

# Editorial

It is our pleasure to introduce this year's issue of IJYT. The featured contributions include original research, review, methods, and perspective articles that span a broad range of topics related to yoga therapy. The high caliber of these contributions is a testament to the continuously growing interest in yoga therapy research on an international level.

## Research: Mental Health in Focus

The majority of the original research articles in this volume focus on yoga for mental health issues, and they include studies on a range of populations. We have reports on both a pilot (Wahbeh & Nelson, 2019) and a follow-up (Wahbeh & Fry, 2019) on the effects of iRest meditation for older adults with depressive symptoms. An evaluation of a 10-week yoga protocol aimed at reducing trauma-related mental health symptoms in veterans (Justice & Brems, 2019) represents a trend in the increasing number of studies researching contemplative practices for trauma-related symptoms. Additional papers describe a yoga program targeting emotion-focused coping in menopausal women (Crowe & Van Puymbroeck, 2019) and the effects of a 5-week seminar on the biopsychosocial-spiritual model of self-care for anxiety, self-compassion, mindfulness, depression, and stress in graduate healthcare students (Klawonn et al., 2019).

## Yoga in Diverse Conditions and Settings

In terms of investigations with specific clinical populations, one article reports a randomized controlled trial looking at the effect of yoga-based cardiac rehabilitation on heart rate variability in patients who suffered myocardial infarction (Christa et al., 2019), and a second evaluates changes in nonmotor symptoms in individuals with Parkinson's disease following an 8-week yoga intervention (Walter et al., 2019). The final two original research articles include interesting qualitative and quantitative work evaluating yoga training programs in diverse community settings: One looks into yoga as a peacebuilding tool in a social housing complex in Colombia (Liévano-Karim, 2019), and the other reports the evaluation of a yoga teacher training program for adults in custody (Freeman et al., 2019).

The featured review article describes psychosomatic associations of Parkinson's disease in terms of yoga philosophy, considering how this perspective can elucidate unex-

plored associations between the severity of the disease and the subjective evaluation of one's life (Maddela & Buetow, 2019).

An interesting contribution in the methods department describes the development and implementation of "Yoga: Theory and Practice," an elective in an academic setting (Klatt & Webster, 2019). The course offers college students an in-depth, academic study of yoga that incorporates both scientific and holistic health perspectives; if yoga and yoga therapy are to be implemented into healthcare, this kind of research on medical education will be important.

Rounding out the issue are two valuable perspective articles, one describing the concept of "yoga kernels" as discrete, evidence-based yoga practices that are amenable to scientific study and dissemination as a public health intervention (Smith et al., 2019), and the other exploring the legal and ethical obligations of yoga programs to uphold both the principles and the spirit of secularism when teaching in schools (Cook-Cottone et al., 2019).

## With Gratitude

As always, we would like to acknowledge everyone working behind the scenes to make the publication of IJYT possible. A special thanks goes to our editorial board members Lorenzo Cohen, Holger Cramer, Timothy McCall, Matthew Taylor, and Shirley Telles; to our managing editor Laurie Hyland Robertson; to our art director Ken Wilson; to our advertising manager Abby Abhaya Geyer; and to Devi Mueller for website support. Last but not least, we offer much gratitude to all of IAYT's members and sponsors for their continued interest and support.

Sincerely,

Laura Schmalzl, PhD, & Sat Bir Singh Khalsa, PhD  
Co-Editors in Chief

