As is hopefully true of most other aspects of our human condition, macro and micro, language evolves. Little more than a year ago, for instance, many of us were unfamiliar with mRNA vaccines or spike proteins, and no one had heard of the scourge now called long COVID. Where terms originated may have power (you’ll never see the phrase “rule of thumb” in this magazine as long as I’m editing it), or what they have come to signify may drive their impact—regardless of whether that effect is intended by the speaker or writer.

In this issue, longtime Yoga Therapy Today Copy Editor Lokiko Hall steps into the role of YTT author with an article that prompts introspection on the words we yoga therapists routinely use (see p. 49). No matter where you stand on ideas of dualism in yoga, I have no doubt you’ll find a look at everyday terms to be thought-provoking.

This issue also marks the first for Associate Editor Alexa Owen, C-IAYT, from whom you’ll be hearing lots more in the future. Among other pieces, Alexa curated this year’s reports on IAYT’s Symposium on Yoga Therapy and Research, beginning on page 16. Our reporters took a fresh look at a conference that itself represented a new take on SYTAR. Huge thanks are due to Alexa, and to the other IAYT team members whose tireless helping hands make every issue of this magazine possible.

Many of these same hands made light—albeit still intense—work of SYTAR 2021, which pivoted fully online in a collaborative flurry that happily resulted in a more accessible event than ever. (In fact, you can still join in—see the note on p. 19.) Much of the best of IAYT’s annual practitioner conference remained present this year, including the practices, perspectives, and range of content spanning from yogic traditions to biomedical science. Interpersonal connection was as evident a theme as ever, including among the winners of the 2021 Seva Award, featured on page 46.

As an accomplished musician, Arnab Bishnu Chowdhury, C-IAYT, pictured below, had already been engaged to play a role in the final evening’s entertainment when he was named the 2021 Seva winner by the award’s selection committee. Arnab premiered his therapeutic music composition “Playing with Sunlight—Re-Imagining Our World Beyond COVID” at SYTAR, dedicating the work to all of the brave healthcare providers battling COVID-19 around the world (https://youtu.be/u2p8wzukKUE).

The 2020 Seva Award winner, Mona Flynn, MS, E-RYT 500, C-IAYT, also does life-changing work that invites an embrace of the sunlight without bypassing the difficult. On page 42, she offers a look at the rapid evolution of her Yoga Connection project. The deftness with which she gathers a sangha (community) of helpers for her worthy goals is nearly as inspirational as the mission itself.

Only slightly less lofty is this issue’s continuing education article (p. 30): Documenting your sessions and care plans in ways that both honor the fullness of yoga therapy and speak to healthcare providers who may not be familiar with the scope of our work is one of many endeavors that will help to move the profession forward with integrity. Yogic assessment and co-creation of interventions make yoga a unique therapeutic endeavor, and well-thought-out integrative recordkeeping captures these intentions.

Rounding out the issue are two pieces on common human experiences: Turn to page 26 to read about headache and page 37 for prenatal care, both presented through the ever-evolving lens of yoga therapy. As the authors of these pieces demonstrate so clearly, yoga therapists can provide vital support for chronic conditions and major life experiences, especially during a pandemic that has heightened health concerns and stretched thin the already-overtaxed resources to which people routinely turn for care.

Thank you for reading! YTT
—Laurie

On the cover: A class offered (pre-COVID) by 2020 Seva Award winner Mona Flynn’s Yoga Connection project