As I sit down to write my first president’s message, our world is still in the middle of fighting a pandemic caused by coronavirus disease 2019; we are strife with societal and political issues around the world; many are fighting for equality; and in the United States, the atmosphere is politically charged. All of these issues have had a major impact on our lives in some aspect.

It is the nature of nurses to help, and these recent times have left us asking, “What do I do? Where do I fit in?” Or maybe you are feeling weak and tired in the face of societal or personal struggle from the stress of it all. What is the answer?

In 2020, Emergency Nurses Association President Mike Hastings focused on the theme of the power of one. How can one person make a difference? This message is so important and continues for all of us as we begin 2021.

In 2021, I challenge each of us to focus on the word ELEVATE. Elevate ourselves: take the time to make ourselves better in some aspect. This step of elevating ourselves will have an impact not only on us but on the world around us, as doing something good and positive for ourselves reflects on those around us. Elevate your career in whatever role you fulfill in our profession. Does that mean honing a certain skill, educating yourself on a disease, or taking a leadership class, for example? Push yourself higher through the act of getting lost in the service of others. Mahatma Gandhi said, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Elevate your professional association: help take the Emergency Nurses Association, our profession, and the specialty of emergency nursing to the next level. Get involved, volunteer to help propel us all forward as a united force. This united force will be very powerful.

To accomplish great things, we will need to lean on one another, but it all begins with us individually. On a personal note, I love to listen to music of all kinds. I use music to relax, to get hyped up for something, and also for inspiration. The idea of improving ourselves before we can improve others always reminds me to reflect on the message in the song “The Man in the Mirror” by Michael Jackson. Its main message is that, if you want to make a change, you have to start with the person you see in the mirror. Another song I find to be inspirational in this aspect is by Matthew West, titled “Do Something.” He tells us that if we are tired of the negative things around us then we need to do something; he challenges us to start with ourselves to make change happen. Lyrics from the song include: “If not us, then who, If not me and you...If not now, then when?”

I applaud you for sitting down to read this message and this issue of the Journal of Emergency Nursing. You are already taking a step right now to better yourself, which translates to elevating the emergency nursing profession, your career, and ultimately the care of the patients we serve.

Now comes the homework for the next 2 months: Before you sit down to read the next issue of the Journal of Emergency Nursing, set a goal and accomplish something in your personal life, your professional life or profession, and your community to improve that space around you.

Stay positive, stay focused, and be the good!
ELEVATE

REFERENCES