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No Time for Defeat

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You can do what you want to do, accomplish what you want to accomplish, attain any reasonable objective you may have in mind – not all of a sudden, perhaps not in one swift and seeping act of achievement – but you can do it gradually, day by day and play by play, if you want to do it, it you work to do it, over a sufficiently long period of time.

-- William E. Holler

ASEP EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGISTS have no time for the printed letters, “Defeat.” Forget about the negative thoughts and the so-called power of others. They understand that positive thinking is consistent with a self-disciplined approach to becoming what exercise physiologists are meant to be. Moreover, they get that a healthcare profession begins with professionals who believe in the words, “I CAN” in capital letters. It is the only way that professions are built. That is why they seek out every opportunity to share their excitement as 21st century healthcare professionals. They acknowledge and live exercise physiology as healthcare professionals and not as “researchers interested in their own promotion and tenure status.” They get that change takes courage to commit one’s emotions, time, and thinking as an ASEP exercise physiologist.

Maurice Switzer said, “You seldom get what you go after unless you know in advance what you want.” This thinking is at the center of the academic exercise physiologists’ problem with the change process. They still believe their primary job is to do research even if it is at the expense of the students’ education and success after college. Never, not once, has a well-known doctorate exercise physiologists written about professionalism. Yet, they write exercise physiology books and variations thereof and talk at great length about the importance of research. While it is true that research is important, it is not “the beginning and the end” of a college teacher’s responsibilities to the students. You might say, the majority of the academic exercise

physiologists are products of past thinking and failed rhetoric that keeps them on their knees when all other academic departments and respective faculty are standing up and telling the world who they are and why they are pursuing professionalism.

If you are reading this article to build support for yourself, it is a good first step. If you are interested in increasing your chances of a better career in the public sector, remember, “You become what you think.” If you are tired of the academic exercise physiologists using the academic system to build their financial and career security, then, pull away and embrace the ASEP perspective for a better future for yourself, your family, and the future of the profession of exercise physiology. Thinking straight isn’t complicated, but it is a huge challenge when so many people are working to build themselves rather than helping others to achieve their goals in life.

For these reasons, it is important to welcome the opportunity to think like an ASEP exercise physiologist and act like an ASEP exercise physiologist. The reader may say, “What? What are you talking about? What is your point? I have never heard or read of anything like this in all of my years as a student and after college. Well, then, that is part of the problem, isn’t it? The encouraging thing is that every time you read an article posted on **PEP**online or **JPEP**, you may think “It isn’t an impossibility to be more than a personal trainer or have to apply to graduate school.” The truth is that positive thinking is not all that common in exercise physiology, which often sets the circumstances for failed dreams and expectations. Failure to get a job after college or living the feeling that the time spent earning the undergraduate degree was wasted kills enthusiasm and desire.

Remember that the title of this short article is “No Time for Defeat.” Hence, it is okay to experience pressure and tension as long as person is disciplined to make constructive use of his or her time. Yes, I understand it sounds too simple to be true. No, this isn’t rocket science. Most people would agree that it isn’t a complicated thought, but it is hard to live. The idea itself is almost meaningless to a negative and/or destructive mindset that is inclined to dismiss it cynically and say, “I don’t think so. Are you serious?” However, reality is this: Life is too short to never start thinking, living, experiencing, and making things happen in spite of the pressure to embrace status quo.

Ultimately, every person’s success is lies with that person. This is true regardless of the encouragement or discouragement from others. It is true whether you friends and colleagues support you or try to hold you back. The ASEP leadership understands this reality. More often than not, they are still living with or have dealt with the negativity and demeaning statements of colleagues. The person who gets the job done is the person who forgives and moves on. That person understands that ASEP is as successful as its memberships’ willingness to become what they say they are. So, why not recognize the power that is within you is the driving force for success? Why not, especially since there are young and old dogs who are not willing to learn new tricks.

Simply believe deep down that you can change and live the life you wish to live. After all, life is about people those who are willing to find a better way.

That “way” is ASEP. For 17 years, the ASEP leaders have spelled out the vision, goals, mission, and objectives for everyone who has the desire to be an exercise physiologist. The “break off point” from sports medicine was clear then as it is today. There is nothing that will compromise the ASEP effort to promote professionalism in exercise physiology. Every exercise physiologist will be judged by what he or she is doing on behalf of the students of the profession of exercise physiology, and the day-to-day commitment and dedication to exercise physiology. Nothing will snuff out happiness, willingness, and respect for all exercise physiologists who have the desire to live and fully experience their own profession as a healthcare giving force.

Of course, none of this was possible without strong exercise physiologists who stood up and challenged status quo almost two decades ago. In due time, their names will forever be known for they had the guts to deal with the fear of their stepping outside the box for all the right reasons. They understand that it is the responsibility of every ASEP exercise physiologist to work on behalf of professionalism in exercise physiology. They understand the right of every Board Certified Exercise Physiologist to prescribe exercise medicine in helping clients and patients prevent or postpone the negative effects of acute and chronic diseases. Please appreciate that this isn’t a stretch of the imagination, but a reality of the 21st century of building, striving, and expanding exercise physiology as a healthcare profession.

In short, the profession exists to ensure that members of society get out of life a mind and body state of health that is forgiving, confident, and energizing. These are the deep convictions of the ASEP leaders, members, and Board Certified Exercise Physiologists. This is an encouraging thought because thinking right and doing the right things for the right reasons increases one’s ability to face difficult decisions and do so regardless of the consequences. This means also that every time one of the generic organizations does something to copy a profession-specific organization, they take a step back in integrity. As corny as it might sound, the organization and those responsible have lost their way.

You, however, have not lost your way. Your courage and passion for something better to build yourself, your family, and to help others is an eloquent expression of an enthusiastic professional who thinks and speaks with passion. It is a simple human characteristic, but it is the understanding of unmet needs designed to correct the indifference of failed commitment. Thus, the reason for ASEP drives the behavior of exercise physiologists to distinguish their careers not as an exercise specialist, personal trainer or fitness instructor, but as a credible healthcare professional. This in itself is not something to apologize for since the steps are recognizable and necessary for a safe and appropriate prescription of exercise medicine. This is why ASEP exists, regardless of the pressure and tension. This is why the ASEP exercise physiologists emphasize

the importance of supporting their own profession-specific code of ethics, standards of professional practice, accreditation, and board certification.

So, the bottom line is this: Why not relax, breathe in and out, and allow your mind to ponder new ASEP ideas and possibilities of a positive self-evaluation in which exercise physiologists see themselves as significant professionals who represent an untapped power of healthcare reservoir. It is this spirit and state of mind that moves every person to value exercise physiologists who prescribe exercise medicine. This thinking is critical to the new ASEP beginning in that it sets the stage to overcome the challenges of past thinking. So, having said that, why not get with the program? Clearly, far too many people never start living their dreams and hopes because of misguided thinking. Don't let unsolved problems created by the generic organization complicate life. Instead, stand firm with your beliefs and do what you can to change what you can and, then, deal with the challenges. Remember, it is just a matter of time that change becomes everyday reality. The key to tough-mindedness that makes the difference is desire, persistence, and belief regardless of the roadblocks. Stay strong and determined.

In closing, the obvious question is this: "Do you have what it takes to think with your head and heart?" Stated somewhat differently, "Do you recognize the need to express the ASEP vision to build and help the students of exercise physiology and the profession itself?" If the answer is "yes" ...then, why not do what you can by giving in to need of so many for the passionate expression and meaning of ASEP that will ultimately produce success for everyone who wants to be and is already an exercise physiologist. After all, the process itself adds purpose and meaning to life for each and everyone who steps forward. So, why not take the time to figure out what is your state of mind? Why not decide today that you will support the ASEP organization? Yes, it isn't easy but it is the right thing to do. Perhaps, you need to contemplate these ideas and others of your own regard. Remember, there is "No Time for Defeat." All that is necessary to stay the course is: "Believe that you have, and you have it."