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**The Secret of ASEP Success**

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| 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 termination alone are omnipotent. -- Ray Kroc |

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**lthough many exercise physiologists understand the risks of questioning a generic organization acting like a profession-specific organization, they are tired of the decades of misinformation, misdirection, and false beliefs. That is part of the reason they are not looking back. The other part is that they are now members of their own professional organization, which is the American Society of Exercise Physiologists (ASEP). After all, whatever self-doubt they may have experienced prior to becoming an ASEP member, it did not stop them from taking risks and relying on their strengths to promote the profession of exercise physiology.**

**They do not care what their academic colleagues think about exercise science, human performance, or sports medicine. They are exercise physiologists who have strong beliefs that exercise science, for example, is not exercise physiology just as a physician assistant is not medical doctor. They understand there is a difference between personal trainers and exercise physiologists. Regardless of whether a personal trainer loves to work out and believes in exercise as medicine, they are not the same as someone who gets an academic degree in exercise physiology. Their ideals and values support the proven and accepted way of becoming a healthcare professional, regardless of idea that this is “the way it is”.**

The ASEP leaders are exercise physiologists whose thinking is all about exercise physiology as a healthcare profession. They want to improve upon the existing 20th century thinking that “but, this is the way it has always been”. The ASEP leadership understands that having a backbone is part of the change process. They are not afraid to support new thinking and career possibilities. They are willing to take responsibility for developing a new “profession-specific future” for all exercise physiologists. Why? Because they are tired of the excuses that rule the day. Status quo is not the answer. It will only keep exercise physiologists from developing as a profession. Hence, exercise physiologists must take responsibility for their future, their freedom, and their growth.

No matter what hurdles must be jumped, the ASEP exercise physiologist will arrive at his or her destination. Each one is likely to have somewhat similar but different obstacles, but the secret of success is the willingness to never give up regardless of the circumstances. For example, the exercise physiologist may be a faculty member in the Department of Kinesiology and the Department Chair believes that kinesiology is exercise physiology. What is he or she going to do? The short answer is in understanding that the exercise physiologist has the right to his or her opinion about the importance of ASEP membership, ASEP Board Certification, and attending the Annual ASEP Conference. The implications of this 21st century way of thinking are significant, especially in regards to understanding the exercise physiologist’s capabilities and choices in shaping the profession of exercise physiology and achieving success.

The future of exercise physiologists as healthcare professionals is directly linked to their passion and persistence to live the ASEP vision. In sports, this is often referred to as “keeping your eye on the ball”. Commitment is fundamental to achieving success, which means “never giving up”. Or, as Socrates said, the secret to achieving success is “**When you want to succeed as much as you want to breathe, you will be a great success.”** Just as we need to breathe to live, our success depends on our mindset, our desire, and our persistence in doing whatever it takes so that all exercise physiologists can experience new career opportunities as healthcare professionals.

The success that ASEP leaders are talking about and living today is not about flipping a switch and then exercise physiologists become something altogether different overnight. They understand that success requires hard work driven by the exercise physiologist’s mindset. In short, do you believe that the exercise science degree graduates exercise physiologists? How about the kinesiology degree or the human performance degree? Do you think your Chair person has the right to say no to ASEP when you request the department’s help in attending a conference? The right answer is no to the three questions. The bottom line is that a mindset driven by 20th century thinking cannot accept, live, or experience the decisions ASEP exercise physiologists have made.

Non-ASEP exercise physiologists are living a life based on an outdated mindset and incorrect decisions that fail to address the basic logic in getting a college degree. Take a moment a reflect on the following misinformation that is commonplace on the Internet. “Graduates of a kinesiology degree**can become exercise physiologists**, athletic trainers, fitness instructors, physical therapists, and occupational therapists. They can also go on to become scientists and researchers who conduct studies and experiments.” Yes, it is true but only if graduates go on to get another academic degree in “x” area of study.

Given that “how you think” is important, thinking incorrectly is a huge problem since it takes from the likelihood of being successful after college. Given the time and expense in earning a college degree, shouldn’t students understand from day 1 how to think about what is and what isn’t an exercise physiology degree? I think so and, frankly, I find it unprofessional that the faculty does not make it clear that an exercise science degree is not an exercise physiology degree. The fact they don’t talk about the differences between the two academic degree programs means that they are doing whatever is believed to be necessary to bring in the students to survive as a department and to serve the faculty’s selfish purposes.

Since the students’ thoughts are critical to determining their destiny, they need correct information about their academic major. Otherwise, wrong decisions will be made with the misinformation provided to them by their teachers. They assume their teachers are telling them the truth, which is problematic for the obvious reasons. Today, increasingly college teaching is more about personal success and a higher salary than about the students’ success. In fact, the canvas of academia is painted with evidence of the professors’ success first and students’ future second. This is the students’ everyday reality that will change only when the professors are held accountable for their lack of caring. Hopefully, the power of caring will help make the unseen and little talked about academic behavior undergo a change that will capture a new vision; one that is designed to help the students and give meaning to a college degree.

Fortunately, the ASEP vision is designed to give purpose and meaning to the profession of exercise physiology. It helps exercise physiologists to find and understand why they exist. With the help of ASEP, they can explain their purpose as healthcare professionals. It is the organizational vision that is the key to their hope and expectation of success, which is as declared by the Lord, “I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11). Hence, exercise physiologists are not ordinary, but rather healthcare professionals who are made by God to help society.