

Stepping Forward



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“Even with such an uncertain world around them, members of the veterinary nursing profession continue to focus on their ‘why’ and continue to go above and beyond for coworkers, pets, and the people who love them.”

In the last issue of *Today's Veterinary Nurse* I explored the topic of hope—the hope that we had been through the worst of the pandemic, and the hope that our profession learned valuable lessons and implemented new protocols because we worked together as a team to help one another and our patients navigate through a very difficult time.

Three months later, who could have imagined that we would not only still be battling the COVID-19 pandemic, but that it would mutate and worsen, just as the U.S. was optimistic of a return to normalcy? At this point, more than 18 months after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, many are finding that every step forward is followed by another step or two backward. But what sets the veterinary profession apart? The focus on the step forward. My colleagues are tired, working extra hours, and dealing with angry and sometimes caustic clients. But, yet again, I see them focusing on the positive and remembering why they got into veterinary medicine—touched by the clients that send a note thanking them for staying late and, as always, the nonverbal gratitude from the pets themselves.

I also see this reflected in the current issue of *TVN*—giving back and trying to leave veterinary medicine and the world a better place through actions, offering solutions to problems, and learning from difficult circumstances. We all know the importance of compliance, but to ensure compliance we must focus on improving health literacy (pg. 32). The difficulty of not having reciprocity in the veterinary nursing/technician profession is highlighted by a military spouse who also wants to follow her dreams as she moves through multiple changes of station (pg. 74). Other articles drive home these themes as well: focusing on improving team utilization through veterinary nursing appointments (pg. 81) and by rallying the profession to support this much needed utilization (pg. 8); opening one's heart and home to make a difference to a pet in need (pg. 78).

All of these show the depth of the compassion, the breadth of knowledge, and the care for colleagues and pet owners alike. Even with such an uncertain world around them, members of the veterinary nursing profession continue to focus on their “why” and continue to go above and beyond for coworkers, pets, and the people who love them. Loren Eiseley's story quoted in Robyn Townsend's article (pg. 78) truly encompasses her belief along with mine—we may not be able to make a difference for every single pet or owner or colleague, but we can for one (and then another and another).

Reach for the higher ground every day, in every decision. Big and small, our choices add up to the life we live. Be someone who encourages and uplifts. Trust in what you feel. Follow your heart. Live the dream in you. Through this you inspire someone else to live on their higher ground. Remember the happiest people don't have the best of everything; they just make the best of everything. **TVN**