EDITORIAL

Be the Change

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A prior JHNMA editorial started with "May you live in interesting times." Since then, I have been surprised to learn that these words are generally attributed to an ancient curse. I had always thought of them as welcoming an opportunity, an opportunity to discover solutions and implement them, an opportunity for change. That is the opportunity that I see when I peruse this issue of the *Journal of the National Hispanic Medical Association*. From thinking about dementia, language justice, access to care, and migrant health, we explore disparities in access to care and examine the importance of family-focused and culturally informed care. These are not cookie-cutter approaches. These are solutions grounded in relationship, the social context, what matters to the person. As humans, our relationships with others can maintain us and support our health. For example, the health of the caregiver can impact the health of the patient and vice-versa.

But change requires advocacy as in advocates, persons who come together to champion a goal. As advocates, we may be supporting lung cancer screening, health education and information in the person's preferred language, and clinical care that provides safety and takes into account the patient's psycho-social-cultural environment. Advocacy is essential to address disparities and to impact policy. Social factors matter. Economic factors matter. Psychological and spiritual factors matter. As we move toward a whole-person care paradigm, we acknowledge the importance of identifying and addressing the life factors that impair health for the individual, for the family, and for the community.

As health professionals, as patients, as loved ones who have cared for an ill "family" member, we have experienced the truth of these words and witnessed the need for whole-person care. If these words resonate with you, then join us! We invite you to "be the change."

So, I leave you with a quote, words for reflection as you read the articles:

> *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*
>
> –Margaret Mead

Happy reading, and Happy Hispanic Heritage Month!

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