

EDITORIAL

A Vision for *Families, Systems, & Health*

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From its earliest days as *Family Systems Medicine*, under Don Bloch, the founding Editor, this journal has occupied a unique position in the landscape of health care journals. Rather than carving out a new, more specialized area, it has been placed at the confluence of health and mental health, the individual and the family, personal and population approaches. Under Susan McDaniel and Tom Campbell, the editorial team that renamed *Families, Systems, & Health (FSH)* and guided it for twelve years, it has been brought to the high level of influence and stability that it enjoys today. Its title promises, and the journal has delivered, a balance of types of articles from its position at the nexus of intellectual endeavors that address the role of relationship in health.

The change that I see that is most important to *FSH* is in the environment. *FSH* is just beginning to cease being ahead of its time. Some of the people central to the developing life of the journal have also been important in the transition that has created the current flowering of collaborative care. The forces that are driving this flowering are much larger than the group of us who

have been supportive of *FSH*. These forces have created a renewed need for a multidisciplinary journal that can address practice and theory in addition to education and research. The *systems* in the title can refer to systems of healthcare delivery in addition to systems of human interaction.

FSH is or should be the first journal for manuscripts on collaborative practice, for research on the influence of the family in health and illness, for family interventions in health and illness, and for systems thinking as it applies to health and illness. For people doing research whose primary academic commitment is with a particular discipline, such as health psychology, behavioral medicine, clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, nursing, or medical specialties, we can be the locus for articles about collaborative practice. For the field as a whole, we should be the journal for rigorous descriptions of the reciprocal evolution of the routines of practice, the delineation of social roles in service delivery, and models of phenomena underlying collaborative healthcare.

Gregory Bateson said that being able to articulate patterns that connect seemingly disparate domains of phenomena must certainly be a nontrivial accomplishment. I cannot improve on that idea as a reason for intellectual endeavor. We need to be much better at articulating the patterns that connect different domains if we are to be able

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to think better about phenomena such as “mind” and “body” that we have dichotomized so thoroughly. In what other field does common parlance, such as “that child is a pain in the neck,” carry a more sophisticated synthesis of physical and behavioral experience than the language professionals usually deliver? Producing a journal that regularly offers clear articulations from many domains of relationship in health and healthcare, and occasionally offers a new articulation of the patterns that connect across domains, is the first goal the new editorial team has set itself. The second is making *FSH* an accepted and well-used outlet in the worlds of medicine, mental health, and systems thought.

As an approach to both goals, we want to broaden the readership and the contribu-

utors to *FSH* by making the journal accessible to authors who do their scholarly writing in Spanish. To this end, Gonzalo Bacigalupe has joined as Associate Editor. We will be inviting leading scholars from the Spanish-speaking world to join us as reviewers. We want to be able to take a manuscript in Spanish from submission, through all the steps in the editing process, to an accepted final form before it is translated. To be a true “agora” for ideas and science, we want to hold the loyalty of the stellar group who have published in *FSH* in the past and encourage submissions from authors in English and Spanish who have not contributed previously. We hope to set the bar for publication high, and to take steps to help new authors meet the standard.