Spring is the Time for Renewal

A pril showers bring May flowers; next, June is “bustin’ out all over.” Spring and with it, renewal, has two dimensions: there is a time for purging, cleaning, and getting rid of the old; only then is it time to refresh, rethink, reorganize, and entertain new ideas. Some of us older folks remember that spring cleaning meant a masterful exercise in every room, including turning mattresses, emptying closets, washing windows inside and out, and painting ceilings and walls. Those of us who had attics, basements, garages, and carports remember the mounds of stuff that made its way to the curb for pick-up. Only then did the yard get attention, with new flowers, shrubs, or trees. Those of you “down under” will have to adjust the months to match your seasons.

In this editorial, I will share with you the inside story of how we, at the Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services (JPN), carry out the purging and cleaning dimensions of our work, and then invite you to help us with the renewal dimension.

PURGING AND CLEANING

A very big purging operation took place approximately 13 years ago, when we eliminated the paper process for article submission and review. Since then, we have gone entirely digital, using the online submission system, Rapid Review®. Before Rapid Review, potential authors submitted paper documents. Reviewers were selected, and they were mailed copies of the manuscripts to review and return with their handwritten or typed comments. I then received paper documents of the original submission and the reviewers’ comments. You can imagine the extra time it took to mail the documents back and forth! Rapid Review allowed a splendid purging and emptying of filing cabinets and a solution to considerable postage fees.

Another change was in the production process, which used to begin at SLACK Incorporated in Thorofare, New Jersey. The manual steps of producing the actual journal are now all digital. The paint and large paper boards for layout are gone forever.

Manuscript review, of course, is a continuing process. But in the Spring, in anticipation of our annual board meeting, which takes place in the Fall, we pay special attention to several dimensions. First, we take a careful look at our Review Panel and Editorial Board members’ “report cards” in terms of their reviewing activity. These evaluations include the length of time taken to submit a review, the quality of
the review, and how well the reviewer makes suggestions for improvement to the potential author(s). We also assess expertise terms, which the reviewers use to indicate their knowledge of specific domains. Some terms on the list are purged, some are grouped, and new areas are added.

We also keep track of new author submissions and guest editorial contributions. These evaluations give us direction for changes to make to both the Review Panel and Editorial Board.

RENEWAL
New Directions and New Ideas for Clinical Practice

Editors and editorial board members always have their eyes and ears open and tuned in to new directions and new ideas for clinical practice. “What’s new?” is quickly followed by “How good is it? How do we know?” Sources for new ideas can be found in the proceedings of conferences and conventions, news media, health sciences and government websites (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Food and Drug Administration), and in paying attention to what is happening on clinical units. Nurses in various areas of practice are absolute gold mines for new ideas regarding the assessment, planning, and implementation of new strategies for care and treatment.

New Review Panel and Editorial Board Members

Here is your special invitation to help us with renewal! We would like to hear from you about potential new members. Our criteria for selection are that the individual is an experienced clinician, with a well-articulated domain(s) of practice, who has been published in one or more refereed journals. We consider being an author in published in one or more refereed journals, state journals or media, opinion pieces, chapters in books, or documentaries as evidence of potential, and would begin with an appointment to the Review Panel. The Editorial Board is reserved for authors who have had peer-reviewed articles published and hold a highly regarded position as a clinician or academic. We ask potential candidates to submit a current curriculum vitae and copies of the articles they regard as their best.

As we consider potential reviewers, we keep geography in mind, as well as domains of practice (i.e., private/public, specialty, holding office in professional associations). Holding a doctorate is not a requirement, nor is being a nurse. From time to time, we have had psychologists, social workers, and psychiatrists on our Editorial Board. Of course, they must have expertise in a psychosocial domain.

Special Issues

Each year JPN publishes at least one special issue, which focuses on a specific topic. Many of the suggestions for special issues have been made at our annual editorial board meeting. The most recent special issues were published in October and November 2014: Simulation in Psychiatric Nursing Education, and Seclusion & Restraint: 10-Year Report of Successful Reduction Strategies. Currently, we have two potential special issues slated for this year, Behavioral Addictions, and Human–Animal Bond and Mental Health.

New (and Old) Sections

We regularly canvas our readers and ask them about which departments/sections of JPN they read regularly and value. As a result, the Book Review section was discontinued. On the other hand, the Psychopharmacology section always get accolades. The other current sections, which run every other month, are Aging Matters and Youth in Mind.

Internal Processes

In 2012, SLACK Incorporated launched Healio.com, an in-depth specialty clinical information website featuring news reporting, dynamic multimedia, CNE educational activities, quick reference content, blogs, peer-reviewed journals, and a full line of book titles. Health care specialists can access the website and register to select and tailor news and education to fit their daily practice needs. All current and past issues of JPN can be accessed via the website, as well as online advanced release articles. Information regarding manuscript submission and award opportunities can also be found. Stay tuned for information on a JPN app.

YOUR RENEWAL?

If this editorial, for you, has produced some new ideas, do let us know. Do you now have an article in mind? A guest editorial! A suggestion for a member of the Review Panel or Editorial Board? Are you considering suggesting yourself? Do you want to “run something past” me? The best way to reach me is by e-mail: Smoyak@docs.rutgers.edu. Most of the time, you will hear back from me within the day.

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