



Friday Night [under the] Lights

2013

Happy Friday.

It's been a while.

It's nice to connect again (my kids still occasionally remind me that I can't say "it's nice to hook up again" – *daaad. Yuck.*). I hope everyone had a really nice holiday season and you're comfortably & deeply entrenched in 2013. Seems like we just took down all our Christmas decorations and already we're decorating for Washington's Birthday, one of our favorite holidays...

I feel like I have so much stuff to pass along – *and I do*. One of the fascinating things about our AMR family is *how much goes on* in so many different corners of our organization. You and 17,998 of your closest colleagues (give or take a few hundred) take care of almost 3.2 million patients every year. There are so many great stories and powerful life lessons that happen every single second. I love passing along stories I hear (hint, hint, by the way).

I hope you'll bear with me in coming weeks as I share a bunch of those cool things that are going on, both within AMR and the EMS industry as a whole. I'll need a month or so to catch up, though. I'm not kidding when I tell you there's a ton going on.

But tonight, I want to spend my time talking about something that's on all of our minds – something that creates discomfort and pause and deep down inside, bugs us.

Change...

To say there have been a few changes around us lately would be the understatement of the decade. *Think about it.*

Our President for the past 5 years has stepped down, the Northeast Region CEO is no longer with us, a couple of General Managers have changed, MEDS 3.10 rolled out, the organization is making serious efforts to align with the ever-changing healthcare landscape, NCTI and IHM have combined efforts as the new AMR Learning, Ninth Brain, a software solution we've had for

a while, is being converted to a more robust and functional platform, our business development strategies are evolving dramatically, our efforts to collect clinical performance data have been ongoing and now we are starting to ACT on that data, and, on top of all of that, all of our ambulances now have surveillance cameras in the cab and patient compartments.

And on and on and on...

With so much change, especially so much diversity in what's changing, its human nature to feel a bit uncomfortable and try to understand what's going on and what it means for us as individuals and as an organization.

(By the way, before I forget, just kidding about the ambulance surveillance cameras - ☺)

I'll be the first to tell you – I sometimes struggle with change. I get some sense of security in status quo. I was perfectly happy with a paper medical record in the emergency department *thankyouverymuch*. And, who needs an electronic calendar when a pocket planner does perfectly well (AND, for the record, never runs out of juice)? My hair style is some minor variation from what it was the day I was born (and progressively returning to that style with every passing year I would note). A Zithromax Z-Pack could cure just about anything and I had no interest in getting a new boss or having to train new folks that worked with me or even changing my well-travelled route to and from work.

ATM? You kidding? Write a check for crying out loud.

But then I think about all the things that have changed that have made things so much better, not only for me personally, but for our profession and our work lives.

Like this. Remember having to find a payphone if you were paged (it's scary that some of you reading this have never even owned a pager)? I'll take a cell phone any day – A smart phone that can search the web / or look up a specific medication / or remind me to reach out to a friend in Spokane when my GPS says I'm in Spokane / or communicate via video discussion with my kids when I'm travelling.

I like the fact that not everyone that has “any trauma above the clavicles” goes on a backboard anymore. I like the simplicity of contemporary resuscitation efforts that have shown such a dramatic improvement in survival.

I like the fact that flu vaccines are so safe now that there are very few excuses to not get one (being chicken is the only remaining valid excuse)...

So... change, while hard and sometimes disrupting to our sense of “stability” is also our most valuable key to new and exciting chapters in the Book of Life. Change forces us to look at what we do, how we do it and who we do it with in a totally different way. And it's those explorations that give us the opportunity to be even better at what we do...

As a matter of fact, organizational scholars now spend a lot of time teaching leaders to *force change* – a concept many call “disruptive leadership”. As an example, check this out...

Really?



You bet...

Change is essential to our long term development and our ability to adapt to everything else that's changing around us (why do you think skinny mammals with rounded, blunt teeth, no claws and a wimpy howl can run so fast??).

Probably one of our best examples – a couple of years ago, as an organization, we made a conscious decision to change the intensity of our focus on medicine and how we prioritized it. The results have been phenomenal.

So, yes... there have been a lot of changes recently. And I will tell you that in the midst of those changes, I am 100% comfortable that we are continuing to grow stronger, become a more credible leader in the clinical delivery of out-of-hospital care and that we are using all the collective brain power of the organization to deliver that care more effectively and efficiently. As a matter of fact, productive change always builds on the foundations and successes we've learned from others along the way.

I can't think of any single organization that has greater potential.

And I'm not just blowing smoke. *I truly believe it.*

The entire healthcare space has become much more challenging to navigate - I feel like we've got all the tools (and specifically the passion and the people) to not just follow, but lead.

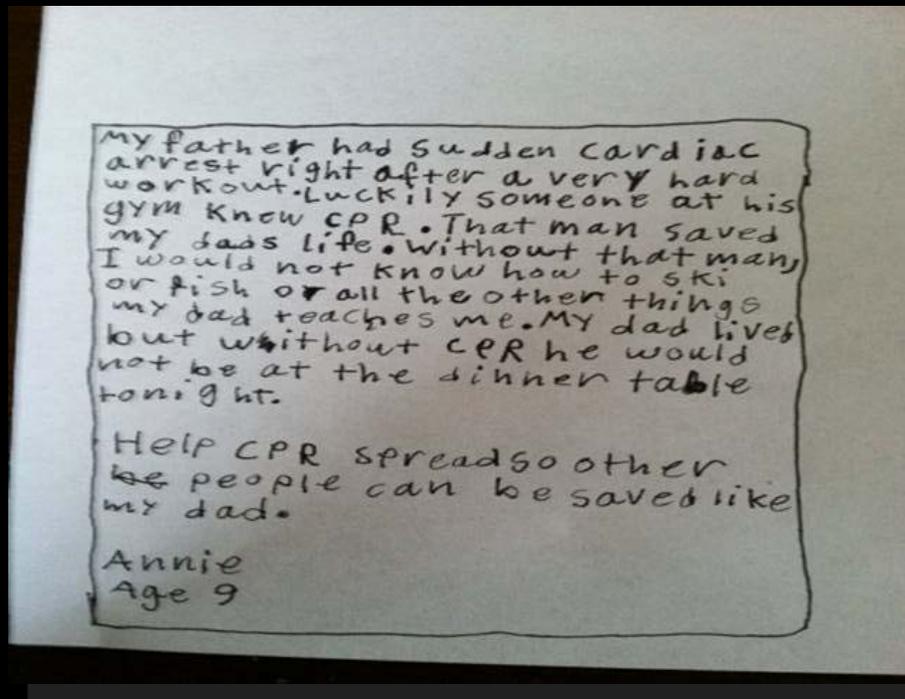
So, I want to ask a favor of all of you as we navigate our future together. There are 3 very important things that I'd love for all of us to do this year...

1. Wrap everything we do in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement **Triple Aim**
 - ✓ Improve Health
 - ✓ Improve Patient Experience
 - ✓ Reduce Costs
2. Generate palpable excitement and pride in AMR Medicine
3. Aggressively reach out and partner with every individual and organization involved in any way with our patients

I might even consider a change in hair style this decade...

AMR Pride

From a little girl in Montana. This one speaks for itself.



This gentleman, Carl, was saved after a strenuous workout at a Crossfit gym. He collapsed and suffered SCA. Another class participant (Todd), immediately came over and began compression only CPR. Bozeman Fire Dept and AMR continued resuscitation, transported and Annie's dad survived. She's only 9 years old and has been helping our colleague Kevin Lauer train lately. She stands in front of classes and tells her story like only a nine year old can, open and honestly. She speaks of her dad dying and Todd saving him and how it is so great that her dad is still able to teach her to ski and fish and he is home at the dinner table each night. She also speaks of her and mom and big brother waiting in the hospital not knowing what the outcome will be.

Hats off to all our Bozeman colleagues in the Gallatin Heart Rescue Project...

Epilogue

These comments come from test papers and essays submitted to science and health teachers by elementary, junior high, high school, and college students and compiled at the NEA Life Sciences Symposium, Kansas City, Kansas.

"The body consists of three parts - the branium, the borax, and the abominable cavity. The branium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs, and the abominable cavity contains the bowels, of which there are five - a, e, i, o, and u."

"H₂O is hot water, and CO₂ is cold water."

"When you smell an odorless gas, it is probably carbon monoxide."

"Water is composed of two gins, Oxygin and Hydrogin. Oxygin is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water."

"Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, vanes and caterpillars."

"Blood flows down one leg and up the other."

"The moon is a planet just like the earth, only it is even deader."

"Mushrooms always grow in damp places and so they look like umbrellas."

"The pistol of a flower is its only protections against insects."

"The skeleton is what is left after the insides have been taken out and the outsides have been taken off. The purpose of the skeleton is something to hitch meat to."

"A permanent set of teeth consists of eight canines, eight cuspid, two molars, and eight cuspidors."

"Vacuum: A large, empty space where the pope lives."

"To keep milk from turning sour: Keep it in the cow."

That's it from my world. *Happy Friday.* As always, thanks for what you do and how you do it...
And watch out for those ambulance cameras.

EA

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