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# Journal of Bodywork & Movement Therapies

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## Editorial

# A new era for the Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies



It seems only fitting to begin this editorial on a personal note. During the past 5 years as JBMT Senior Associate Editor, I had the privilege of working closely with founding Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Leon Chaitow. A wonderful mentor, full of wit, knowledge, and a passion for teaching, his loss is deeply felt. Until the end, he remained focused on his mission for this journal to be a voice for clinicians wishing to explore new techniques and research findings, as well as mentoring new researchers through the publication process. Ordinarily focused on quality research in the bodywork fields, he was also willing to include articles in the journal that were controversial so that a discussion could ensue. He enjoyed deep conversations about new theories and findings, knowing that there were many clinicians who had similar intellectual curiosity and craved such a conversation. In a sense, the journal was an extension of his thought process. He seemed to fold together the research findings and authors' discussions into his own understanding of the field and then write eloquent editorials posing his view of the subject.

The journal was Dr. Chaitow's way of communicating with a broad readership; creating a global forum to distribute information to the clinical field and develop discussions through the discovery of new information. This journal is fortunate to feature authors and editors from literally all over the world, offering different viewpoints and ways of practicing. This has led to a unique diversity of articles that includes new hypotheses, diagnostic tests, survey instruments, new techniques, efficacy of treatment, and unique health conditions.

As it enters its 23rd year, JBMT has evolved into a well-known and respected collective of many different professions. Its necessity is demonstrated by the continued growth of evidence-based practice, and the consequent need for an equal growth in the amount of literature that can support the exceptional clinical work within these professions.

### 1. Looking to the future

As incoming Editor-in-Chief, some have asked me whether there will be a new direction for JBMT. My response is that we will continue to focus on clinically relevant articles that are interesting to manual medicine practitioners. My passion for research began in the mid-1980s while I was embarking on my own education in manual medicine. I found the lack of research on the techniques we were learning particularly frustrating, and even though our instructors' clinical expertise was formidable, I recognized the need for further research and professionalization and thus focused my efforts in that direction. Clinically trained as a massage therapist and a chiropractor, I moved into research and completed a PhD in

epidemiology with the desire to offer more to these professions. Since then, I have worked in clinical research for over 25 years and continue to feel passionate about the need for more quality research in the bodywork professions.

Unfortunately, some well-known techniques still have very little to no evidence, and practicing clinicians and educators (who together form the majority of our readership) continue to find it difficult to justify their approaches in accepted scientific terms. This situation does not suggest that we should disregard bodywork practices that do not have any data to support their efficacy. Rather, it is essential that we collectively move toward demonstrating through scientific methods why and for who such techniques are beneficial. Yet, we will need to remain open-minded to research findings that may demonstrate that some techniques are not as helpful to patients as we once thought.

Likewise, as research findings emerge about new techniques (or techniques new to us), we must continue to critically appraise the literature and apply the new information only when it reaches our own internal level of scientific certainty. One article will never be enough for most clinicians to change the way they practice. However, several high-quality clinical trials might bring us closer to the understanding that the benefits of utilizing a new therapy may outweigh the uncertainty. This balance among our clinical knowledge and judgement, the newest research findings, and the preferences of our patients is truly the definition of evidence-based practice as first coined by Dr. David Sackett so many years ago. Therefore, to support this effort, JBMT will continue to focus on building the evidence for current treatments, as well as developing a path for new discoveries.

Beyond the technical research reports, many readers comment on looking forward to reading JBMT editorials because they include discussion, speculation, and exploration of the many directions in which our clinical work and research is moving. Therefore, we will continue these writings by some of the most well-known clinicians and educators in the manual medicine field, including Jan Dommerholt, PT; Demetrios Kostopoulos, PT, PhD; Craig Liebenson, DC; Warrick MacNeill, MCSP; Matt Wallden, MSc, DO; and Glenn Hymel, EdD, LMT. We are delighted to welcome Thomas Myers as Associate Editor of the Fascia Section, as well as Sasha Chaitow, PhD as Managing Editor who will also write editorials drawing on the History of Science. We are proud to continue these practical and philosophical writings, some of which are featured in this issue along with a diverse selection of reports from the 5th International Fascia Research Congress in Berlin.

On a more technical level, JBMT is in the process of establishing a new online submission and review platform, as well as modifying the author instructions to incorporate common reporting protocols

such as the CONSORT guidelines. These changes may not be overtly obvious to most readers; however, they will improve and expedite the publication process and significantly advance and enhance the information offered to our readers.

In closing, I would like to personally thank all of our readers, authors, and reviewers for your continued support of the Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies. May the new year bring you much curiosity, wisdom, health, and happiness.

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