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The Game of Change: How to Stay Strong!

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Each of us has the right to be and to express ourselves, and to feel good (not powerless or guilty) about doing so, as long as we do not hurt others in the process.

-- Robert Alberti and Michael Emmons

THIS ARTICLE IS ABOUT THE GAME OF CHANGE. Understandably, change is a game. However, it is a game that cannot be played successfully without the knowledge of one's reality or destination. The problem is that many exercise physiologists, particularly the academic exercise physiologists, are in ignorance of their true destiny. That is why they are striving for things (such as research, status, and recognition) that do not help their students or their profession. If they understood their destiny, then, without question they do whatever is necessary on behalf of exercise physiology as a profession to enable their students to move out of the "fitness instructor" mentality and into the reality of mainstream healthcare professionals.

Nobody will believe in you unless you believe in yourself.

-- Liberace

"Change is a game" bears repeating. This is no time to economize our thinking. All things are possible with the right mindset and intensity. If one asks for and believes in something better for the students of the profession of exercise physiology, such a person must be ready to accept the reality of a miraculous change. In other words, as Florence S. Shinn said, "Man can only receive what he sees himself receiving." That reality from the ASEP perspective is filled with the need for jobs, recognition, professional expression, and success. That is why the ASEP leadership is transformative. It is not about wrong thinking, but rather right thinking. It is not about themselves, but about students and the profession of exercise physiology.

Students need to picture themselves as successful, not as failures. They must be taught to attract positive thoughts, not illness or disaster. Academic exercise physiologists are the key to helping students picture themselves as healthcare professionals. They are the golden link in the game of change. They must therefore have a good sense of professionalism and investment in their work. This means they must gain the faith and intellectual knowledge of the ASEP change process. No exercise physiologist is a success if he or she is not supportive of the ASEP work to empower all exercise physiologists. Neither indifference nor greed is the answer to the boomerangs of failed thinking.

Key Point. Never play another person's game. Play your own.

-- Andrew Salter

Professionalism and good-will are invaluable in the academic setting. Happy is the mother who can say sincerely that she puts her daughter in the hands of the academic community and knows that she is protected and supported. Academic exercise physiologists must make the first move in caring for their students. They must rely on their intuition to point the way to integrity and credibility. Integrity in the workplace isn't just important, it is required. Integrity requires a person to be honest and truthful in one's actions. Without it, college teachers have nothing. Without it, what they teach is meaningless. No matter how many research articles they publish, without integrity, it means very little. Without credibility, why would anyone believe what academics do or say?

To help students play the academic game with success, they need to surround themselves with teachers and academic advisors they can trust and can act as their advocates. Students must never stop believing in men and women with integrity even if there should be clouds of doubt and answers seem impossible to come by. It all comes down to one's attitude in playing the game. Be happy no matter what comes your way. Remember, staying strong is very much the same as saying, "I believe I can!" After all, most everything people set out to do the impossible is an act of faith and a strong sense of self-esteem. Decide that you are going to play the game today and, then, "Just Do It."

As Robert A. Schuller said, "People can try to manipulate you. They can try to control you. They can try to put you down and make you feel bad. But in the final analysis, only you can make you feel badly. Only you can defeat yourself." Hard to believe, not really

when you think playing sports or dealing with the issues of life. The truth is that attitude is everything and more. It is your choice to play the game. You can help promote professional thinking in exercise physiology for all exercise physiologists, that is, if you sincerely want to. But it doesn't happen in a flash. It doesn't even happen over a 15-year period. To develop a profession takes diligence, consistency, and regular commitment. Why not give it a try?

Do not concern yourself with not having all the answers. No one does, but through faith and hard work you and others can achieve something special and, while doing so, help provide others the power to grow beyond status quo. Do not concern yourself about being less than perfect. Being perfect is myth, if not a style of thinking to compensate for personal

It takes guts to leave the failed rhetoric of sports medicine and exercise science.

failures. Passion and excellence are all about playing the game the best you can. Develop your style of doing so and be all you can be. Dare to live, share, and think as an exercise physiologist who is a credible healthcare professional, not just as a second-rate person or a trainer

without the academic and/or hands-on laboratory qualifications. Take charge of your future by taking a chance on new ideas and possibilities.

How? There are many ways to achieve success. Perhaps, the first step is to want it and be willing to work for it. Both require making a decision to support the ASEP efforts to put professionalism in the students' classroom and laboratories, especially if you are a college teacher with ties to the past. Obviously, it will not be easy so a strategy is important. The second step is to think about it and create good plans to stay ahead of those who are scare of change. Third, be ready to stay the course. That means persevere at all costs. Believe that you have the right to shape your destiny. Similarly, it means "never giving up" regardless of how difficult it becomes (and regardless of how many so-called friends fall by the wayside). If necessary, start over again and again and again! Remember, "**It's Up To You**" or as Ray Kroc would say:

Press on: Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful individuals with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.