

Editor's Note

Self-healing and the struggle for self-understanding through the reading and writing of literature form the base of this issue of the *Journal*. Laura Cohen conducted a qualitative study on adults who found reading to be helpful in dealing with difficulties in life. The results indicate that recognition of self in the literature was directly related to the therapeutic experience. Jane Marston, drawing from literary and therapeutic experiences, discusses her understanding of self and mother through Synge's play, *Riders to the Sea*. Constance Silver provides a report of a patient who brought poetry to her and how their therapeutic relationship developed.

It appears that although the reading and writing of literature is a unique and solitary process, the healing qualities emerge from the recognition that we are not alone in our struggles. The greatest danger to the above process is complete withdrawal. The greatest hope for the resolution of problems is within the sharing and lending a vision of what we experience. Through the articles, columns and poetry in this issue, reflection and an appreciation of the human spirit are affirmed. To be alone or with someone in the reading or writing of literature remains an individual decision. And decision-making, through heart and mind, is part of poetry and therapy.

Nicholas Mazza