



ORTHO2

See the Need...Be the Answer

by **Rosemary Bray**

It was a warm summer morning like any other in San Diego – or so it seemed.

Entering the neighborhood pool with my 10-year-old grandson, I was thinking only of that calm, refreshing swim awaiting us. Yet what was there instead, was a man alone, on the bottom of the pool, lying motionless.

Every sense kicks in, everything you ever learned surfaces, your heart races, and your brain clicks into overload. *What to do? What did I learn? What can I remember?*

The message today is about learning, retaining what you learned, acting when you need to, and being responsible.

How often we sit in a training class and mentally check out. "I don't need to learn CPR, I work in 'the front'." We rationalize, "We're ortho, we will never need CPR, we don't even give shots here!" "Why do I have to learn about Ortho2? I am a clinical assistant!" "Do I really have to hear this webinar on sterilization? I work in 'the front'." There are many excuses why we don't listen, don't pay attention, and think NOT ME. It will never be ME. I don't need this. The same is true on the airplane. I so often see people sit in the exit row – bragging they only do it to get that bit of extra legroom – and never take time to read the emergency card instructions or listen to the crew verbally giving instructions.

And so I was reminded at the pool: It IS you. It WILL BE you. You DO need it.

Shouting to my grandson to call 911, I jumped into the pool to retrieve the man whom I did not know. Unable to get him out of the pool, I positioned him on the shallow end steps, and remembered from years ago...A B C... Airway, Breathing, Chest..."Annie. Annie, are you ok?" I had to use what I had learned in a class, way back when, as a team member – thinking back then that it would never be me.

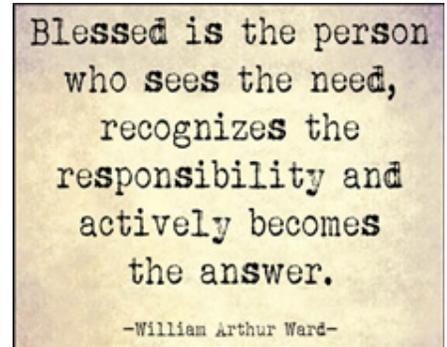
What I learned from this recent incident in which I had

now become a very active participant is this:

When your team has a learning or training day – whether in-office or

at an AAO Annual Session, whether it be on software management, appointment scheduling, OSHA compliance, the new patient process, or your annual CPR review – never sit back and snooze or think it is not necessary for YOU. It doesn't matter how trite or unimportant it might seem to you at the moment, one day you WILL be called on to make that appointment, print that receipt, explain a procedure to that questioning parent, answer that new patient phone call, sterilize that instrument, clip that pokey wire, seat that patient, or perhaps even administer CPR.

I recall a PCSO Annual Session following the water landing of Flight 1549 on the Hudson River when we Ortho team members were fortunate to have Captain "Sully" Sullenberger as our keynote speaker. He stressed to his listening audience how both teamwork and training made that landing in the icy water of the Hudson River turn out successfully, thus not losing one of the 155 passengers on board. He emphasized to us that every one of his airline crew members had sat through many training sessions to know their jobs, how they practiced their jobs routinely, and how they listened and reacted accordingly that day. Many called him the HERO in that memorable day, yet he still denies it and says the thanks and credit goes to an entire team of dedicated individuals who were each doing



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their job and doing it well.

And so let it be with us, in ortho. Learn your job, yes. But also learn the things outside the realm of your job description. Omit the words, "That's not my job" or "Why do I need to know this?" You DO need to know it. Learn it and retain it. As author William Ward teaches us "...actively become the answer."

It is my hope for you that it will never be retrieving a dying person from a pool or compressing the heart of a victim in a restaurant or your own family room or your practice reception area....but it will be important. It will matter and make a difference to you and to the others who are impacted by your knowledge and your subsequent actions.

Sadly the man in the pool did not survive his heart attack. Nine committed paramedics and police officers could not revive him, nor could I, yet we ALL tried our best and without hesitation.

Those medics are incredibly well-trained and are there to serve you and me, and our communities. The same holds true for you and your ortho team within the practice. Be well-trained and be committed, and then be there to aid and assist your valued patients, in ANY way you can or are called upon to do. Don't sit back and wait for someone else to jump in.

A new friend has entered my life because of my willingness to try and help. The spouse of that husband, father, grandfather, and Vietnam War vet has invited me to be at the military service for a man she loved for nearly 50 years and that I only knew for moments. What an honor for me to receive that request. What an honor for my grandson to get a high five from a paramedic AND a policeman both thanking him for being so brave to help as he did.

What a gift it can be to YOU when your patient, their parent, your doctor, your team member thanks you for listening, learning, and going beyond your job description or perhaps even your comfort level to serve them well. You don't need to be saving a life to "...see the need, recognize the responsibility, and actively become the answer." ♡

About the Author



Rosemary Bray has spent nearly 50 years employed in the dental profession, both in clinical and administrative roles, with experience in general dentistry, periodontics, and 18 years in orthodontics – all in San Diego. She is presenting at the 2019 UGM in Fort Worth, Texas.