Passing the Torch

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I've always loved the movie *The Sound of Music*. A particular favorite song performed by von Trapp family singers had this as its refrain: "So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye...". This is my goodbye as editor, and it's been a great journey for me. As U.S. presidents are wont to say in their state of the union speeches: "The State of the Union is very good." So is the state of the *Journal of Cancer Education*. I turn it over with pride in the work we have done together.

My foremost emotion is profound gratitude to all of you who have helped me along the way—more than you will ever know. I'll start first with thanks to our founding editor, Dick Bakemeier, and his very capable sous-chef, his wife Alice, who founded the Journal in 1986, nurtured it with love and affection and turned it over to a new fledgling editor, me, when I was ready to fly. They were always at my side, ready to help in any way. I've quoted Isaac Newton many times in reference to Dick: The reason I see further is that I stand on the shoulders of giants, and Dick was a giant of giants. I also owe profound gratitude to Dick Gallagher, the Assistant Editor-in-Chief, who also was always "there" whenever I needed him. Dick Bakemeier and Dick Gallagher always had my back, and I will be forever grateful. In the top box on the masthead appears the group of Associate Editors, and a finer group could not be assembled anywhere. I was too unsure of myself to use them as effectively as I should have. According to a recent book by Wiseman and McKeown [1], one very effective trait of leadership is to act as a multiplier, and there is such talent at the Associate Editor level that in my new role, I'll help Art Michalek to multiply. The editorial board, which keeps getting revamped, was another huge asset. Seldom did anyone say "no" to reviewing, no matter how busy, and I marvelled at the quality of the reviews.

Each reviewer seemed to want to help the authors create their best work. Both authors and reviewers poured their hearts into the work and I'll never forget that. I also want to thank the courageous authors, especially those who were submitting their first paper. Reviewing was done with love and care, to an extent beyond that of any other journal I've ever seen. And finally, thank you to the librarians who helped people find articles, and the readers, whom I hope found value in what they read and used the ideas they found in *JCE* to become better educators.

Over the years, we have been blessed with publishers. On my watch, first Erlbaum and then Taylor and Francis and especially Sean Beppler tried to do right by us. After a thorough process, we made one of the best decisions we ever made and joined up with Springer in 2009. This took us out of infancy and helped foster a tremendous growth spurt through adolescence into early adulthood, and we haven't even begun to tap into all that Springer can offer. Springer is a great partner and helped launch us into the modern age with electronic submissions and reviews and rapid uptake to an online publication. The way-too-long time from submission to print has been shortened, the backlog of articles addressed, and we would welcome even more articles. The Springer liaisons, especially Ky Hammond, Tracy Marton and Carmina Jimenez, seem to love the journal like we do. They know we can "reduce the burden of cancer in the world through effective education" and have joined our quest.

As I thought about my role with the journal, I remembered my teacher at Harvard, Erik Erikson, and his stages of life. In my time with the journal, I feel I've lived his stage of middle adulthood (35–55, or 65) and attained what he called generativity as opposed to self absorption or stagnation. In middle-age, work is most crucial. Erikson observed that during that period, we tend to be occupied with creative and meaningful work and with issues surrounding our family. Also, middle adulthood is when we can expect to

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"be in charge," a role we've long envied. Strength comes through care of others and production of something that contributes to the betterment of society; this is what Erikson calls generativity. When we're in this stage, we often fear inactivity and meaninglessness. The journal offered me meaningful work and the opportunity to be generative.

Now I enter the phase of late adulthood, and the options that Erikson identifies as ego integrity versus despair. I feel that I'm zooming into ego integrity. Erikson says that we develop this feeling of integrity when, as older adults, we can often look back on our lives with happiness and are content, feeling fulfilled with a deep sense that life has meaning and that we've made a contribution to life. Some may reach this stage and feel despair over their experiences and perceived failures. They may fear death as they struggle to find a purpose to their lives, wondering "Was the trip worth it?" The Journal and my association with all of you made my life "worth it".

As I bid goodbye, I surely have some regrets. I wish we could have made the review process hum better; there still are some bumps. I had high hopes that *JCE* would feature more review papers on "how to" do great education, as well as host collections of papers, begun on my watch, similar in subject to those we'd already published on spirituality in cancer education, edutainment, and oral health. However, the backlog took precedence.

I'm ready to step aside and watch Art Michalek thrive. The search process was fair, thorough and expertly led by Shine Chang. In a top-flight field, we got the right guy to lead us. Just like Dick Bakemeier and Dick Gallagher, I promise to

have his back, be there for whatever he needs, and help him into the role, but he'll be great. We all need to join forces to help Art in any ways we can. He is truly a collaborative leader and multiplier. The journal is ready to take another great leap forward—perhaps, as Jim Collins would say, to go from "Good to Great" [2]. The Springer resources; the people involved with this journal; the passion to use education to lessen the burden from cancer; the new insights into how people learn and how to utilize technology to produce better learning, better care and better outcomes; the exploding scientific understanding of cancer....these and many other forces can come together in this journal. I think impact (saving lives and making lives better) is the ultimate measure of the journal, not the artificial impact factor, and we already have had and will have even more impact.

As I bid farewell, let me close with this traditional Irish blessing:

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

References

1. Wiseman L, McKeown G (2010) Multipliers: How the best leaders make everyone smarter. HarperCollins, New York
2. Collins J (2001) Good to great: Why some companies make the leap...and others don't. Harper Business, New York