
Editorial - February 2015

This volume, the first for 2015 presents articles that relate to various fields associated with occupational therapy, written by clinical and academic occupational therapists as well as by clinicians from other treatment-related disciplines. Later in the course of the year we are planning to publish a special extended volume dedicated to occupational therapy in the school systems. Many readers submitted manuscripts for this volume and we look forward to its publication. I wish all of us a productive year and urge you to share your experiences, projects and thoughts via papers, columns and letters to the editor.

Now, to the content of this volume, we open it with a **Position Paper on Sensory Modulation Disorder**. Leading Israel occupational therapists specializing in SMD worked jointly to formulate a summary of the unique contributions of occupational therapy to the treatment of individuals with SMD.

The position paper is followed by an article entitled **Social Exclusion within the Community: Can we Change it?** This article, by **Prof. Navah Z. Ratzon**, is based on her Award for Excellence lecture delivered at the Israeli Association of Occupational Therapy Conference, 2013. The paper discusses social exclusion, health exclusion, and occupational exclusion,

and our duty as therapists and agents of change to promote equality. In addition, the author describes projects aimed at promoting occupational justice and equality.

The third article, **Athletic Walking, Executive Functions, and Falls among Community-Living Elderly People**, examines the contribution of physical fitness, especially walking, to the physical and cognitive well-being of elderly. More specifically, it describes a study that examined the relationship between executive function and falls in elderly who are engaged in walking as a fitness activity versus those who do not engage in walking. The authors discuss the results and its implications for occupational therapy intervention.

This volume also includes two articles in English. The first is entitled **Changes in Occupational Therapy Students' Attitudes towards People with Disabilities: The Importance of Firsthand Experience**. It was written by occupational therapy academic faculty members who wished to evaluate their students' attitude towards individuals with disabilities and to examine whether the training of future occupational therapists can change their attitudes. The article describes the importance of this topic and a longitudinal study in which the students' attitudes were monitored throughout the years of their study program. As a result of the study's findings the authors stress the importance of constructing an academic curriculum

that emphasizes students' exposure to and formation of meaningful relationships between students in the first years of their studies and people with disabilities.

The next article was written by researchers from the social work and educational psychology fields and is entitled **What Do the Parents Say? Parents of Children with Developmental Disabilities Using Touch-Screen Mobile Devices**. The article describes a survey aimed at understanding the use of touch-screen mobile devices by children with developmental disabilities from their parents' point of view. The authors were concerned with whether parents were being provided with the necessary training and guidance in the use of these devices in light of their widespread use by their children's educators and therapists. The results and discussion provide the readers with insights into the parents' satisfaction and thoughts about the use of touch-screen mobile devices by their children.

The **Personal Glimpse** column was written by a social worker and PhD student on a unique topic - the challenges facing clinicians with mental disabilities and how they cope with them. In describing this phenomenon, the author discusses her personal experience as a social worker with a mental disability and the challenge of being on 'both sides of the fence'; i.e., a person who functions both as a client and as a therapist. The column also

describes a support group for clinicians with mental disabilities called "service consumers and providers".

Pleasant reading,

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