

Editorial

International Journal of Yoga Therapy: Past, Present, and Future

Trisha Lamb



When the International Association of Yoga Therapists (IAYT) became a division of Yoga Research and Education Center (YREC) in 1999, *The Journal of The International Association of Yoga Therapists*, as the journal was then known, had a long and

rich history under the editorship of Richard Miller, Ph.D., for its first six years and Steven Kleinman, M.D., for the next two. Richard created the journal so that Yoga teachers and therapists, who otherwise would not have access to Yoga research and related medical research, could benefit from its findings and be instrumental in future research projects.

Although YREC published the eighth (1998) issue of the journal, which was then renamed the *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, credit for editing goes to Steven. The ninth through thirteenth issues were published by YREC under the editorship of Georg Feuerstein and managing editorship of Trisha Lamb, bringing us to the current issue, published by the newly independent IAYT under the editorship of Trisha.

Early issues of the journal brought two or three articles on the philosophy of Yoga or Yoga therapy and two or three articles on Yoga research or the practice of Yoga therapy, concluding with in-depth reviews of books and videos just as we do now. Although the journal remained at c. 60 pages for its first eight years, the breadth of topics expanded with each issue, with the inclusion of what might be termed the first “policy” arti-

cle in issue no. 8, where Wendy Davis Larkin wrote about money matters for Yoga therapists.

This essentially defined the categorization of articles from then on: 1) Yoga and/or Yoga therapy philosophy, 2) Yoga research, 3) Yoga therapy practice, and 4) Yoga therapy policy. These categories are not mutually exclusive, however, as articles on Yoga research often contain extensive information on Yoga therapy practice, and articles on Yoga therapy practice often bring valuable insights into Yoga therapy philosophy. We currently attempt to bring at least one policy article per issue, two or three philosophy articles, two or three research articles, two or three practice articles, and at least one article that relates to psychology and/or psychotherapy. To accomplish this, the journal has almost doubled in size to c. 110 pages per issue.

Having participated in the journal’s formation for the past six years, it has been interesting to observe each issue essentially “create itself.” Typically two or three articles per issue have been invited, but all the others have been written by authors who wrote and asked if they might contribute—a source of great joy for an editor.

I read every membership application we receive, both for new and renewing members, and that is the primary source of invited articles for both the *International Journal of Yoga Therapy* and the online journal *Yoga Studies*. The breadth and depth of expertise of our c. 1,000 members in 30 countries is really quite remarkable, and it has barely been tapped editorially. I also occasionally find potential authors in my daily scans of the Internet, either while looking for Yoga news or

serendipitously while searching for something related.

The deadline for submission of completed articles to each year's journal is March 1 of the year of publication, and over the past six years the date by which the contents of each issue have been set has become progressively earlier. For instance, the basic contents of the present journal were determined by the end of October last year, with only a few additions/substitutions made since then. For next year's issue, we already had *too many* potential articles by June of this year. This is a testament to the rapid growth in interest in Yoga therapy and Yoga research, not to mention an editor's dream! We are now accepting proposals for articles for the 2006 issue of the journal, and if you are interested in contributing, we recommend that you not wait long to contact us. (To initiate the process, please submit a summary and outline of the proposed contents of your article to mail@iayt.org.)

In response to the significant increase in potential contributors and the growing interest in Yoga therapy, and as part of IAYT's renewal, we are considering the possibility of publishing two issues of the journal per year and either eliminating or reducing the size and frequency of the online journal *Yoga Studies*. If *Yoga Studies* is eliminated, we would transfer some of its features, such as research summaries, to the printed journal, and bring the Yoga news items on our website where the continuing education section of *Yoga Studies* already appears. Your feedback on these proposed changes is, of course, most welcome.

We also would like to see the *International Journal of Yoga Therapy* offered in more Yoga center bookstores and on specialty newsstands, and to that end we hired

designer and Yoga teacher Linda Getz to redesign the cover beginning with this issue. Linda designed our stationery as well and is presently creating a new look for our website. It is a delight to collaborate with her, and we would like to acknowledge her fine work thus far. If you would like to carry the journal in your center's bookstore, or know of a center that might be interested, please contact Amber Elliott at amber@iayt.org.

It is also a great pleasure to work with the authors contributing to each issue and observe each volume coming into focus. In the current issue we bring two fine articles by longtime member Matt Taylor, one a reprint of an in-depth article he wrote on the philosophy and practice of Yoga therapy for an orthopedics journal and the other a timely and critical consideration on risk management for Yoga teachers and their responsibilities for student care. Scott Blossom imparts interesting insights into yogic scripture and psychoneuroimmunology, combining the best of ancient and modern approaches. Member Robin Rothenberg takes us inside her group Yoga therapy classroom, inviting us to sense the ebb and flow of this ever-changing, sometimes challenging, and always rewarding circumstance.

New member David Shapiro and his colleague Karen Cline bring an intriguing look at the effect of various categories of *âsana* on mood changes, with the discussion section of their research-based article being one of the most interesting and valuable this editor has ever read. Also in the realm of psychology is Dr. Frances Vaughan's timeless commentary on the psychological symbolism of the *cakras*, a work originally published in 1983.

Nicole Culos-Reed et al.'s research on the benefits of Yoga for

cancer survivors and Debra Campbell and Kathleen Moore's research on the benefits of Yoga for depression, anxiety, and stress make valuable additions to the growing body of evidence that will help Yoga therapy become an integral part of complementary and alternative medical treatments. Member Ginger Woods's in-depth and carefully documented case study of Yoga for chronic pain management makes a strong case for further research in this area as well.

Rounding out the contributions is member Louise Goldberg's wonderful Yoga-based program for regular and exceptional students in the Florida public school system. Based on calls we have received over the past two years, Yoga in the public schools has been one of the primary topics of interest to the media, and it seems to be one of the most rapid areas of integration of Yoga into U.S. culture today. I wish I had room to convey the many beautiful stories I have been told of Yoga's gifts to students of calmness, self-esteem, and relationship-building. The one that has moved me most was told by member Anne Buckley-Reen, who will contribute an article to next year's journal on her work with Yoga in regular and special education in thirty New York public schools. She told me how Yoga has transformed bullies who made life miserable for other children into their compassionate and caring protectors. I cannot think of anything that holds more promise for our future.

In Yoga,

Trisha