

Editorial

Crossing the Divide: Realizing the Power of Partnership

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Editor in Chief



For years I have worn a leather band on my wrist that reads, “Be the Change.” It is a constant reminder to embody the change I want to see in the world by engaging in service and collaborative partnership and approaching each person and task with compassion, loving kindness, and equanimity. When I received the honor of becoming the new editor in

chief of the *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, I was compelled to examine how to transform this personal intention into practice for the good of the yoga community.

As I stand on the precipice gazing out at the remarkable legacy of my predecessor, Kelly McGonigal, and the vast accomplishments of the IAYT leaders and community, I can clearly see that the field of yoga therapy is poised to change healthcare service delivery in ways that we could only dream of a decade ago. Yoga therapists, teachers, researchers, healthcare practitioners, and students have experienced the power of the practice, yet as a field we have yet to fully realize the potential of partnership.

This issue is dedicated to building bridges, to examining the beliefs that limit our ability to construct meaningful relationships between yoga, scientific research, and modern healthcare, and to finding common ground. While cultivating interconnectedness, we lay the foundation for bridges that span disciplines, traditions, and belief systems. The Perspectives in this issue provide philosophical views and practical examples of how to accomplish this task at multiple levels, ranging from deepening our personal practice to working with major insurance companies.

There are many bridges to construct and countless opportunities for each of us to participate. Perhaps the most important task in this effort involves communication, with yoga professionals making a concerted effort to learn the language of science and modern healthcare, and vice versa. Michelle Walsh and Kusnick, Kraftsow, and Hilliker offer two exceptional examples of the power of partnership and successful collaborations that built on shared vision and communication strategies and translated yoga traditions into pragmatic concepts for researchers, healthcare professionals, and administrators.

Consider examining ways in which you can uniquely contribute to this evolution. What skills can you offer, and where can you realize personal and professional growth? Do you have ideological biases that prevent you from cultivating relationships with those whose skills and expertise are different from yours? If you have ever tried standing relaxed with your eyes closed and your feet rooted into the ground, you will observe that your body engages in continuous micro-movement to allow for the dynamic shifts of the earth. If you stand rigidly, you will inevitably fall over. If we remain entrenched in our personal or professional dogma, we miss the rich opportunity to move in synchrony with those who are dedicated to serving others.

As you observe the personal and professional vistas before you, I encourage you to open yourself to the groundbreaking possibilities of partnership and to seek opportunities to build bridges in your practice, therapeutic work, research program, or wherever you see the potential for moving beyond your comfort zone. I hope the articles in this issue inspire you to be the change you want to see in the world.

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