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AMPA

Society & Fellowship

I write this having recently returned from New Mexico, where I got to enjoy some extraordinarily informative and productive times with some of my favorite people at CCTMC and AMPA's biennial strategic planning meeting. I wasn't at Snowbird in '92, but spending some time talking to those of you who have been with AMPA awhile has reinforced the importance of society and fellowship. The physician practice of air and critical transport medicine is one of the most independent and isolated, and the opportunity to collegially share ideas and expertise with each other is often limited by time and geography.

The evolution of the Medical Director Forum into the Air Medical Physician Symposium has contributed significantly to our interactions as a community, and the board is developing additional ways to enhance how we communicate, work, and grow together. One of the things in which participants at our conferences consistently express interest is some form of recognition for their practice as a physician specialist in air and critical care transport medicine. In the coming months, we hope to create novel ways to communicate electronically, new opportunities for committee involvement, and a formal way to acknowledge your experience and contributions to our field.

Brendan Berry, President

ASTNA

Resilience

The term *resilience* by definition includes the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change. Resilience offers protection from stress. Stress is defined as a physiological and/or psychological response to a perceived or actual threat. While we indisputably all have stress, our ability to be resilient must be addressed, prepared, and maintained in order to preserve our mental and physical wellbeing. Stress is unavoidable, it is part of life, and while this is



especially true in our line of work, we are all exposed to varying levels of stress each and every day.

The balance of stress and resilience was recently immensely challenged by many individuals in the small community in which I was born and raised. This battle of resilience arose from a nationally publicized tragedy surrounding a young child who was reported missing. After an extensive investigation and search, it came to light that he was battered and abused until his death and then buried in a shallow grave at the hands of his parents. There is anger, sadness, blame, and disbelief. How do we move forward? This was beyond devastating, not only for our police, fire, EMS, and health care workers who had some form of frontline involvement in this case, but also for members of the community.

People who don't work in the previously mentioned professions were hyperexposed to the things we see and hear all too often in our line of work. To hear that people within the community were having difficulty coping with the details of this tragedy, while not surprising, is thought provoking. We are constantly exposed to human suffering through illness and injury. Our ability to be resilient, make changes, and find purpose

must be continuously evaluated and addressed in order to avoid a negative impact on our mental and physical health, as well as overall wellbeing that comes with the high stress environment in which we work.

How do we build and improve resilience? Our ability to survive, adapt, thrive, and recover are crucial elements in the foundation of cultivating resilience and in turn thriving as individuals, personally and professionally. In life there will always be stress, situations, challenges, events, and tragedy, varying in severity and longevity. Our success in responding, adjusting, bouncing back, and growing from these circumstances depends greatly on our mindset.

Neuroplasticity

While some may consider the stress response or resilience level as innate, genetic, or developed from upbringing/past experience, I challenge you to reflect on your opinion of this notion in contrast to the concept of neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity is described as the brain's capability to restructure itself by developing new neural connections throughout the lifespan. Neuroplasticity allows the brain's neurons to compensate for trauma and disease and to regulate activities in

response to situation, circumstance, or environmental changes. Take a moment to evaluate your current level of resilience; if it's not where you want to be, maybe it's time for a rewire.

Sharon J. Purdom, President

IAFCCP Engagement

The IAFCCP recently conducted our spring board meeting at CCTMC in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The meeting was excellent, and as always, seeing everyone tends to keep the fires of progress burning. These events always amaze me because they are the culmination of passion and excellence brought to fruition. The underlying sentiment that I took away from the event was engagement.

Whether you're at work or at home, on a sports team, or in a club, you can recognize the teammates who are engaged and the

teammates who are not. Board members and associations are no different, and like yawns, disengagement can be contagious. Sitting at the IAFCCP board meeting, it was clear your elected board members are engaged. The membership got it right when they voted these professionals in. It was awe-inspiring, watching your board members work for you, advocating and bringing their expertise to the table to make sure that we deliver on our commitments of opportunities and examples of leadership, excellence, and education.

During this event we covered the spectrum, continuing to see improvement in our delegate program, led by board member Cory Oaks. We discussed IAFCCP's strategic partnerships and the events occurring in our near future, such as the Safety Drive with the Medivac Foundation and future planning of CCTMC with ASTNA and AAMS. We congregated over support for future conferences that were important to our membership and

ways to continue to spotlight and recognize our champions of the paramedic industry. We discussed at length ways to continue to promote higher education as an organic element to the professional specialty care paramedic.

Ultimately, engagement was the key to another successful board meeting. With that I would like to recognize Dr Peter Tilney for his support and guidance as he moves on to other opportunities. We appreciate all the time and effort that you have put into the IAFCCP, and if there is ever anything we may be able to do to support you in your future endeavors, please let us know.

I would also like to recognize Dr Michael Brisson, our military liaison, for his contributions as he plans to rotate off the board. He has been instrumental in promoting ideas and opportunities of reciprocity between the military and civilian skillsets of the out-of-hospital clinicians.

Ryan Walter, President