How Do You Plan to End This Year?

Recently, I was part of a group who was requested to reflect on and share experiences (both positive and negative) during the past year of the pandemic. One of the themes that emerged was the impact of random acts of kindness and connection that happened in this unprecedented time of crisis. During these extraordinary days, small gestures such as unexpected check-ins, touching base with people to see if they were okay, and arranging socially distant or virtual get-togethers made a major impact on our well-being. It reminded me of a quote from Leo Buscaglia, a professor at USC and motivational speaker, “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” Our community of coworkers, friends, APTA professional colleagues, neighbors, and strangers have at moments provided us exactly what we needed, even though we didn’t know to ask.

As an element of this centennial year, the APTA is challenging its members to commit to ending the year with 100 days of service starting on September 22. This is our opportunity as individuals, as well as on an organizational and professional level, to give back to our communities that have supported us this year. There is so much need out there right now that any type of service can make the world a better place: from health care and wellness screening, fall prevention education, donations of food and clothing, or equipment drives. I encourage you to advocate within your local community and your workplace to join the APTA on this 100-day journey to create those moments of impact for others. If starting an initiative seems daunting, there are many efforts being organized at your local, state, and national levels that need additional volunteers. This service initiative comes at an opportune time, as we are hoping to initiate or expand our social interactions with others. We all have a community that supported us not only this year but also in our journey to becoming a physical therapist or physical therapy assistant. Now is our opportunity to connect with others, surround yourselves with others, and give back to the community that has supported us throughout the pandemic. Giving of our time and expertise provides an unparalleled opportunity to bridge gaps and create impactful moments.

Winston Churchill wrote, “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” Often, we make commitments about how we will start our new year. I challenge you to make a commitment to end this year in a meaningful way. What will be your focus for these 100 days of service?

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REFERENCE