

## Transitions

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The nature of the human state is that it is a transient one; one that for each of us comes into being and then passes. Marcus Aurelius, in his *Meditations* (1964), wrote of this and of the importance of experiencing it - living it - to the full. Whilst life is indeed transient, it also encompasses very many transitions along its course, whether related to movement along the life path from birth to death, the emergence of increasing and perhaps decreasing independence, varying experiences of good and poor health, changes in one's location and abode, passage from one form of work or education to another, acquaintances, relationships and many, many more.

It is striking how many such transitions exist along the path of a human's life and yet many of us manage to navigate these with a confidence and skill that grows as we progress. Yes, we often make wrong decisions and take wrong paths, but still, we manage to find ways forward which move us towards experiencing life more fully. On reflection, I do not believe that we achieve this independently but, rather, that life paths are often marked with significant interdependence, grounded in a social fabric that facilitates people to learn through guidance, encouragement and support. The absence of such encouragement and support, along with the presence of derision or disregard can, of course, lead to other outcomes.

The origins of intellectual disability service provision were, sadly, marked by the latter characteristics and led to the expectation that people with intellectual disability could not, and would not, be capable of experiencing life to the full. Furthermore, it was considered that life transitions could present jeopardy and that they were best avoided, thus creating life patterns of sameness and banality. Happily, we have seen significant movement away from this perspective and many people whose earlier lives were spent in institutional care have had the opportunity to taste the richness of life and its dynamic nature. As more and more people with intellectual disabilities are growing up in normative family and community settings, one can only hope and expect that they will increasingly experience the full enjoyment of life's richness (United Nations 2006).

My focus on transition is purposeful here, as I too am moving through a transition, and this will mark my last editorial as Editor in Chief of the Journal of Intellectual Disabilities. I am delighted to be passing the editorial torch to my good colleague, Dr Mary-Ann O'Donovan of the Centre for Disability Studies, University of Sydney, Australia. Mary-Ann brings a wealth of experience and a perspective that is wholly in line with the values of this Journal. I hope that my service to the Journal's community has been positive. Over my term as editor, I have noticed a significant increase in the number of manuscripts being submitted and have been delighted to note that have been coming from all parts of the world. I have also been very proud to see the Journal receive an impact factor, something that will be built upon going forward.

I am grateful to preceding editors for their support, as I am for the advice and commitment of those on the editorial and advisory boards. I wish to also acknowledge my colleagues in Sage who have assisted me along the way and whose work often goes unseen. Finally, I want to offer my sincere thanks to those who review for and publish in the *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities*. I have always experienced support and patience from you, and this has made the role, however onerous, a positive one for me.

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## **References**

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