

Biggest Loser

by Colleen Whiteford PT, DPT

I'm a loser.

I lose my cell phone all the time, much to my husband's chagrin. I lose paper appointment cards before I can write them down in my amazing electronic calendar. I lose my glasses. I lose track of time with patients and get behind in the schedule. Sometimes I lose my patience....

Losing these things is not good. But not all losing is bad. Like losing an election. You know what I think is worse than losing an election? Never running for anything in the first place. I used to be afraid to run, thinking that if I lost, then people would look at me and feel sorry for me, or whisper behind my back. "She's never been the same...." Or, "I can't believe she thought people would vote for her...." Or how about this one: "I don't stand a chance running against them." Kind of why I always hated eating at a restaurant alone, even when travelling. I felt like people were looking at me feeling sorry for me, that I didn't have any friends. Carry-out worked fine.

But I've learned some things in my old age.

1. *No one remembers who ran and lost.* That's a fact. Even when I was Nominating Committee Chair I couldn't tell you. So certainly the average APTA Virginia member has no recollection either. We give a lot more credit to people's memories than deserved if we imagine they harbor such stats.
2. *Running for office and not being elected is a brilliant campaign strategy.* What a great tactic for garnering name recognition and being elected to that or another other role in the future! Wish I would have thought of it sooner.
3. *The only people who never fail at anything are those who never try.* Sometimes the only way to grow your network, skills, opportunities, and experiences is to step outside your comfort zone and try something new. I've gotten over a lot of my fears of what other people think, perhaps a sign of my "maturity." But in a past election when I learned that someone was running against me for APTA Virginia secretary I moved through a variety of emotions somewhat akin to the stages of grief: surprise; then curiosity as to who it was; then hurt feelings that there were people who evidently thought I was not doing a good job; next was acceptance – whatever happened, happened; next was contemplation of what I would do with my free time *when* this other person won; next was hopefulness that they

Nominations are being taken now through June 22 for the listed positions below. Please consider running for an elected position. It's a great way to meet other physical therapists and physical therapist assistants throughout Virginia and advance the profession.

Self-nominations are certainly welcome! Don't be shy! Likewise, if you know a colleague who would be a good fit, please nominate them.

The nomination form takes 2-3 minutes to complete.

[Nomination Form](#)

would win; finally came clarification that my opponent actually meant to run for district secretary so I had no opponent at all. So much for all that free time. Next came grief.

Competition is healthy, part of life, and can push us to test ourselves, question our motives and goals, and expand our comfort zone. Not such bad things. **The real victory isn't in winning an election. It's in choosing to run.** Let's purposely choose to overcome our fears and insecurities. C'mon. I'll even take you out to eat. Then I don't have to go alone. Which, by the way, doesn't even phase me anymore.

OPEN POSITIONS

Chapter Positions:

Vice President
Treasurer
PTA Caucus Rep
Delegates

District Positions:

Secretary for the following districts: Blue Ridge, Mountain, and Valley
Treasurer for the following districts: Central, Northern, and Tidewater
Directors: One for each district
Nominating Committee Member for the following districts: Northern, Central, and Tidewater