

**2010 APA Council of Representatives Speech
Presented by Robert “Bob” Woody, PhD, ScD, JD
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Since I spoke to you folks last fall, a lot has happened—much of stemming from the economic conditions in society. The effort for health care reform is, at best, unsettled. Payment plans for mental health services have had only minimal gains. Certain media sources have decried the efficacy of therapy, lumping legitimate professional services with quackery. Natural disasters and wars have left unspeakable human suffering. And a look at several Division listserves reveals dissonance among psychologists. It is clearly a time when logic, reason, energy, and focus are needed. Thus, I seek your support for nominating me for and electing me to be APA President-elect.

If elected, my presidential initiative will be four-fold: (1) psychology as a STEM-quality science for developing a healthy and productive society; (2) the practice of psychology being composed of science and scholarship to benefit ALL people; (3) unification of psychologists, with no schisms; and (4) assertive promotion of societal and governmental resources to improve the human condition globally.

As a first step towards enhanced professionalism, I advocate reconsideration of standards and processes for accreditation of training programs, requiring proof of evidence-based outcomes rooted in behavioral science. Given the nontraditional models for training that have emerged and proliferated over the last fifty years, it is time to reaffirm the scientist-practitioner model and require its usage in all training programs.

In these current times, psychological practice calls for high quality professional development throughout one’s career. It is time for concerted efforts to better disseminate the research about empirically-supported interventions and evidence-based practices. This does not mean eliminating any scholarly theory, but there should be a behavioral science foundation for constructing assessment and interventions, regardless of modality or specialty.

Within the framework of health care, the practice of psychology should be linked to primary care, with the mental health dimension meriting respect and acceptance from all health-related professions. Certainly neuropsychology, prescription authority, empirically-derived assessment, and interdisciplinary interventions should be prominent.

Somewhat controversial perhaps, I believe that benefits for society and psychology will be improved by implementing a lattice-career approach; that is, allowing entry into psychology at all stages of training and regardless of specialty; however, there should always be sage supervision from fellow psychologists with more advanced training and experience.

The human suffering in New Orleans, Haiti, Indonesia, Africa, and the list goes on and on must become a mission for psychologists. However, these disasters cannot be allowed to overshadow the unmet needs of the chronically mentally ill, homeless, disabled, and poor persons of all ages and cultures that live among us. Too often the neglect of those in need of basic care and support comes from prejudices and discrimination—that must no longer be tolerated. Yes, psychology can and should tackle these problems.

If I am nominated for APA President-Elect, I will bring high energy and knowledge of psychology, health care, law, and education to the table, and work tirelessly for the creation of effective strategies and solutions. I will appreciate your support. Thank you.