

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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Welcome to Volume 17, Issue No. 4 of *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*, special issue on "The Heart of Justice; Social Work Innovations in Israel." Instead of a general issue which provides a collection of narratives on diverse topics that have been approved by the journal's own editorial board, a special issue such as this one is quite different. It presents a theme, in this issue: social justice and social work innovations in Israel. Readers are invited to be present in the journey of the authors who share their experiences through their individual processes of helping others and bringing about social change.

A special issue begins with a concept proposed by an individual or team who are invested in a particular topic and dedicated to seeing their idea come to life in print. This special issue reflects the extraordinary commitment of a unique team working between California and Israel. Dr. James (Jim) Kelly and Dr. Ray Berger are the guest and consulting editors for this special issue. Dr. Kelly's commitment to *Reflections* dates back to its birth nearly two decades ago. As the director of what was then the CSULB Department (now School) of Social Work, he supported the birth of *Reflections*. Dr. Kelly is renowned in numerous arenas, including as past president of the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and for his expertise worldwide in new program development and educating social workers on several continents. Those of you who are subscribers to *Reflections* will remember the remarkable issue that focused on social justice in Africa, co-guest-edited by Dr. Kelly, who is the president of Menlo College in Atherton, CA (San Francisco Bay Area).

This time, Dr. Kelly collaborated with a long-time colleague, Dr. Ray Berger, Professor (Retired) who served at the CSULB Department of Social Work and was

recognized then for his commitment to social justice issues. Such an endeavor requires the dedication and expertise of an Israel in-country colleague, so Drs. Berger and Kelly turned to Dr. Itzhak Lander, a lecturer at the Department of Social Work at Sapir College in Hof Ashkelon. The investment of Dr. Lander was so meaningful that Drs. Kelly and Berger have provided a separate acknowledgements page for him on page 5.

The *Reflections* executive and editorial boards and staff extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Berger and Dr. Kelly for the selfless and countless hours of time invested in conceptualizing the special issue, working with prospective and confirmed authors, and copy editing, especially when authors are writing from Arabic and Hebrew to English. Across the thousands of kilometres, we also thank Dr. Lander for his generous and expert commitment. In the United States, social workers have our NASW Code of Ethics which is embodied in six major principles: being competent, having dignity, having integrity, respecting human relationships, providing service, and advocating for social justice. In Israel, there is the practice of tikkun olam, which means "to repair the world." Ethical practice knows no borders. You will find all of these concepts come to life in the pages of this special issue of "The Heart of Justice: Social Work Innovations in Israel."

For the Cover art, we again turned to CSULB Professor of Art, Dr. Robin Richesson, MFA. She worked with the elegant graphic nature of the Hebrew and Arabic script to create the image for this cover, which reads "social justice" in these languages.

To all who worked on this issue and to our readers: Toda Raba and Shukrun (Hebrew and Arabic transliteration for "thank you").

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