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What Do You Believe About Exercise Physiology?

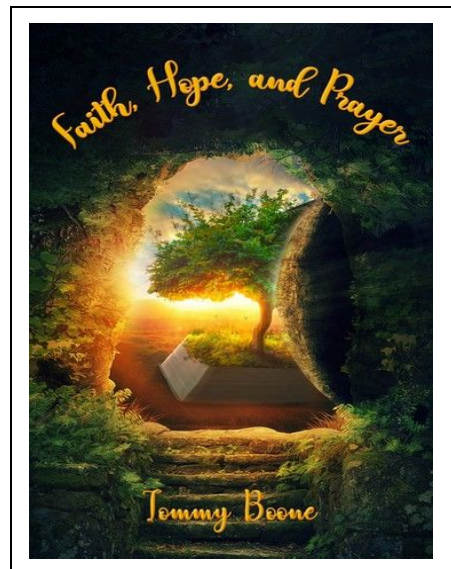
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As a man thinketh, so he is. As he continues to think, so he remains.

-- James Allen

It has been at least 50 years since I was involved in coaching and teaching gymnastics, and even longer since I was a college gymnast. I still remember and understand the role the mind played in learning and performing gymnastic skills (such as a stutz handstand, a diomidov, or a one-arm handstand on the parallel bars). Without the right mindset, it is not possible to be a gymnast, to complete a college education, to stay married, or to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

The part that the mind plays in life often goes unnoticed and/or discussed. Yet, it is true that we can accomplish so much more in life if we would recognize the power within us because it determines what we think, what we believe, and what we become. What we believe we can do determines whether we are willing to do the work to be the person of our dreams. Our beliefs, how we think, speak, and act determine our reality. If you are interested



in becoming an athlete, an exercise physiologist, or a college teacher, then you cannot be indifferent to what is going on around you.

The mind is a miracle-working power to put you on the right road to success and happiness. If you have the desire to write a book, to live a healthy life, or to fall in love and raise a family, then you must believe that you have it within you to do so. Your mind is all-powerful. You must believe in yourself. You must have the desire to see things that your friends or colleagues don't see. As an example, if you want to be an ASEP Board Certified Exercise Physiologist, you must live the thought in your mind. Joseph Murphy and Ian McMahan highlighted this point in their book, ***The Power of the Subconscious Mind***.

Your mind is the gateway to success. Have you looked into the eyes of an athlete who was told that it is time to perform the full twisting back flip without a spotter? I have. As a coach, I can recall saying to a gymnast that it is time. But, there is always the mental factor to deal with. Even though I believed the young gymnast was ready, her eyes at that moment said otherwise. She wasn't mentally ready and so she refused to try without a spotter. Most of the time the

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

coach knows when the athlete is ready, but there is always the mental factor that must be taken into consideration. Belief is so powerful that if the athlete isn't thinking I can do it, the chances are it is unlikely the skill will be performed correctly. Bruce Lee put it this way: "One will never get any more than he thinks he can get."

Hence, in regards to the profession of exercise physiology, what do your eyes say about exercise physiology? Is it little more than the typical "Physiology of Exercise" course? Is exercise physiology the same as the Exercise Science major (i.e., anyone with the Exercise Science major believes that he or she can refer to him- or herself as an Exercise Physiologist)? Is exercise physiology a discipline or a sub-discipline of Kinesiology or, perhaps, Human Performance or Physiology? Or, with regards to the thinking of the ASEP leadership, do you agree that Exercise Physiology is a healthcare profession as they report it is on the ASEP website? What do you believe? Is your thinking a product of what your colleagues say or what you think?

Do you have the desire to share with the world what exercise physiology is to you? The truth is that you are probably reluctant to express your thoughts for fear of what your colleagues' are thinking? Obviously, at present, the everyday

thinking of the majority of the exercise physiologists speaks to exercise physiology as a sub-discipline of Kinesiology. The problem with such thinking is that it is totally wrong. But, exercise physiologists at all levels are not comfortable with sharing their thoughts, ideas, and beliefs for fear of retaliation. So, they go from one day to the next without saying what they actually think. Yet, if only they were to not allow the thinking of others to shape their thoughts, they could change their destiny (and if they are a professor, that means thinking differently about their students).

To further emphasize my point, please bear with me. If exercise physiologists think of themselves as individuals who work as an Exercise Scientist or as a faculty member in a Department of Kinesiology without any interest in promoting their own profession, then it must be true from their perspective that exercise physiology does not exist as a profession in and of itself. But, if there are exercise physiologists who habitually think of themselves as members of the exercise physiology profession, then, as transformational thinkers their willingness to believe what others do not believe gives them the hope and faith of thinking positive about ASEP.

Regardless of the majority feeling the first way that sustains mediocrity, those who support ASEP do so on a conscious level with the passion to support change. Their approach to exercise physiology is driven by an obligation and responsibility to think of exercise physiologists as members of a healthcare profession. This means they are willing to share the same with their students and, if it is necessary, they will confront the reality of professors who are indifferent to the students. They are willing to do what is necessary to become their vision.

You can have anything you want if you are willing to give up the belief that you can't have it.

--Dr. Robert Anthony

We become what we think, what we talk about, and what we do. If we think our work is for the right reason, if we think that our actions will bring forth positive results, and if we start living as professionals, we will become our vision.

So, to all the exercise physiologists who refuse to rock the boat on behalf of ASEP and the students of exercise physiology, the bottom line is that they are unwilling to help others be successful. Why, because ultimately, every exercise physiologist who is consciously looking for success and improvement for all

exercise physiologists will find it. That is why the ASEP members are already a success. They have learned to think for themselves, regardless of the work required or the circumstances that may result from following their own thoughts and dreams.

So, why not think about it? Or as Steve Jobs said, *“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.”* Sounds like great advice, right? Why not take a moment a pray for all exercise physiologists? Our Father in Heaven, be gracious unto Thy servants, the professors of the colleges throughout the United States. Given them strength for the ASEP tasks of this day and guide them in their thinking. When they are prone to think that the non-exercise physiology organizations are right in defining “who is an exercise physiologists” and “what is exercise physiology”, help them to understand the necessity of new thinking, the importance of life-changing beliefs, and the good things that are possible with hope, faith, and prayer.

Remember, if you are willing to tell your friends and colleagues that ASEP is the way to professional growth and development for all exercise physiologists, that is what you and they will become. The ASEP leaders believe this 100%. They believe the lack of these beliefs has kept exercise physiology as a research discipline with minimal future career opportunities for the students of exercise physiology. Thus, there are no secrets since it is obvious that the 20th century thinking that keeps exercise science and kinesiology afloat must understood for what it is – status quo. This point of view is consistent with the James Allen statement, “As a man thinketh, so he is. As he continues to think, so he remains.”

Yes, it is possible to think differently. It is as simple as putting your mind to a different idea to realize something different. The process itself is a reflection of who you are individually in that if you give up on your dream of exercise physiology as something other than a credible healthcare profession, then you are selling yourself short. Remember, if you can dream it or live it in your mind from one day to the next, then you can help make it your reality. This is true regardless of those who may laugh at you or ridicule you for thinking of exercise physiology as something other than exercise science or sports medicine. So, regardless of what others fail to understand, this means you must hold fast to your thoughts, ideas, and dreams. Stay the course and do not allow anything to distract you from realizing your goal.

After all, failure becomes your reality only when you give up and give in to the ideas and beliefs of others. Nothing should stop you from believing that exercise physiology is a profession unto itself. Keep at it and never give up or otherwise you will find yourself thinking that exercise physiology is a sub-discipline of kinesiology, which makes no sense whatsoever. Frankly, there is no joy and opportunity in giving up. Thus, it is important to stay the course or otherwise giving up is consistent with the thinking that defines you as part of the 20th century status quo. Is that what you want to be remembered for? Is that what your subconscious mind is telling you? Or, do you want to be remembered as an exercise physiologist who had the guts to fight for your professional recognition, development, and respect for the exercise physiology healthcare profession?

Why not share the story and legacy of ASEP leaders like Mr. Shane Paulson (the CEO and President of ASEP) and Dr. Frank Wyatt (Exercise Physiology Professor and Board Certified Exercise Physiologist at Midwestern State University in Texas) and get involved in motivating and inspiring others to join and support the work of ASEP professional development? Why not do what is necessary to create a better future for the students of exercise physiology? That is, why not do what you can to help students achieve their dreams of career success? After all, no doubt you have worked for other things in your

Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.

--Thomas Jefferson

life, such as becoming an athlete. You knew then that it was important to never quit and to keep believing in yourself. The ASEP leaders understand this thinking. They will never stop working to overcome the present-day mindset. They understand the mistakes and failures created by status quo thinking, and they are willing to keep at the change process to bring recognition to all exercise physiologists throughout the United States as the healthcare professionals who are responsible for the prescribing exercise medicine.

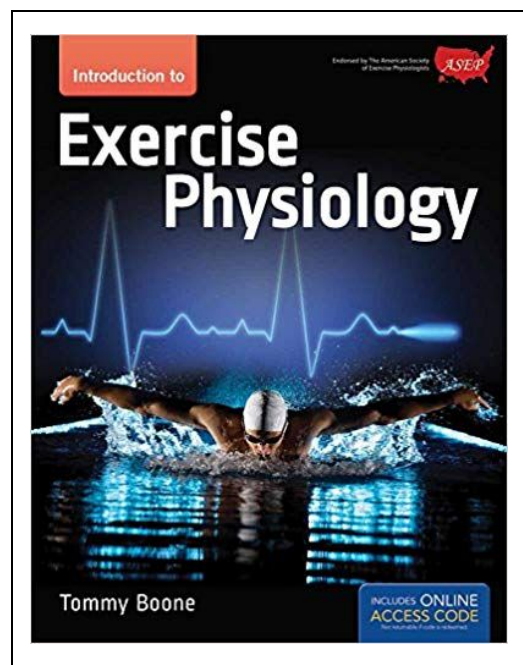
So, why not answer this question: What is it that you believe today that you didn't believe yesterday about exercise physiology? Remember, your beliefs will either help guide you to make a difference about ASEP or they will continue to align you with the non-exercise physiology organizations. Yes, this is the point of this article. To continue to think as exercise physiologists have always done means you can stop reading and go back to your old way of thinking. Or, you can say "Enough is enough. I am going to face the difficult moments of the

change process and challenge the status quo. I am going to start thinking about who I want to be regardless of what my colleagues are likely to say. I am going to face up to the reality that I believe is the correct one for the profession of exercise physiology, and that is the need for professional development through the ASEP organization. I am going to change my membership from whatever organization to ASEP and support the work towards accomplishing the ASEP goals and objectives. I am going to sit for Board Certification and earn the title, Board Certified Exercise Physiologist. I am going help with the development and recognition of ASEP however I can. I am going to look upon my support and work with ASEP as an opportunity to grow exercise physiology to benefit the students of exercise physiology throughout the United States.

If I had to identify one important reason for a person's success, it would be the power of one's thoughts. To think the right thoughts regardless of what others may say is the beginning of something special. Yes, I am cognizant of the fact that it is much easier to simply go along with the flow. After all, there are powerful forces at work in diverse ways to encourage the turning of a deaf ear to the ASEP initiative. That is why some exercise physiologists who support the popular generic organizations instead of the **American Society of Exercise Physiologists** think that ASEP exercise physiologists have missed the mark.

I have witnessed many different ways to think about this topic during the past 5 decades. What I continue to live with is the following question: Why not step out of the past and believe in your own right to define exercise physiology as a profession? That is what I did when I wrote the 2014 **Introduction to Exercise Physiology** text. Belief is all powerful. It begins with the attitude of independence backed by the determination and the will to endure to the end. After all, there is magic in setting a goal and staying the course.

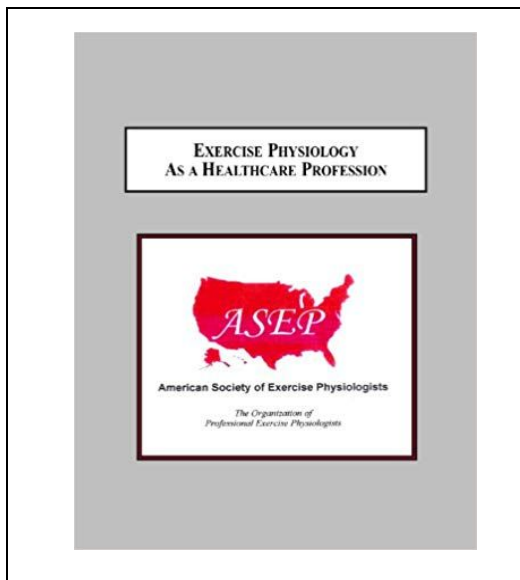
Remember, a different world cannot be built by indifferent people. That is why every major change is the result of persistence and perseverance that builds character, hope, and opportunity. That is why refusing to give up and staying the course are all powerful. An old Latin proverb says it best, "Believe that you



have it, and you have it.” Belief is without question one of the most important forces that empowers each of us to achieve our goals. For example, I believe that ASEP is the professional organization for exercise physiologists. Certainly, exercise physiologists can be members of a sports medicine or an exercise science organization, but their professional membership should be with ASEP. This is simply straight thinking just as physical therapists are members of their own professional organization, APTA.

But, unfortunately too many exercise physiologists (including strangely enough, most college professors) are not interested in learning how to think differently about exercise physiology. They want to keep it a research discipline and not a healthcare profession. That is a major reason why I wrote the 2012 book, **Exercise Physiology As A Healthcare Profession**. On behalf of the

students of exercise physiology, I believe that exercise physiologists must embrace ASEP as their professional organization.



Claude M. Bristol said it best, “You must know where you are headed, and you must keep a fixed goal in view.” He also said, “Just believe you can do it and you can!” This is true regardless of what your colleagues think is impossible. The quote by Clavin Coolidge highlights this point: “Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men 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. The slogan ‘Press On’ has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”

It is important to repeat this point again, persistence is omnipotent. It is the winner’s way of thinking. No, it doesn’t mean there will not be challenges and trials. For certain, there will be obstacles and setbacks forever. But, when your friends, colleagues, and others create inevitable difficulties in your life, forgive them and learn from each encounter. Move on and begin again. There is no reason to give up in despair, especially if you believe that exercise physiology is a healthcare profession and members of the profession need their own professional organization. Stay positive and motivated regardless of what non-ASEP exercise physiologists are likely to say.

In closing, it is imperative to think beyond today. Tomorrow is always another opportunity to build a different world of exercise physiology by ASEP exercise physiologists. Always keep your mind set on ways to influence your academic colleagues to think and act in a way that it makes a difference in their students' lives. That is what the ASEP leaders are doing. They are keeping their mindset on the prize of something better for all exercise physiologists and not just for a few. They understand that courage and persistence are the means to conquering their adversities and living a professionally satisfying and fulfilling life. They know what they want and by God's grace, they have what is critically important for the success of exercise physiologists as healthcare professionals.

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--Dr. Robert Anthony