

## Editor's Note

The second issue of the *Journal of Poetry Therapy* brings an increased range of articles, from the use of poetry therapy in a women's growth group to its use for clients with borderline personality disorder. The columns again offer a variety of items suitable for both practice and research. Publishing articles, information, and poetry relating to the creative aspects of therapy remains one of the central functions of the Journal.

I have been pleased to receive numerous inquiries about our new journal. Many individuals report that they have been using some form of poetry therapy (though not calling it as such) for many years. Others write that they have been using bibliotherapy in a variety of clinical settings. For all practical purposes the terms poetry therapy and interactive bibliotherapy are synonymous. Bear in mind also that the use of the poetic (e.g. metaphors, imagery, literature) is not limited to poetry therapists. Consider for example Minuchin, Satir, and Andolfi's work in family therapy. Still others ask questions about the type of articles that are sought. In a relatively new and emerging field we need a variety of articles. This includes both clinical reports and empirical investigations, as well as philosophical and theoretical pieces. With respect to the empirical, the use of single system designs is especially promising. Unless we can prove that a particular poetic intervention works with a particular client, problem, and situation, it will be difficult to gain increased acceptance in the professional arena. This also means publishing case studies that are clear, concise, and meaningful. One guideline to follow is to determine if a professional not familiar with poetry therapy, could replicate the procedure(s) described in the article.

It is pointless to argue whether empirical studies are better than

descriptive studies (and vice versa). We need both! Let's recognize, however, our limitations as well as our strengths. Words and numbers are no more nor less than symbols. In the words of a famous philosopher, "You pays your money and takes your choice." The element of choice is our strength. We must produce scholarship in poetry therapy. This means rigor, honesty, and relevance to the psychotherapeutic domain. We can build a literature that is complementary (i.e. art and science) and, on a cumulative basis, far reaching. There is of course some skepticism from helping professionals about the value of poetry therapy. This is true to a much lesser extent for all of psychotherapy. One way to respond to this skepticism is to continue to practice, evaluate and document. On that note I'll close by again calling for manuscripts, subscriptions and/or memberships in The National Association for Poetry Therapy. I am also asking that questions, comments or information be sent to me or any one of our column editors. The potential of this *Journal* is directly related to reader interest and input. A special invitation is extended to all those involved in other creative arts therapies. Let's join forces!

*Nicholas Mazza*