

# ISPS Newsletter

Volume 4 #1

February 2015

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## 19th International Conference of the ISPS



Relationship and Experience in Psychosis - An International Dialogue  
March 18 - 22, 2015 in New York City



[Register now](#)

## ISPS NY 2015 Pre-conference workshops

Weds. 18th March (10 am - 4 pm)

### Have you signed up yet?

**Christine Braehler** Compassion  
Focused Therapy and Psychosis

**Larry Davidson** Recovery & Psychosis

**Tony Morrison** CBT and Psychosis

**Mary Olson** Open Dialogue & Psychosis

**Maurizio Peciccia** Art Therapy, Aquatic  
Therapy & Psychosis

**Bent Rosenbaum** Psychodynamic  
Supportive Psychotherapy

[Further information](#)

## News from the Executive Committee

Dear ISPS Members,

It is my pleasure to introduce this last Newsletter before two major ISPS events, our bi-annual ISPS conference and our ISPS Executive Committee elections.

### ISPS NY 2015 International Conference

As you are all aware our conference in March is taking place in one of the world's most exciting cities and, as I write, close to 450 persons have already signed up, so we are optimistic we will be close to capacity. We had about 300 submissions and that has posed a real headache as the organisers wanted to find a way of including nearly all your offerings and compromises will have to be borne by everyone involved.

A great deal of work has gone into the conference under the leadership of Brian Koehler and Julie Kipp backed up by our conference organiser Natalie Shear and her staff and our own ISPS organiser Antonia Svensson.

The aim of the conference is to provoke dialogue between our speakers and us all on the multi-faceted understandings, misunderstandings and current lack of certainty of the factors that lead to and ameliorate the state of mind we call 'psychosis'. There has already been plenty of lively dialogue provoked by and leading up to the conference.

If any of you are hesitating about attending, I hope I can persuade you that we don't want you to feel you missed out on what promises to be yet another real 'buzz' conference. I have been part of ISPS since 1991 and I still remember the great feelings I came away with in

## ISPS NY 2015 Saturday night dinner cruise



Join your colleagues and friends for an evening cruise on the Hudson River on the Saturday 21st March. See the glittering New York City skyline from the Spirit of New York cruise ship ... complete with buffet dinner, wine, and music for dancing.

Enjoy incredible views from the ample windows surrounding the enclosed deck, as the three hour cruise passes notable landmarks from the Empire State Building to Battery Park, Governor's Island, the Brooklyn Bridge and the Statue of Liberty, and much more. It will be a true New York experience.

You will board the cruise boat at Chelsea Piers beginning at 6:30pm and cruise from 7pm to 10pm.

**Capacity is limited. Reservations must be made by March 6th.**

Stockholm then and have felt the same at every ISPS International conference since: energised, enriched and motivated.

I would like to draw your attention to just a few of many aspects of the conference that link with EC activities and developments.

### Linking with other organisations

The conference will mark the first tangible sign of our wanting to link with other organisations to find common ground in anticipation that in some areas we may be more effective by working together to try and improve services and therapies for people who experience psychosis and need expert help. There will be a first ever ISPS symposium in which dialogue between representatives of some of our sibling international organisations will start. Perhaps this approach could be mirrored at ISPS national level.

### Nurses

Nurses are far and away the largest professional group who provide support and potentially therapeutic help to people who experience 'psychosis'. We intend to use the conference to launch our ISPS policy of being more actively welcoming of nurses into ISPS and to start some initiatives such as focussing on the making of milieus as therapeutic as possible. Again the EC hopes to encourage similar initiatives at ISPS regional and neighbourhood levels. We feel there is huge potential here to be enriched by more nursing members and that our existing membership can be very helpful to nurses.

### 2015 General Meeting

Don't forget that we will be holding our formal general meeting for members during the Friday lunchtime of the conference. This is an opportunity to hear and interact face to face with the executive. This brings me neatly onto my second topic.

This will surely be a night to remember!

[Sign up here](#)

## Continuing education and ISPS NY 2015



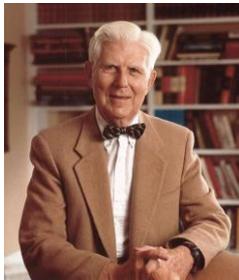
Continuing Education and Continuing Medical Education will be offered by the Institute for the Advancement of Human Behavior (IAHB).

For further information  
visit [www.iahb.org/cecme.html](http://www.iahb.org/cecme.html)  
or email [contact@isps-us.org](mailto:contact@isps-us.org)

### ISPS NY 2015 Plenary speakers include:

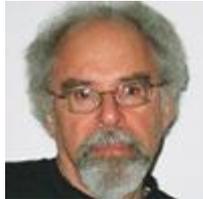
#### **Aaron Beck, MD**

Founder of Cognitive Therapy



#### **John S. Strauss**

Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at  
Yale School of Medicine



#### **Deborah Levy**

PhD, Director, Psychology Research  
Laboratory, McLean Hospital

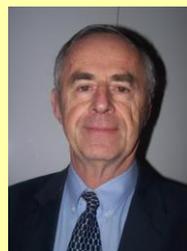
### ISPS Elections

Before the conference members have the opportunity to vote to elect the new executive. This is a most important and serious opportunity for the organisation. Many of our regional networks are now really flourishing, others struggling somewhat. It is very important to have a strong international executive who can facilitate and encourage what ISPS stands for in as many corners of the globe. So please take the elections seriously and read the statements of those who are standing.

May I hesitantly advise you to not get too caught up in national biases in reminding you that the elected ISPS members task is NOT to represent their country, it is to take part in promoting the international work of the society wherever they reside. So I would like to take the liberty of asking you to vote for the men and women whom you think will have the ability, energy and time to do the best job in that respect. It is clear that we have very capable people standing and that it is likely we will have a healthy mix of continuity and 'fresh blood' and as I indicated you have a chance to meet the old and new executive at the General Meeting in New York at the general meeting during Friday lunchtime.

### 2015 Greetings

I wish you all the very best for your lives in 2015 and look forward to meeting so many of you in New York at what will be my last meeting as your chair and as an executive member. It has been a most wonderful privilege to have served ISPS for many years and to have benefitted so much from so many of you.



Brian Martindale  
Chair, ISPS (January 2015)



**Lisa Dixon**

MD, MPH from the Center for Practice Innovations



**Larry Davidson**

PhD of SAMHSA Recovery to Practice



**Jan Olav Johannessen**

MD on early intervention



**and many more!**

[www.isps2015nyc.org/speakers](http://www.isps2015nyc.org/speakers)



## 19th International Conference of ISPS



Relationship and Experience in Psychosis - An International Conference  
March 18 - 22, 2015 in New York City



Here in New York, we are putting the final touches on the 19th conference of ISPS, to be held at the Cooper Union from March 18 to 22, 2015. This promises to be the biggest ISPS conference in years, thanks to an overwhelming number of submissions from all over the world.

ISPS-US and New York City look forward to welcoming ISPS members and everyone throughout the world interested in psychosocial approaches to psychosis. The City that Never Sleeps is going to be a great place for many long conversations ranging from DNA to Neighborhood.

See you in New York in March!

[www.isps2015nyc.org](http://www.isps2015nyc.org)



Brian Koehler PhD & Julie Kipp, PhD, LCSW

Co-Chairs, ISPS NY 2015

### ISPS Executive Committee Elections

Have you voted yet? Voting is open for the ISPS Executive Committee election (2015-2018 committee).

You are strongly encouraged to vote. All fee paying members of ISPS are eligible

Join the 900 people who Like  
us  
[www.facebook.com/isps.org](http://www.facebook.com/isps.org)  
[#isps2015nyc](https://twitter.com/isps2015nyc)

Join Our Mailing List!

## Are you a member of ISPS?

ISPS members pay reduced rates at our  
conferences plus many other benefits

Fees vary across regional groups

### TO JOIN US NOW

contact Antonia Svensson

[isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org)



## Danielle Knafo: Winner of the 2015 Barbro Sandin Award

We are pleased to announce that Dr Danielle Knafo is the winner of the 2015 Barbro Sandin Award. Dr Knafo was nominated for the award by Orna Ophir. Orna describes her as an active member of ISPS-US, a prolific writer and a highly respected leader in our field, Dr. Knafo has been the Director of the Serious and Persistent Mental Illness Concentration, at the Department of Clinical Psychology at Long Island University, for more than a decade. Dr. Knafo stands out as a

to vote in the EC election. If you are an ISPS member and you have not already received the voting form (via e-mail) please contact Antonia Svensson on [isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org)

The statements of the nominees can be found [here](#).

**Voting will close on Monday 9th  
March 2015.**

The results will be announced to the membership at the ISPS Formal General Meeting which will take place at lunchtime on Friday 20th March 2015 at The Cooper Union in New York (the site of the 19th International Conference of the ISPS).

## News from ISPS Regional Groups

### ISPS-United States

We had an election and I am pleased to announce that our Vice-President, Nancy Burke remains, and to welcome aboard our new Treasurer, Ron Abramson, and our new Secretary, Leah Rokeach. I am humbled also to announce that I am the new president! I want to thank the former president, Brian Koehler, for his mentorship and friendship over the past ten years.

We had our annual retreat with the outgoing officers and the incoming officers in November, 2014, to help with the transition. We also took this time to make some changes to our brochure and website by updating the language to make it more inclusive, and also to enumerate new member benefits.

Our Secretary, Leah Rokeach, is also chairperson of the Membership Committee, and has coordinated a mentorship program for new members. Ron Unger, the chairperson of the Education Committee, has commenced with the plan to offer webinars to our members on a variety of pertinent topics. Marie Hansen is the new chairperson of the Student and Early Career Professional committee and is working to engage students from multiple disciplines to join

dedicated leader and effective teacher who advocates an admirable humanistic approach to individuals who suffer the most severe mental conditions such as schizophrenia, mood disorders, severe personality disorders, addiction, and trauma.

The Barbro Sandin Award was created in 2008 by Dr. JoAnn Elizabeth Leavey in honour of Barbro Sandin, an Honorary Lifetime member of ISPS, who found ways in which to work with vulnerable persons with psychotic experiences that were in some cases deemed untreatable by mainstream psychiatry. The award honours a woman leader in psychological treatment every two years at the ISPS International Congress. The award is financed by the Barbro Sandin Foundation. Dr Knafo will be presented with the award at the 19th International Congress of ISPS in New York this March where she will also give a talk.

[Read about Barbro Sandin](#)

***"With all my might I wanted to fight for the restoration and renewal of at least one of these forgotten persons..."***



**Pankaj Suneja: Winner  
of the 2015  
David B. Feinsilver  
Award**

We are pleased to announce that Mr Pankaj Suneja of Delhi, India has won the 2015 David B. Feinsilver Award. The award is a scholarship which funds travel

us.

Noel Hunter is the new chairperson for Experts by Experience committee and will be presenting with other members of the committee at the ISPS 2015 meeting on ways that the organization can be more inviting and address the needs of people with lived experience.

We are in the initial planning stages for our next annual meeting in the Boston, Massachusetts area in 2016. However, we are still working intensively on the planning for the ISPS meeting in NYC in March 2015. I look forward to meeting everyone there.

Jessica Arenella  
ISPS-US President

**ISPS New Zealand**

"Shifting the Kōrero" was a very apt title for the latest ISPS conference held at the Auckland University Marae, Waipapa. It captured the many competing voices and perspectives when a member of any whanau struggles with extreme states. A series of really important dialogues emerged which were contained by the four walls described in the Whare Tapa Wha Model - Te Wairua (spirit), Te Hinengaro (mind), Te Tinana (body), and Te Whanau (the wider family).

The presentations covered the way in which psychiatry and cultural perspectives might accompany each other on a journey, whereby beliefs, tikanga, spiritual notions, and pathways toward healing of the whole person can be thought about; the ways in which the mind and body are affected by extreme states and the treatments offered, and the possibility for alternative treatment models, or considerations at least, including nutrients and supplements, and models of social connection; and finally, the way the broader whanau or family members might contribute to the journey of the one who struggles (e.g., The Recovery Rocks Community in Australia), or be influenced and affected by the individual's experiences and the psychiatric systems responses.

Each day began with a keynote talk which,

expenses to the bi-annual ISPS International Conference. Mr Suneja will be presented with his award at the 19th ISPS conference in New York this March, where will also give a talk entitled *"Each of Us Have Struggled and It Needs to be Written"*.

David Feinsilver, M.D. was a long-time staff member at the Chestnut Lodge Hospital in Rockville, Maryland, U.S.A, where he chaired its Symposium Committee. A former president of ISPS, the chair of its 1994 meeting in Washington, and the founder of ISPS-US, he established a fund before he died after a long illness. The Feinsilver Committee grants the award to the best research or clinical paper on the psychotherapeutic treatment of the severely disturbed and it funds travel expenses to the ISPS congress for a person who would not otherwise have the finances to attend.

#### [Further information](#)

### **ISPS India Mental Health Fair**



"Don't hide it- Fight it". "End the stigma- Change lives". "Say it out loud. I am a person not a mental health problem". "Mental illness is not contagious... You can't catch it by being kind" "Label jars, not people"... 180 students penned down their own creative thoughts while participating in the mental health fair recently organized by Turning Point in collaboration with BITM and ISPS India. The poster competition initiated the chance to emit the feelings & awareness of students towards mental health with colourful painting & a caption attached to it. The mental health fair has given them a scope to participate in quiz, poster competition along with workshops on Self Esteem & communication. The emotional orchestra,

for me, traversed the intersection between culture, spirituality, and psychiatry: a possibility which can only occur when respect exists between all of the parties involved and when listening extends to what is harder to know. There was a panel discussion alongside each series of talks and these became quite lively discussions which allowed the many and varied voices to be heard. Amongst these voices were those hurt or dismissed by the system, those who work within the system, and those that were healed as a consequence of the input offered from the system and the wider community.

And, some of the more significant voices of the conference were those that, through their spirit and perseverance, had found a way through. They spoke to their experiences of being affected by a direct or indirect experience of extreme states in all its realness and difficulty, and hence, could shine a light into that very dense mist, which, I feel, has the possibility of clearing if we can all sit back to listen. In the words of Karlo Mila, "Va" is that relational and sacred space into which energy flows, and here we can begin to determine the influence of spirit, environment, the social world, and the self in our many dilemmas, and from here create some freedom and ease. We're all needed for that.

The inaugural John Read Award was also awarded during the conference. Jim Marbrook received the award this year for his contributions in raising the awareness of mental health issues, and "shifting the korero", via his movies *Mental Notes* (2012) and *The Dark Horse* (2014). Congratulations to Jim and we wish him well for the future.

Mark Rose  
ISPS NZ Executive Committee member

### **ISPS Netherlands-Flanders**

The annual conference of the ISPS Netherlands-Flanders group was held on October 30th to celebrate the retirement of Dr. de Pater and following the visit of Prof. Louis Sass to the Netherlands. Travelling all the way from Brussels to Rotterdam for the occasion, I was lucky to be just in time for the core message of Dr. de Pater's convincing discourse. She notes that

improvisation and reactive performance prepare students to deal with intense emotions during adolescence. To boost their self esteem and peel off shyness students played a role just opposite to their daily personality pattern and started enjoying the novel role. Amidst laughter and enjoyment they also learnt to make mistakes in life without feeling overburdened by them.

The film festival CINE MIND organized by Learning System in collaboration with Turning Point also screened five short documentaries. Their stories revealed the need for promoting a positive competitive spirit.

Talent Hunt- Members (people suffering from chronic mental illness) of all the NGO's participated in the three day Fair organized by Turning Point in collaboration with BITM. They took part in a unique talent Hunt competition where participants got the chance to showcase their talents in music, recitation, art, creative writing and instant drama session. Effort was given to initiate their growth and exploration of talents. Along with Talent Hunt competition there was exhibitions of costume jewellery products made by people with mental illness.

"I was totally confused while picking up costume jewellery for me from the exhibition of handmade" told Dolly Basu. "I found each of them extremely beautiful & it was a difficult choice. These are like any other branded jewellery where customer would buy the product for their designs & finishing & not for sympathy attached to their work."

In a study commissioned by the WEF (World Economic Forum) in Davos, in 2015, mental disorders emerged as the single largest health cost with global projections increasing to \$6 trillion annually by 2030, more than diabetes, cancer, and pulmonary diseases combined. This also gives a chance to people who are stamped as sufferers of mental illness to play a different role altogether. Generally as they accept the illness, they almost stop performing or perform as a loser. This contest gives them a scope to perform as an artist, as a creative individual budding with lots of energy, enthusiasm and talents. It changes the individual and acts as a form

someone experiencing psychosis often starts communicating in an incomprehensive way. This renders interaction with others more difficult, she says, and as such it gets in the way of getting better. Dr. de Pater claims that patients might be doing this as part of a protection strategy, since words can hurt. "The tongue can contain a deadly poison and we are aware of that." By communicating incomprehensively, we can protect people close to us, for example against words that might hurt them or against the intensity of our emotions. We also want to protect ourselves, against interference of those who wouldn't understand anyway or maybe even against reality itself. Someone else's power, his capacity to not fall apart, thus gives us freedom of speech, dr. de Pater explains. By offering security, you can start communicating again in a real way and it is this authentic communication that is a first and necessary step to getting better.

My thoughts drift to my own manic speech in some distant past. Dr. de Pater would have hold her own in the face of all such nonsense, that is for sure. With more than 30 years of experience she concludes that a safe battle works. "But not only a safe battle," she continues. Also acceptance and striving for what is of value in life (ACT), tuning in to your body (sensoric integration therapy), the direct experiencing of another living creature (as with equitherapy), paid work and interpreting your own life history through theatre performances all help in getting better. As such, Dr.de Pater offers a nice introduction to all speakers that are up next.

Dr. Lot Postmes asks whether the disintegration of the self which is characteristic for psychosis, could relate to the disintegration of sensory perception. Contradictory sensory information leads to perceptual incoherence, which in turn leads to distortions of the self. Delusions and hallucinations all help patients reduce the perceptual incoherence (and with it also distortions of the self). Seen this way, they offer an advantage to the patient, be it one that comes along with a disadvantage: poor reality testing. Could perceptual coping strategies thus help recover from schizophrenia? It is a fascinating thought.

of therapy. It also acts a relaxation and improves motivation where they find out the purpose of life once again. Almost 1000 participants participated in the three day program.

Ishita Sanyal  
ISPS India

## **Forthcoming ISPS events**

### **ISPS NY 2015**

Wednesday, 18 March - Sunday, 22 March  
2015  
New York, USA

### **The 19th International Congress of ISPS**

From DNA to Neighborhood: Relationship and Experience in Psychosis - An International Dialogue

[www.isps2015nyc.org](http://www.isps2015nyc.org)

#isps2015nyc



### **ISPS Sweden Spring Meeting**

Friday, 10 April 2015

Malmö, Sweden

Invited speaker: Ulla Bertling, Psychologist and Anne Denhov

Topic: New Public Management

Contact: [kent.o@bredband.net](mailto:kent.o@bredband.net); [kent.nilsson@psykolog.net](mailto:kent.nilsson@psykolog.net)

[Further information](#)

### **5th DDPP Congress**

Friday 8th May 2015 - Sunday 10th May  
2015

Berlin, Germany

"Psychosis and Trauma"

In any case, an interesting finding seems to confirm Dr. Postmes's theory. In people born with blindness, the risk of suffering from schizophrenia is significantly smaller than in people who are not blind. This holds true, in spite of a greater risk to all other mental illnesses. With one of the senses missing, the intersensory balance improves, which makes all the difference.

After Dr. Lot Postmes, Dr. Jos De Kroon introduces Dr. Ross White. With some thought provoking pictures and quotes he introduces the audience to the intriguing world of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). The goal of ACT is to help people get more psychological flexibility. In doing this, one does not presuppose that people have a "broken" brain. The assumption is that people can get stuck and as such, can get unstuck. In a clear presentation he explains how ACT is based on three pillars: being present in the here and now, being open to experience and doing what matters. Where the first two pillars correspond to what is called mindfulness, the third pillar boils down to clarifying your values and living according to those values. Being mindful alone does not suffice to get better, Dr. White explains. Where mindfulness is the means, doing what matters is the end.

Prof. Sass brings us a phenomenological approach to delusions. The DSM describes delusions as the result of poor reality testing. This isn't quite certain, claims Dr. Sass. One could also see a delusion as a radically different way of perceiving, an extraordinary way of being in reality. It's this important point that he wants to confer during his presentation. This is shown through the quotes he uses, which are derived both from literature as from his correspondence with Sophie, one of his patients. Sophie has a beautiful way of writing and knows how to vividly describe what's happening to her during her psychosis. It's almost as if she's sent to parallel worlds. During a delusion both her beliefs and her knowings become dislodged from each other. "And no matter my efforts, I can't make them connect again", she says. Dr. Sass quotes Schreber who states that hallucinations show him insights that are deeper than those from other people. Dr. Sass speaks with a deep respect for his patients. He's a man who clearly hears what they are saying, who

(Conference language is German)

Speakers include:

Dorothea von Haebler, Peter Kapfhammer, Ingo Schäfer, Ferdinand Haenel, Olaf Schulte-Herbrüggen, Michaela Berg, Volkmar Aderhold, Stefan Klingberg and Günter Lempa

DDPP stands for "Dachverband deutschsprachiger

Psychosen Psychotherapie e.V." = umbrella organization for German speaking psychotherapy of psychosis. ISPS-DDPP is seeking representation by and cooperation with ISPS-Germany

[Further information](#)

### **ISPS Croatia - 20th School of psychotherapy of psychoses**

Wednesday, 13 May 2015 - Saturday, 16 May 2015

IUC, Dubrovnik, Croatia

"Inpatient treatment of persons with psychotic disorders: The spectrum of interventions"

E-mail: [Branka.Petrovic@pbsvi.hr](mailto:Branka.Petrovic@pbsvi.hr)

### **Open Dialogue: Experience in the UK**

An ISPS UK day conference

Friday, 15 May 2015

Liverpool, UK

-Why is interest in Open Dialogue growing so fast in the UK?

-What is the experience of Open Dialogue actually like?

-Is it relevant for you - should you be getting involved?

This is a day for anyone wanting answers to these questions, and suitable for professionals of all disciplines, those who commission services, people with personal experience of psychosis or family members, and anyone trying to support people experiencing psychosis.

Further information [www.ispsuk.org](http://www.ispsuk.org)

### **44th Annual meeting of ISPS-Germany**

Thursday, 04 June 2015 - Saturday, 06 June 2015

University Hospital Zürich, Switzerland

"Psychotherapy of Psychoses and Depressions, Social Therapy of Psychoses, Psychodynamic Approaches, Group Psychotherapy"

Speakers: Heinz Böker, Paul Hoff, Klaus Hoffmann, Uta Jaenicke, Tilman Kluttig, Nicolas Nowack, Frank Schwarz

[www.zsp-salzwedel.de/isps-germany](http://www.zsp-salzwedel.de/isps-germany)

Contact: [isps-tagung@gemeinde-](mailto:isps-tagung@gemeinde-)

wants to understand and thus actually listens. When later I ask him during lunch what his main motivations were to study psychosis, he tells me about one of his friends who was diagnosed with schizophrenia. The fact that really moved him was the contrast between the fascinating experience his friend was going through and what was made of it in mental health care. With all of his work he's provided the mental health care with an answer of what he thinks about their approach.

In the afternoon we were provided with workshops given by the speakers of the morning. In addition to that there was also a presentation with equestrian therapy as a subject, provided by Natalie Bryssinck. She works with psychiatric patients and explains how she has seen little miracles happen through working and having contact with a living breathing animal. The interaction between client, horse and therapist can thus provide us with nice results. The beauty of this interaction is the basic way you're being confronted with your own thoughts, feelings and actions. The horse doesn't judge, it only shows what it feels through your presence and actions. In this way there's no room for psychotic preoccupations, you have to focus on the reality around you. This focus enables you in time to reconnect to old strengths and talents. Natalie is very enthusiastic about seeing people believing more in their own abilities through repeating the exercises during an extended period, it gives people's self esteem a well needed boost. You could clearly see among the participants that Natalie's talk made an impression. There was even a woman who was scared of horses who wanted to come by and see for her own the effect this therapy has on her!

During his ACT workshop Dr. White submits us to a cross examination. What are your values? Imagine: your friends are toasting on your 50th birthday. What would you want them to say about you? Interesting, but at my 30th my 50th seems already too close for good comfort. Instead I imagine my own retirement party. I discover that I wouldn't mind to have a similar one to Margreet in the form of a conference. The fact that I'm not satisfied in my current job becomes even more clear because of this. Dr. White doesn't stop

[psychiatrie.de](http://psychiatrie.de)

**Save the date!**

**The 20th International Congress of the ISPS will take place in the city of Liverpool.**

**ISPS Liverpool 2017**

**Wednesday, 30 August - Saturday,**

**02 September 2017**

**Liverpool, UK**

Website: [www.isps2017uk.org](http://www.isps2017uk.org)

E-mail: [isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org)

**#isps2017uk**

## **ISPS 2019 Call for expressions of interest**



Formerly the International Society for the Psychological Treatments of the Schizophrenias

Following ISPS 2017 in Liverpool (UK), we would like our regional ISPS groups to consider bidding for the 21st International Congress of the ISPS, due to take place in 2019.

As many regional ISPS groups know, hosting an ISPS International Congress is an extraordinary opportunity for regional groups. Organizing the conference will help your group increase its visibility in your community, draw in new members and develop new leadership skills among your group activists. Furthermore, there is an opportunity for the host network to financially benefit from a successful conference to aid its own development.

The ISPS Executive Committee (EC) will select the site of the 2019 congress after careful consideration. Among the factors the EC will consider as part of the proposals are: Conference Facilities, Financial impact, attractiveness of the city and accessibility, Media opportunities for the organization, and capacity to make links with (and gain support from) mental health disciplines and psychotherapeutic organisations in your region. The successful local organisation will receive support from the Executive Committee and previous organisers.

there and robs a few more of our illusions. We see ourselves as highly psychologically flexible, but after filling in the flexibility scale we know better. Are you afraid of your own emotions? Are you afraid of your wishes and dreams? That is the opposite of psychological flexibility. It's what stops you from leading a happy life and becoming aware of that is a first step towards it. Dr. White makes a point. ACT makes a point. An important point at that.

The people who attended the ACT workshop, missed out on the performance "Weisernougek, of ik is een ander" ("Who's mad, or I am someone else"). In this piece of theater patients perform together with professional actors to show us their life stories. Several people told me later that the performance was very intense and emotional. You really were sucked into the feelings that someone was experiencing during intense moments of their lives. And maybe even more importantly, it wasn't shown in a rose tinted way. Both the hardships and problems as well as the tender helpful moments were shown in a non distorted way.

The conference was closed off with a reception in honour of Dr. De Pater. "I might be retiring as an active mental health care professional, but that CERTAINLY doesn't mean that I'm retiring from the field" she lets us know in a fierce way. Retirement only means that she will have more time for initiatives to change the current system (and her grandchild). I encounter a young man who used to be a client of hers. "Has she been able to help you?" I ask. "Well, now I'm doing really good", he says, " but the important thing is that you learn to help yourself." He's completely right and I laugh, because I've heard so many stories of fellow clients that they were robbed of this precise fact during their therapy.

We drink another glass in the company of the Red Hat Society: a gathering of ladies in neat outfits, with red designer hats. Dr. de Pater, who's actively going from one group of people to the next, is also a member of this band of friends. She might be free of any diagnoses, but that she's extraordinary that's a fact we can't deny. We raise our glasses again: to a successful conference, to psychological and social

Please read our [conference bid guidelines](#) and contact Antonia Svensson on [isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org) with any queries.



The ISPS book series  
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Routledge  
[www.isps.org](http://www.isps.org)  
[#ispsbookseries](https://twitter.com/ispsbookseries)

approaches to psychoses and to the dependent defenders of those approaches.

Karen Naessens (and with additions of Davy De Geeter)

## And after next month's New York conference...

Planning is already well under way for the ISPS international conference that will follow the New York event. We will be moving across the Atlantic to the unique UK city of Liverpool, a city of history, culture, famous football clubs, impressive cathedrals, a world famous symphony orchestra, the Tate art gallery, and of course the home of the Beatles.

**Our conference theme next time will be change.** We believe that if people who experience psychosis are to receive an adequate response to their needs, then fundamental change needs to happen.

The conference will be about change on all levels - individual, services, society. It will be about changing attitudes, mobilising public opinion, promoting a different understanding of distress, disseminating positive practice, targeting new participants, learning from speakers who have made change happen in other settings. We aim for it to focus on solutions not just problems.

**Can a conference be a game changer?** We hope that maybe the answer can be yes. We will be looking for contributions to address questions such as: What needs to change? How can each of us contribute? Can we reach out and find new allies? What should the role of ISPS be?

We are still to decide on our title. If you have our preference among our front runners, do please let us know (on [isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org)). The front runners are: Daring to change; Change - from contemplation to action; Real change can happen; Making real change happen.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**ISPS Liverpool 2017**

**Wednesday 30th August - Saturday  
2nd September, 2017**

Website: [www.isps2017uk.org](http://www.isps2017uk.org)

E-mail: [isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org)

Twitter hashtag: #isps2017uk

Alison Summers, ISPS UK Chair  
Coordinator of conference organising  
group

#### **Publication information**

ISPS Newsletter Editor: Antonia Svensson, ISPS International Organiser  
Second Editor: Klaus Lehtinen

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The deadline to submit material for the next ISPS newsletter issue is **Friday 10th  
April 2015.**

Submit material for consideration or suggestions to Antonia Svensson at [isps@isps.org](mailto:isps@isps.org). Submissions should be in Arial 12 font without special formatting such as boldface, italic, color other than black, or capitalization of entire words. Items submitted in other ways may be returned.

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