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New Beginnings

I just returned from a long walk in Riverside Park. As I write this, it is a gorgeous spring day here in New York City—the first one we have had in ages. We had a long, freezing, snowy, icy, gloomy winter that seemed to go on forever. Today, though, is sunny and warm, with a bright blue sky. The cherry and dogwood trees are blooming, and tulips and daffodils are sprouting. The streets are packed with people, anxious to enjoy the day, and everyone looks happy. By the time you read this, spring will have sprung, and we will be well on our way to the warmth and sunshine of summer.

The uplifting feelings of renewal that accompany this time of year reflect my own thoughts as I write my first editorial as editor of the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing* (CJON). I am so excited to have the opportunity to work with such a fine journal, and I have enjoyed watching its evolution throughout the years. Some of the most rewarding times in my professional life have been spent mentoring colleagues in publishing, and I happily anticipate continuing that work with many of you. Each editor, of course, puts her or his own stamp on a journal, and as we transition into my vision for CJON, I hope that you will find the journal increasingly indispensable to your current practice and the roles to which you aspire.

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We are at a time now when study after study quantifies the nursing shortage and its negative effects on patients and nurses. An article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (Steinbrook, 2002) called us an embattled profession, stating that we are overworked, discontented, and underpaid. Perhaps, but few other professions have such a variety of specialties and roles. In my career, to date, I have been a staff nurse, a manager, the director of research for the Navy Nurse Corps and a specialty nursing organization, an advanced practice nurse, and a professor. Certainly, problems exist within the nursing profession—many of them on two feet. However, I believe that there is no quicker end to feeling overwhelmed and frustrated than taking a small step toward completing a goal. The opportunities to stretch your skills are many within the Oncology Nursing Society.

In grade and high school, we became adept at creative and expressive writing. That skill

was beaten out of most of us in nursing school and the clinical setting. Writing became checks on a flow sheet or half sentences, all devoid of punctuation. Nurses often need to relearn to write expressively and clearly. The best way to achieve this is by actually writing, rewriting, and writing again. If you have never written for a professional publica-

tion, perhaps now is the time. Several mechanisms exist to help you get started. Participating in a column such as “Test Your Knowledge” might give newer authors the structure needed to write a first article. Others may team up with a more experienced colleague to develop a manuscript on a new disease or interesting therapy.

We all can use a little spring cleaning. Old habits and routines can make us irritable, bored, and dusty. Our specialty is a dynamic one, and many resources are available within ONS to help you rise to the challenge. I hope that you will give some thought to renewing yourself, both professionally and personally.

Reference

Steinbrook, R. (2002). Nursing in the crossfire. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 346, 1757–1766.

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