



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Reinvest In Your Potential

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Potential is defined as “capable of being or becoming,” “a capacity to develop, succeed, or become something.”¹ The book *I Am Potential* tells the story of Patrick Henry Hughes, born 22 years ago with an extremely rare genetic disorder—he had arms that could not straighten; legs that would never allow him to walk; and, most devastating of all, permanent blindness.² He was born without eyes. Remarkably, at the age of 9 months, he began to play the piano and today possesses an extraordinary musical talent. His mantra is, “I am potential.” He has taken his personal challenge and used it to achieve his potential. In the book, he and his father offer lessons on living and reaching your dreams. Many of these lessons can be applied to ASPAN and each of its members. First, when life gives you lemons accept them and be grateful. Hospitals are struggling to balance the impact of the economy on operating costs, while providing care for our patients. I am sure each of you has experienced changes in your workplace such as taking days off without pay or losing educational funding. These changes are designed to cut costs while striving to preserve staff. No one likes to lose benefits, but if the change will keep nurses at the patient’s bedside, it is best to recognize the positive rather than dealing with the alternative. ASPAN will address these economic challenges by exploring new ways to provide programs and services, and by using resources more efficiently to support our components.

Recognize Potential

Second, do all you can to change what you can. Florence Nightingale was appalled by the conditions she saw during the Crimean War. She compiled data about the health conditions and used that data to write reports that proved conclusively that more soldiers died from the unsanitary conditions in the barracks hospital than from the bullets on the battlefield. These reports were the basis for healthcare reform—the first evidence-based reform.³ As perianesthesia nurses and ASPAN members, you have access to services and programs that can assist you in changing and improving patient care. Use standards of practice, position statements, and practice recommendations to support improvement. ASPAN must be proactive and examine our membership and specialty practice groups to provide services and resources across the scope of practice. We must continue to develop evidence-based practice recommendations, perianesthesia data elements, and standards for perianesthesia nursing practice to provide tools for safe patient care now and in the future. ASPAN services will continue to expand and remain current to meet the needs of our ever growing and changing membership.

Third, pursue your passions as if your life depends on it. Pursue your passion as if your PATIENT’s life depended on it - in many instances, it does. Seek every opportunity to increase your knowledge and skills; you owe it to your patient to deliver the best care available. Florence Nightingale’s greatest contribution to healthcare reform was her reform of nursing. In her *Notes on Nursing*,³ she wrote to her students: “To nurse is a field of which one may safely say: there is no end in what we may be learning every day.” She believed that nurses were perpetual learners and responsible for teaching themselves.

No Status Quo

Next, be the you your mother would be proud of. Don’t be satisfied with the status quo! Patients trust us to be the best at what we do and to be their advocates during each encounter with us. CPAN® and/or CAPA® certification demonstrates to the public, our patients, and our peers that we have chosen to be measured by a higher standard. Certification is a declaration of the perianesthesia nurse’s professional competence and is rapidly becoming the norm. Certified nurses have made a commitment to lifelong

learning to maintain their certification. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the American Board of Perianesthesia Nursing Certification (ABPANC). They began this year with more than 8500 certified nurses, with 298 of them dually certified.

“Only as high as I reach can I grow, only as far as
I seek can I go, only as deep as I look can I see,
only as much as I dream can I be.”

~ Karen Ravn⁴

And finally, set your course, and then burn the map. ASPAN's Strategic Plan guides our course by identifying necessary and desirable goals to promote the continued success of the organization. The strategies and milestones of the past will serve as signposts along the way, but the path will look very different. The strategic plan that is in place will direct the ASPAN Board to redefine the organizational infrastructure to ensure more robust opportunities for our members to become engaged and involved and allow them to maximize their professional potential. What does all of this mean to you as an ASPAN member? Each of us has the capability to stretch our boundaries and to make a difference. We ARE potential!

REFERENCES

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