



Association for the Advancement of Wound Care
WIN Fall Newsletter 2011

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AAWC is pleased to announce the winners of the \$100 WIN prizes:

Jack Kegley from Seattle, WA is the Winner of the Article Contest for *“What is the best way to keep a good frame of mind when dealing with a hard to heal wound?”*

Article can be found on Page 2.

Venus Stuhan of Kansas City MO submitted the AAWC WIN Membership Survey and has won the prize for that category.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JACK AND VENUS!

Everyone Can Be Winners!

AAWC is pleased to announce that we have changed the Patient/Caregiver Memberships to be Free Lifetime Memberships!

We want to build the AAWC WIN membership base so that this group of supporters will assist AAWC in influencing evidence based wound healing and tissue preservation. WIN offers support, networking, education and information opportunities to the WIN members. As well as specific benefits, including a patient focused quarterly WIN Newsletter and a free Wound Clinic Directory.

Please share this information with friends and family and contact kstrauss@aawconline.org for free memberships





WINNING ARTICLE

What is the best way to keep a good frame of mind when dealing with a hard to heal wound?

As a person dealing with the healing of a diabetic foot ulcer for the past five years, I know how hard it can be to keep a good frame of mind while waiting for the wound to heal. The challenges seem endless and for every step forward, there seems to be at least a half a step backwards.

So how do I keep a good frame of mind? To me, it is largely based on knowledge. The more I know, the more I can help with the healing. My starting point is in dealing with professionals. Many at the VA hospitals are capable of wound care but few are wound care experts. Find a good wound care specialist. Learn about your wound, its causes and treatments. Am I doing something that either aids in the healing or delays it? It is a lifestyle choice, a medicine choice, a psychological choice? How can the choices I make aid in the healing? I have to call to mind that I am part of the healing process. If I am unwilling to follow advice, take my drugs on time, avoid risky actions, there is little the wound care specialist can do that will make a big change in my progress.

It is my duty to know both my skills and limits. With coronary artery disease, torn rotator cuffs and 25 years of Type II diabetes, there are certain things I can and cannot do. Difficult exercise is, for the present, not an option. I can, however, do limited exercises, keep my blood sugars in line and keep up my drug timetable. I can listen to the advice of my wound care expert about the type of footwear I should select, the amount of time spent on my feet and the rate with which I see my specialist for evaluation.

I must focus on the small improvements. Being able to lower my blood sugars, keep my other readings (cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure, etc.) within approved limits is vital. Knowing that I will from time to time fail to meet my goals on a certain day but can get back on the next is also needed to keep a good frame of mind. I also spend time thinking over the choices. A year ago, there was serious talk about removing one of my toes if the wound did not heal and maybe the foot. Today my wound is nearly healed and serious results have been avoided. I also take the time to model success. There are those I know who have beat adversity, dealt with drug abuse, learned to live with amputations or with a regimen of specific drugs in order move on with their life. I think about these people on a regular basis and know that I too, can beat challenges and be successful if I am willing to seek help and put forth the effort. Knowledge has given me a purpose and a direction and helped me maintain a positive frame of mind for the future.

Submitted by Jack Kegley





Have you seen the new training on the home page of the aawconline.org website? This module is about assessing basic wounds. This great online teaching is based on best practice. Virtual Wound™ self-paced and interactive. The program blends basic teaching with technology by showing a wounded “avatar” (model of a wounded human being.) AAWC thanks Applied Computer Education Services, Inc. (ACES) for providing the training.

BE FULL OF THANKS

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire.

If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something,
for it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times. During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations,
because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge,
because it will build your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes. They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary,
because it means you've made a difference.

It's easy to be thankful for the good things.
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who
are also thankful for the setbacks.
Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive.
Find a way to be thankful for your troubles,
and they can become your blessings.

Author unknown





Wounds Talking Now

Her Wound – “Hey there I noticed you on the way in. I can’t believe what your person was doing! We walked right by and I could smell the smoke from his cigarette. “

His Wound – “I know, I know, he is up to a pack a day.”

Her Wound – “My person used to do that too. I hated it, we reeked and I always felt poorly. It took a very strong warning from our Clinician that finally convinced my person to quit. It was one of the hardest things she ever did. I suffered for a while longer, but lately I have been feeling empowered.”

His Wound – “I am so happy for you. I feel terrible. I know I am getting deeper and I’d bet money that I am infected.”

Her Wound – “It’s been a few months now and she still does not think of herself a “non-smoker”. It is especially hard because dealing with a wound is very stressful and smoking can be a crutch. But she knew that she was taking a chance that I might never heal, so she gave it up. I know it was the best thing she could ever do for us. Maybe the Doctor can scare your person too. Hopefully his provider will tell him that a smoker inhales carbon monoxide. This poison enters the blood stream and lowers oxygen levels. Healing wounds need oxygen. Smoke also has nicotine. This is like adrenaline; it causes blood vessels to tighten. Smoking lowers oxygen supply to the tissues as well as essential nutrients, and healing factors like Vitamin C.”

His Wound – “I really wish he would stop smoking. What else do you know about the results of smoking on wounds like us?”

Her Wound – “Just as you suspected, smoking can cause you to become infected. It can cause blood clots near the wound and treatments will not take well. Sometimes it can make stitches come apart and prevent skin grafts from taking.”

His Wound – “That is terrifying to me. What can my person do to quit?”

Her Wound – “That is the Big Question. But first the person has to admit that they are hooked on tobacco. They need to take control of themselves and take the steps needed to beat the habit. My person has a saying “I have an addiction and I’m powerless over tobacco” This helps to give her strength to say no to “just one” cigarette. She knows that if she can make it just five minutes that the urge to smoke can be controlled. She learned that she couldn’t do it alone. She tried many times but what did it for her was a mix of programs. Her Doctor helped her by giving a nicotine replacement and an anti-depressant.”

His Wound – “I am not sure this would work for him. Can’t he just try to go it alone?”

Her Wound – “Studies have showed that only 5% of independent smokers* are still smoke free at the end of a year. But there are lots of programs through the American Cancer Society, American Lung or Heart Associations. Some people have found help at Nicotine Anonymous.”

His Wound – “Oh, thank-you. I hope he learns that smoking is bad for wound healing and tries these ways to get help. I want to get better and heal.”

Her Wound – “And I want that for you too. Take care of yourself and your person.”

* <http://www.anti-smoking.org/quitting.htm>

