

Following the Code

Few would argue the “code,” that is, a tenet in hand therapy; that what we do is a clinical integration of art and science. Many of us “in hands” strive for the perfect balance and application of anatomy, sociology, biology, engineering, physiology, and psychology, but few of us master the mix perfectly. Leonardo da Vinci certainly embraced an integrated approach to his craft and he understood the code. Da Vinci’s words echo a typical sentiment of those serving the *Journal of Hand Therapy*, that is, “*it is by logic that we prove, but by intuition that we discover.*”

The Journal, and its Editorial Board, embraces and honors “the code,” that is, the spirit of inquiry and search for truth. We strive for a publication that consists of an eclectic mix of randomized-controlled trials; basic science reports, case studies, and anecdotal examples of clinical ingenuity. The Journal exists as a record of how we think, how we practice, and how we use levels of evidence to adapt these constructs. Like another code, that is, that found in the record breaking best seller, *The Da Vinci Code*, our Journal is a receptacle of signs, symptoms, and problem-solving management approaches; it holds key concepts that can challenge our belief systems; and it contains kernels of truth along with

disparaging findings related to what was once thought to be irrefutable.

With this final issue of 2007, we look back and send an appreciative nod to the Journal’s founder Evelyn Mackin who first established the code for the Journal; and another to Ken Flowers who shepherded the Journal through the changing millennium and some stormy times over the past decade. The official motto of Ken’s alma mater, Johns Hopkins University, “*Veritas vos liberabit,*” also known as, “The truth shall make you free” is a standard established by our leaders. Both Evelyn and Ken embraced the code and laid the path for us all to follow. The baton has been passed and the code is clear. No doubt, the charge upon us is a difficult one, especially in times of shrinking resources and time. We continue to lose out on the ability to do research-like activities due to the clinical bottom line. Any protected or supported research time has been sacrificed for maximizing the volume of patients in the clinic. The code, that spirit of inquiry and clinical truth, however, lives on. A good-natured colleague recently lamented the loss of research time, but he will continue his scholarly pursuits; but upon publication the following acknowledgment will follow, “This research was done entirely in the author’s spare

time, without support of any kind from his institution.” We applaud this spirit and at the same time recognize the barriers to contributing to the Journal.

As the incoming Editor-in-Chief, I will continue to follow in the steps laid by others before me. With the help of the Editorial Board, our expert reviewers, and the Publisher we will continue to facilitate and expedite your submissions. As a testament to our commitment, I encourage authors to use the Author Advisory Panel and the new Elsevier web-based author gateway and send us your manuscripts. As this issue attests, we strive to publish materials that decode medical/rehabilitation gossip and clinical urban legends and differentiate it from higher levels of evidence. Essentially, all we are doing is applying a peer-review filter to it. We embrace experimental designs along with clinical anecdotes and cases. The Journal is our receptacle, which captures how we practice the art and science of hand therapy.

Kind regards,



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