who make a resolution make more than one, and 75% of individuals who make a resolution fail to keep the resolution.<sup>2</sup>

#### Tips for Keeping Resolutions

A number of tactics can help one to achieve New Years' resolutions. Ahlers, McFarlane and Dingfelder offer several strategies than can help turn intention into reality.<sup>3,4</sup> When identifying a goal, first commit to the goal by writing it down. Next, share your goal. Writing the goal and letting others know about your plans improves personal accountability and support for your intentions.<sup>3</sup> While linear thinking can get a person from point A to point B, using the imagination can lead to any destination. Using your imagination, create a plan complete with strategies to accomplish the resolutions. In the plan, include a list of benefits associated with keeping the resolution so that the end result will be more appealing than maintaining status quo. Focus on the practice of visualizing the goals you will achieve. Dingfelder relates the story of one group of basketball players who spent an hour simply visualizing dunking the ball time after time while the second group actually practiced on the court.<sup>4</sup> The more successful season belonged to the group that visualized their successes.

Self reflection and self knowledge are also useful tools for success. Recognizing behavior patterns and internally programmed responses to challenges and opportunities will support and strengthen the resolve for improvement. Surround yourself with positive energies and people, and ditch and avoid toxic stressors. Examples of harmful influences include: negative self-talk, "I don't have the power to change"; the need for immediate results (some change takes time); the presence of distracting forces (e.g., horizontal violence, unjust work environments); and denial, "Problem? There's no problem!"

#### A Perianesthesia Nurse's Resolutions

New Year's Eve has always been a time for looking back to the past and, more importantly, forward to the coming year. It's a time to reflect on the changes we want or need to make, and resolve to follow through on those changes. ASPAN is in a perpetual state of change, constantly adapting to environmental and social factors affecting membership and perianesthesia practices. As an association, ASPAN resolves to stimulate organizational growth, respond to ongoing challenges and continue to provide quality products and services.

Moving toward the goal of being the leading association for perianesthesia education, nursing practice, standards and research, ASPAN's Strategic Plan<sup>5</sup> includes several core values. With ASPAN's core

values as vital guiding principles for perianesthesia behaviors, let us strive individually and collectively to achieve the following resolutions:

#### **Building Integrity**

- To expand clinical practice skills and knowledge foundations through attendance at ASPAN sponsored educational programs.
- To seek, build and support safe practices that improve patient outcomes and maintain workplace safety.
- To participate in perianesthesia nursing-related research opportunities.

#### **Modeling Respect**

- To demonstrate workplace tolerance among members of the surgical and perianesthesia care teams.
- To strive for improved communications.
- To proudly display your ASPAN membership logos.

#### **Honoring Diversity**

- To promote enhanced knowledge and sensitivity of diverse cultures, lifestyles, principles and values.
- To model behaviors of tolerance and acceptance towards culturally diverse patients, healthcare providers and workplace settings.

#### **Promoting Stewardship**

- To support clinical practice standards of care in daily routines across the wide scope of practices.
- To promote workplace environments that seek and embrace best practices for optimal patient care and satisfaction.
- To identify areas of perianesthesia practice needing improvement.

#### **Providing Mentorship**

- To mentor critical thinking and evidence based care using ASPAN Standards as a guiding tool.
- To share knowledge and provide education emulating quality practice, leadership and research principles.

#### **Cultivating Passion**

- To embrace challenges in perianesthesia nursing as opportunities for creating improved practices.
- To share stories of perianesthesia practices with other healthcare providers and the public.
- To encourage perianesthesia colleagues to seek or maintain certification.

#### **Supporting Community**

- To understand and support healthcare reform measures.
- To recruit new members to the premiere professional organization for perianesthesia nurses.
- To ensure success with the above resolutions by maintaining an active membership in ASPAN!

### **REFERENCES**

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3. Ahlers A, McFarlane M. Top 10 Ways to Ensure New Year's Resolution Success. Available at <http://ezinearticles.com/?top-10-ways-to-ensure-new-years-resolution-success&id=7530> . Accessed December 12, 2009.
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