

## Firm Up Your Resolve

Marilyn Allen, Editor at Large

As I watched the broadcast of the Summer Olympics in Beijing every day, I contemplated the face of Michael Phelps coming up out of the water as he swam his way to a record-breaking eight gold medals for a single Olympics - a record that had held firm since the 1972 Olympic Games in Berlin. I saw the look of a determined competitor; almost that of a warrior. What does that facial expression embody? Determination, defined as a firm intention or purpose.

There were many such stories of resolve at the 2008 Olympics: U.S. gymnasts Nastia Liukin and Shawn Johnson each taking a gold medal in the individual all-around and the balance beam, respectively. Jamaican Usain Bolt, the fastest man in the world, with world records and gold medals in the 100-meter and 200-meter dash. The American women sweeping all three medals in saber fencing - an Olympic sport in which women could not compete until the 2004 games. The U.S. men's water polo team walking away with a silver medal after a surprise upset of top-ranked Croatia. The U.S. men's volleyball team taking their coach from the personal tragedy of his father-in-law's death two weeks earlier to a gold medal victory. All of these athletes and many more showed how firm they were in their resolve to win.

Then I began to question myself about my firm resolve. Maybe you should do the same. Now is the time to ask yourself two questions:

1. What am I determined to achieve personally?
2. Where is the AOM profession determined to go in the U.S.?

Personal thoughts, goals and intentions are just that - personal. When was the last time you gave thought to this? Do you regularly self-monitor to see that you are achieving what you are determined to do? There is a saying: "Life isn't about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain."

It seems that many times we get bogged down and mired in the day-to-day storms. We interact with family (with all of its joys and sorrows), friends and sick people. The storm clouds certainly do gather. We must remind ourselves daily to dance in the rain.

We have many responsibilities in providing for ourselves and our families, and sharing in the responsibilities of our patients' health. Life is full of paths that are not always the easiest or the most fun to travel. All of these events and paths have an effect on our attitude. There is another saying: "Attitude is everything." Although this saying is slightly overused, there is much truth to be found there.

I came across yet another saying recently: "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude in life." Attitude is more important than education, money, circumstances, failures, success, or what other people think, say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break an organization, business or home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people will act in certain ways. We cannot change the inevitable.

The only thing we can do is look at our own attitude. Life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we react to it. You are in charge of your attitude.

Along with caring and achieving things for our own sake, we must be determined to promote and increase the outreach for the profession. Most often, we are deterred by the storm clouds that keep us from sharing and spreading the information about the healing properties of Oriental medicine - creating an information flow. In the language of public relations, this is known as "buzz."

The Summer Olympics have helped to create a "buzz" about acupuncture. From the opening ceremonies featuring 2,008 martial artists performing *tai chi* in unison to acupuncture being offered for the first time as a therapy to athletes, the good word about acupuncture and Oriental medicine was broadcast to billions of viewers across the globe. It is up to each of us to carry on that "buzz" by helping everyone we meet to learn more about this universal medicine being rediscovered in America.

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