Reflections of a first-time CANO conference attendee

by Derek J. Rothe, Cross Cancer Institute, Edmonton, Alberta

Oprah Winfrey said, “Passion is energy…the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.” (Evan Carmichael, 2014). Being a first-time attendee at the 2014 annual Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology conference allowed me to witness passion at a level I had never experienced before. There was a palpable enthusiasm within the various presentations and workshops, as well as in candid conversations amongst fellow conference goers. It is in admiration of this passion, that I left the conference with a renewed sense of motivation to pursue more in my own career as an oncology nurse.

One of the ways I became inspired was by attending different presentations and workshops. The topics of the different presentations varied greatly. However, one theme came through: all of the presenters brought forward enthusiasm related to their topic. The presentations truly showcased the drive and commitment held by these individuals and I found this to be contagious. These attitudes remind us all of the importance of questioning current ideas and practices, and to find answers to questions we encounter, as registered nurses working in oncology.

I found more inspiration in the candid conversations I had with other conference goers from a variety of different roles and backgrounds. All of the nurses I spoke to were passionate about their careers. Whether it was focused in patient navigating, education, or bedside nursing. Through sharing their experiences, I could sense their passion and enthusiasm for oncology. Hearing about the many different roles opened my eyes to the endless opportunities and possibilities I can choose for my own career in oncology.

This conference is much more than just presentations, workshops, symposiums, and posters—it is the collective energy and passion of oncology nurses that inspires and challenges others. Witnessing the enthusiasm of the presenters and candid discussions with fellow conference goers was a motivating and inspiring experience. Their expertise guides my own decision-making and their commitment to the oncology nurse role reminds me of what an important role nurses hold in the cancer patient's journey. Attending this conference has strengthened my admiration and respect for oncology nurses and has left me inspired to pursue my passions. I must thank all of those nurses who bring passion to this profession; it is because of you all I love what I do.

REFERENCE