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ASEP Stands for THE COURAGE TO ACT ON OUR VISION

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The gift of a vision is the power to become our dreams.

ASEP is all about anxiety, stress, possibilities, hope, relevance, and vision! It is also 100% about the professionalization of exercise physiology. While fitness instructors and trainers are drowning in yesterday's rhetoric, exercise physiology is promptly becoming the new buzz in healthcare. Not only are exercise physiologists increasingly recognized as the experts in exercise medicine, they are the healthcare professionals with the knowledge, credibility, and conviction to willfully move the profession into the 21st century. Hence, my purpose in writing this article is to provide the reader with an understanding of both the challenges and possibilities that associate with the change process.

It takes courage to leave the beach and swim out to sea. It is no simple matter.

-- John P. Gorsuch
An Invitation To The
Spiritual Journey

Even if you are already a personal trainer, you may find this article helpful. For certain, it is about finding yourself and enhancing your career opportunities however complicated the world is today. Those who take a moment to reflect on the ideas and concerns presented are likely to cross the barrier of yesterday's thinking into something much better. Those who fail to do so are likely to automatically consign themselves to a 20th

century sports medicine formula that hasn't proven correct. Frankly, turning a deaf ear to useful communication is seldom helpful. The results are 90% of the time less than satisfactory.

Bear in mind that there are few hard and fast rules in thinking outside the box. What is important is that exercise physiologists stop admiring and copying yesterday's style of thinking. It is old, and it is obviously a mistake that is loud and clear. Hence, why not imagine yourself as a healthcare professional with a credible degree in exercise physiology? Even if you have never been faced

It is unfortunate that most people feel they have to do everything by their own efforts. It doesn't have to be that way. If we are willing, we can invite God into our lives to help us with the courage to act on our vision.

with this expectation, imagine how you would feel. This thinking may not be a simple matter to many who are subject to yesterday's thinking. It takes courage to recall the past and the present and, then, ask yourself: "Is that what you want for your future?" If it is, there are no issues before you. If it isn't, change is necessary by learning to be different by thinking differently. This means

learning to trust the ASEP leadership as men and women who are working on your behalf.

The sum of new ideas result from knowledge, biases, hopes, fears, dreams, and desires to mention a few. The problem most people experience is the lack of courage to proceed. And yet, according to John P. Gorsuch (1), "Because God's Spirit has been planted in us, we need to be very clear about something: in spite of our laziness and our outright stubbornness, there are deep resources to help us face into our problems and our fears, and grow." It is God's support that enables us to charge-hard against the forces of decades. Our job is to develop the right strategy, message, and a panoramic vision of something better for all exercise physiologists. The ASEP leaders are confident that they understand this point. The ASEP vision is clear.

For others, strangely enough, this is still a hard concept to grasp. Their notion of changing from what they are comfortable with is especially challenging to deal with when it comes to feelings of separation from status quo. Thus, in

my experience, and that of most change agents I have talked to, hardly anyone is quick to embrace new thinking. The emotional barriers are difficult to remove, thus making it hard to accept a different message. Barriers of any kind are always a challenge to deal with. Clearly, emotions have had a significant influence on how ASEP members communicate not only the ASEP goals and objectives of the organization, but also the manner in which they speak of ASEP.

Even then there is always the effect of expectation on perception, given the mindset driven by historical thinking. To emphasize this point, David Lewis presents in his book *How To Get Your Message Across* (2) an excellent example of the effect of expectation on perception. His instructions are to cover the numbers with a sheet of paper. Move the paper downward to reveal them one at a time and count the numbers aloud as you do so, i.e., 'One thousand, two thousand, two thousand and twenty, three thousand and twenty' and so forth.

1000
1000
20
1000
40
1000
30
1000
10

Was your final total 6000? If so you have responded in the way the majority does when asked to perform this calculation. The right answer is 5100. Why did you get wrong? Lewis points out that your mind was locked into a mindset that caused you to think in thousands. When applied to exercise physiology, it should not be surprising that the professors' mindset and expectations exert a powerful influence on the thinking of recent graduates of doctorate programs. If the professors don't learn to think differently, it is that much harder for their students to grasp a different mindset.

This thinking has everything to do with the professionalization of exercise physiology? The final total 600 is the wrong answer. It is representative of the sports medicine and exercise science mindset that keeps exercise physiologists thinking as they have always thought. To think differently, to see farther than what is common, today's exercise physiologists must unlock their mindset to see not just what is but also what can be. This means that they must want to think differently by keeping an open mindset.

Seeing the future as it comes into being is part of the change process that inspires new thinking. As Myles Munroe (3) said, "The destiny of an acorn is a tree. By faith, you can see the tree within the seed." Similarly, the destiny of ASEP is the profession of exercise physiology. The leaders have a vision of exercise physiologists as healthcare professionals. They believe that only by seeing and believing in what is not yet recognized can exercise physiologists fulfill professionalism in exercise physiology. This is the test of any evolving profession and how deeply it is attuned to the spirit of professionalism and openness to change.

In sum, it is for certain that exercise physiologists shall never know themselves beyond their historical perspective until they are willing to plug into a larger reality. That reality is the most challenging and important task we exercise physiologists have. We avoid it when we fail to shift from yesterday's thinking to the trusting of our destiny with the ASEP organization. Our professionalism is locked within us, awaiting our willingness to let new thinking guide and influence the professionalization of exercise physiology.

Obviously, we cannot control the future. But we can take action now to try to achieve results closer to what we want them to be. If we don't try at all, one thing is certain: We'll have no say in our future.

-- Gordon Porter Miller (4)

References

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