

# ISPS Newsletter - Autumn 2019

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**Dear ISPS members,**

*On behalf of the new Executive Committee I would like to thank you all for your confidence in electing us to further develop the rich philosophy of ISPS. The foundations for a strong organization of ISPS have already been laid down by the previous EC members, and we want to thank in particular Brian Martindale and Jan Olav Johannessen for the immense work they have already done as*

*Chairs of previous ISPS ECs. We feel encouraged by their work and will try to continue in the same direction. It is a real honour for me that the EC elected me as their new Chair and I am happy to take on this task. Right from the start of the new EC I felt a freedom to speak, a respect for different opinions and great friendship. I am convinced that with each other's help we can continue to work in this spirit to face the many challenges that await us.*

*The central theme of the Rotterdam conference 'the healing power of human reconnection' goes to the heart of ISPS. Therefore, a constructive 'trialogue' between professionals, people with lived experiences and family members is essential. As Chair I want to make sure that this triologue can happen in a positive atmosphere with respect for everyone's opinion and without demonizing anyone. Although people with psychotic experiences and their family members have often felt abandoned and hurt by an approach due to a failing psychiatry, I think it is important that professionals can continue to make their knowledge available for a better approach to psychosis. With the support of the whole EC I would like to develop some of the many points that were mentioned during the Rotterdam conference further.*

*First of all, we realized that it is important not only to include the most fragile people with a migration background but anyone who feels alienation from himself and from the world around him. There is no difference between 'them and us', we have all to cherish the stranger into ourselves. Secondly, the role of family members cannot be emphasized enough. Families can help to understand psychosis and I am very happy that Jen Kilyon has joined the ISPS International EC as the first family member to build further on the inclusion of families into our organization. Thirdly, we learned during the parallel sessions of the conference of the huge importance of nurses, the special possibilities that art therapies can offer and the particular strength of small-scale, accessible initiatives. In the next period we wish to bring more attention to these forms of professional expertise. I hope that ISPS can create a climate where professionals can use their scientific background and can develop further (in the permanent triologue mentioned previously) their psychotherapeutic skills for a human and qualitative therapy, that is available for all people in the world who need it. In this way I think that ISPS has also political ambitions to improve the system and to expend the dialogue with French speaking countries and with other continents like Africa, South America and Asia.*

*Hope is the most vital engine for treatment. I hope that ISPS will grow further into a very large worldwide organization where people work together for a better future for those people who suffer from psychosis and for their families.*

*For members of ISPS who want to know more about their 'new leader' I describe some of my professional activities:*

*I am a Belgian psychiatrist, psychotherapist (since 1987) and psychoanalyst linked as full member to the Belgian School for Psychoanalysis since 2000. From 1987-2018 I was the head psychiatrist for an inpatient ward for young adults with psychosis at the University Psychiatric Hospital of Leuven in Belgium. Confronted with special concerns for those young people and inspired by the work of Jan Olav Johannessen and of Brian Martindale, I started with my co-workers an Early Intervention Service in the community of Leuven in 2009. At this moment I am still working in this outpatient service following the ideas of ISPS and of the International Early psychosis Association (IEPA). In my private practice where I am working as a psychoanalyst, I have the great opportunity to explore the inner world of those people who suffer and thanks to the intimate journey with each other we can both grow to something new. This intensive, fragile but always surprising work supports me a lot for my organizational work because I am convinced that the therapeutic relationship is the most powerful element that we can count on in our meeting with people with psychosis.*

*I have attended almost all the international conferences of ISPS, since 1987, presenting many papers. Because the conferences taught me so much, I am very grateful to ISPS and this gratitude was the motivating factor to become a more active worker for the ISPS organization. As a founding member of the ISPS network Low Lands in 2002 and a member of the local ISPS board, I worked many years together with Jan Leyten and Margreet De Pater, both chair of our local ISPS network, to communicate the valuable ideas of ISPS in the professional field in The Netherlands and in Belgium, by organizing conferences in our own region. The organization of the 2019 International ISPS conference in Rotterdam, together with a marvelous team, was an enriching experience for me. From 2017 I became a member of the ISPS EC, where one of my aims was to develop an ISPS network for nurses. During my EC membership I also took up the bridge function between the EC and the ISPS book-series to support Anna Lavis and Andrew Shepherd in their beautiful creations for the series.*

*Although I am well aware that medication can play a role in alleviating overly severe symptoms of psychosis, I feel indignant that in current psychiatry this medication is overvalued. Stimulated by this indignation I gave several lectures in my country promoting psychotherapy for psychosis for professionals, for people with lived experiences and for family members. These lectures, which always became a dialogue with the audience, created an impulse to write several chapters in books about psychotherapy for psychosis in Dutch. As an active member of the psychotherapeutic section of the Flemish Society of Psychiatry I promote psychotherapy in psychiatry in general in Belgium. Because of my passion for music, dance and theatre, I have a particular link with LUCA School of Arts in Leuven. There I have an educational and a supervision role for trainees in music therapy. This experience brought me the insight that artstherapies have an immense strength beyond the spoken word. I hope to develop this further during my future work.*

*All these projects were made possible thanks to the basic trust and the stimulation given to me by both of my parents, who recently died, and thanks to the always lively support of my husband who is also working in the medical field as a general practitioner. He recognizes the strength of families like no other. Together we have three beautiful children who left home to realize their own projects and who gave us three grandchildren, the joy of our lives.*

*Ludi Van Bouwel  
Chair, ISPS*



## **Presenting the new ISPS Executive Committee**

The ISPS Executive Committee (ISPS EC) is composed of eight members who are elected by ballot, by the ISPS membership, at least every three years. The latest election was held in June 2019.

The ISPS EC is made up of people with a wide range of interests and experience, all of whom donate their time voluntarily, and all of whom are highly committed to the common aim of advancing education, training and knowledge of

mental health professionals in the treatment and prevention of psychotic mental disorders for the public benefit.

**Ludi Van Bouwel**

Ludi has been a psychiatrist and psychotherapist since 1987. She is the head psychiatrist for an inpatient ward for young adults with psychosis at the University Psychiatric Hospital of the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. Ludi joined the ISPS Executive Committee in September 2017 and is the current Chairperson of ISPS.

**Cecilie Brøvig Almås**

Cecilie is a clinical psychologist working in a FACT-team in the addiction unit, Sorlandet hospital in Kristiansand, Norway. Cecilie is the current chairperson of the Norwegian chapter of ISPS and joined the ISPS International Executive Committee in September 2019.

**Marjaana Karjalainen**

Marjaana is an advanced practice registered nurse and a family therapist. She works as a head nurse in Early Intervention Center for young adults and Outpatient Clinic for adults with psychosis in Helsinki University Hospital, Finland. She is a founding member of ISPS Finland and joined the ISPS International Executive Committee in September 2019.

**Jen Kilyon**

Jen has campaigned for many years for more compassionate and family friendly mental health services. She has been a trustee of ISPS UK since 2007 and is also a trustee of Soteria Network UK. She joined the ISPS International Executive Committee in September 2019.

**Julie Kipp**

Julie is a Clinical Social Worker/Therapist from the USA who works with people who have been given challenging diagnoses including psychotic disorders. She co-chaired the ISPS 2015 congress in New York. Julie joined the ISPS Executive Committee in March 2015 and has been ISPS Treasurer since 2017.

**Debra Lampshire**

Debra is an experience-based expert at the University of Auckland and project manager for Auckland District Health Board in New Zealand. Debra is the current chairperson of ISPS-NZ and joined the ISPS Executive Committee in May 2012.

**Margreet de Pater**

Margreet specialises in work with families. As a member of the Executive Committee (2006-present) she is involved in the development of the ISPS website learning tools pages and the email discussion groups and Chaired the Congress organizing committee of ISPS Rotterdam 2019.

**Dag Söderström**

Dag is a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, researcher on City and Psychosis and co-founder of ISPS Switzerland. He has a clinical practice and is an academic teacher, individual and team supervisor. He has been involved in ISPS since 1994 and became a member of the ISPS International Executive Committee in September 2019.

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## ISPS Psychoanalytic sub section

The group now has 191 members in its email list and around 50 met for a lunch time meeting at the ISPS Rotterdam conference. Quite a number of members contributed to the programme there in various ways. Some members are active in publishing and many are active clinically, using a psychoanalytic framework to understand and assist people experiencing psychosis in a wide range of settings as well as teaching and supporting staff.

In the coming weeks we intend to develop webinars to discuss key topics and other ideas are also progressing including collating research and seminal articles and books. A further idea is to gather together experiences of training in psychoanalytic approaches to psychosis so as best to learn from their experiences and as a support for those developing trainings.

Of course, a major source of concern is of systems that do not seem to allow the necessary space for staff to offer and practice psychological approaches.

We welcome ideas and invitations to dialogue with other groups within ISPS. Although we feel a need to connect with one another as interested in psychoanalytic ideas and psychosis, we do not want to be without bridges to others.

[Brian Martindale](#)

Convenor of the ISPS psychoanalytic sub section



## We are pleased to announce 2 new Honorary Lifetime Members of ISPS

### **JAN OLAV JOHANNESSEN** **NEW! Honorary Lifetime Member of ISPS**

This accolade to the achievements of Jan Olav Johannessen will inevitably fall short, but we want to highlight his overarching quality as an outstanding facilitator of the personal development of others both colleagues and those experiencing psychosis.

Besides his achievements within ISPS, he is best known internationally for his work with colleagues in the field of early intervention in psychosis from his work in Stavanger and the surrounding county of Rogaland in Norway. Starting back in the 1980s, their early detection and treatment programme and research (TIPS) showed it was possible to substantially sustain a reduction in the duration of untreated psychosis by using educational methods in a community. This reduction was associated with less disturbance and suicidality at the time of earlier detection and better outcomes some years later.

This demonstration of the benefits of earlier access to care of people experiencing psychosis was possible by his facilitation of the development of both the research teams and of the wide variety of educational and reduction of stigma programmes in the community that lead to the early detection. The latter involved working alongside teachers and school children, health workers in primary care and the use of newspapers, radio and television.

As his work in Stavanger developed, he initiated related projects that influenced others locally and internationally. Major examples of this are his leadership in the annual 'Schizophrenia Days' conference in Stavanger that often attracted more than a thousand participants from throughout the Nordic countries and beyond. He and his colleagues continued to use the word schizophrenia in the title and design of the conferences, and by doing so effectively counteracting the stigma and lack of hope usually associated with the term. Linked with 'Schizophrenia Days' but also of great influence far beyond was the development of "Stiftelsen Psykiatrisk Opplysning, (PsykOpp)" (The Psychiatry Knowledge Foundation). Through this



foundation, information about psychosis and help for families has been spread widely in Norway and translated into several languages.

Jan Olav was Senior Psychiatrist and Head of Department of Psychiatry in Stavanger from 1985-1992 and subsequently Chief Psychiatrist, Division of Psychiatry, Stavanger University Hospital from 1992-2013 during which time he was the leading influence by which Stavanger became very well known internationally for the quality of its services and research. No one who visited the Rogaland County Hospital can fail to have been filled with jealousy at the tangible quality of both the environment for, and staff attitudes towards, those suffering from mental disturbances. Just one example of an innovation of Jan Olav was a 24-hour comprehensive assessment service that allowed perhaps 50% of those admitted to immediately return to the community. On the other hand, there was a conspicuous absence of pressure to discharge persons who needed many weeks of quality 'asylum' time and to build up therapeutic relationships and confidence that would survive into the community.

It is important to mention here the importance of the late Gerd Ragna Bloch Thorsen who was the co-investigator of community projects such as 'Schizophrenia Days' and the publishing house. Gerd Ragna and Jan Olav and colleagues also led an important long-term initiative from Stavanger to support colleagues developing mental health services in the Stavropol area of Russia (some 4000 kms away!).

In recent years Jan Olav has been Professor of Psychiatry and director of research in the University of Stavanger where he has continued his prodigious output now coming to a total of some 140 articles and book chapters, including several chapters in the ISPS Book series, covering early intervention, health service development, and anti-stigma. It is important too not to overlook his encouragement and supervision of the research of others.

Jan Olav took forward his focus on quality of care and continuing service development plans into his Presidency of the Norwegian Psychiatric Association from 2006-11 and his chairing of the Norwegian national committees developing guidelines for both early detection of psychosis and the whole field of psychosis as well as other national committees concerned with quality assurance.

SEPREP is a foundation funded by the Norwegian government since 1993. Its aim is to enhance therapists' competency in psychotherapy and other psychosocial interventions with persons suffering from the most severe varieties of mental illness and hence enhancing the means by which the fore mentioned quality guidelines can be implemented. Jan Olav has been a key figure in this organization for many years as board member, developer of the programmes supervisor and teacher.

The overall objectives of ISPS coincide with Jan Olav's professional ethos. He has retained an interest in the psychology of psychosis from early days in his career when he trained in psychodynamic therapy with the Norwegian Institute of Psychotherapy. The work referred to in this citation cannot fail to indicate his keen interest in the social environment, expressed even further by his being elected as labor member of his local community council. He has been a member of the ISPS international executive most of the time since 1997 and been its President 2001-2006 and 2015-2019. During these times he has facilitated the ongoing development of ISPS and its activities and influence. Those present will not forget the outstanding ISPS conference held in Stavanger in 2000. Most important is his founding and nurturing of ISPS Norway, one of the world's most active and largest ISPS networks with its high-quality annual conferences.

On reading the above, one would have to read between the lines about his personal qualities as an individual and in group relations. Jan Olav is a quiet person, with an enjoyable sense of humor, a capacity to express his ideas in simple language often with memorable illustrations. It is interesting to reflect on his engrossment with the Beatles, perhaps identifying with their capacity to captivate the world with simple themes – such as 'All you need is Love' a theme of one of the Schizophrenia Days conferences – and loaded with symbolism to his life's work, Jan Olav succeeded in inviting the excluded Beatle, Pete Best, onto the stage at the conference.

Behind his professional life Jan Olav has a very full family life shared with his wife Kristin and their children and grandchildren. Jan Olav loves the time he spends with them in the Norwegian mountains or by the coast as well as his travels, especially to Italy. Kristin, a teacher, has played an active role in the teaching programmes connected with TIPS and in the publishing house.

So this quiet man, now has a place in the 'Hall of Fame' with international recognition of his outstanding work in the early intervention in psychosis field by receiving in 2018 the Richard J. Wyatt Award at the 10th Early

Intervention in Mental Health Conference in Boston, US, and now in 2019 by receiving a much deserved Honorary Life Membership of the ISPS.

Inge Joa, Ola Marstein, Brian Martindale



## **MARIUS ROMME NEW! Honorary Lifetime Member of ISPS**

Together with Sandra Escher, his wife, Marius Romme is one of the most important founders of the hearing voices movement and one of the first psychiatrist who broke down the schizophrenia concept.

Marius was a professor of community psychiatry and Sandra a researcher and journalist. In 1985 one of his patients Patsy Hage, who suffered from hearing voices and looked for a way to handle them, gave him a wakeup call. He realized that hearing voices was not just a symptom of schizophrenia but a real experience. He couldn't answer her questions, psychiatry had no answers. Sandra Escher proposed that she should tell her story on a popular television program.

During the TV program Marius invited people to react. His call was meant for all people, not just the ones receiving psychiatric care. 700 people reacted. Many people had no psychiatric complaints at all and had given the voices a place in their lives. And so, the hearing voices movement was born.

Sandra conducted research with young children who heard voices, 60 % got rid of their voices. Much of voice hearing seemed to be connected to dramatic, traumatic life events, which was an unique finding at the time. For additional information watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le3ktbUCItU> (click on settings to select English subtitles).

He said: "Only living fishes swim against the stream", that was characteristic of the Marius' style. He always talked straight and to the point, which did not make him popular in mainstream psychiatry. He was not afraid to criticize our Rotterdam 2019 ISPS conference which did not spend enough time on therapy for voice hearing, in his opinion. I visited him at home and explained to him that I also am a person who is swimming against the stream and that this conference is about new paradigms.

I was very glad that he visited our 2019 ISPS conference and think that he truly deserves the term Honorary Member of ISPS.

Margreet de Pater

Further information:

A Lancet article: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(15\)00066-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(15)00066-8/fulltext)

Sandra Escher research: <https://www.amazon.com/Children-Hearing-Voices-Sandra-Escher/dp/1906254354>

The Maastricht approach on hearing voices: <http://www.dirkcorstens.com/maastrichtapproach>

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## **Did you attend the 21<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the ISPS in Rotterdam?**

**Please remember to complete the feedback  
questionnaire!**

We would really like to receive your feedback; this helps us to improve our next conferences. It takes just a few minutes.

Give us your feedback [here](#)



## **Stranger in the city**

**On the circular relationship between alienation and psychosis and the healing power of human reconnection**

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## **ISPS 2019 CONFERENCE REVIEWS by "Stranger in the City" participants**

Joanna Obiegalka and Daria Dembińska - Krajewska  
(ISPS Poland)

Judith Varley  
(ISPS UK)

and Marc Calmeyn  
(ISPS Lowlands)



### **Daria Dembińska - Krajewska, PhD**

For me, the climate of the conference focused on searching for solutions, getting out of trauma rather than preserving it, listening to each other and staying in contact with them was the most essential and stirring part of this meeting.

Precious meetings with our - Polish - group, was excellent as well as people from other countries. The fact that we think similarly and operate in the same area and the possibility of cooperation gives me energy and hope that change is possible.

The workshops in which I took part on Wednesday were a refreshing and exciting experience. Especially the energy, commitment and fascinating form of classes that Devi Hisgen and his colleague proposed were a great introduction to the conference.

What I think we can adapt to Poland in a short time, the most important is probably the film "I could also be Miranda". The film is insightful, has a positive message and at the same time is not naive or exalted. It also shows different points of view, different sides of getting sick and helping. Different ways to solve the same problems. From the conversation with the producer, I understood that Isps has the resources for translation and will help us do it. I want to translate the dialogues and post Isps on the Polish website. I think that this will be an essential reference point both for people with experience of psychosis and the whole environment. It should be the first obligatory source material for those training in helping. I want to say thank you, Miranda - for your brave and openness.

Our participation in the psychodynamic group Isps also seems substantial to me. I think that this way of thinking, even if not very visible during the last conference, allows answering many questions at a deeper level. In my opinion, it gives a chance to understand better the vast problems in psychosis. This way of thinking also brings relief that such complicated processes can be understood, they have their genesis, the recognition of which helps to work with them. I think that analytical thinking is closely connected with the

whole idea of ISPS and gives a stable base for developing many other methods of understanding and acting.

A kind of revelation for me was contacting with creative writers and their way of working. Creative writing understood as a method of development for all members of this process. Regardless of the type of trauma, this way of working seems to be a great way to transform experiences. It gives them a form that reduces the fear associated with painful memories. It teaches how to think and talk about experiences which at first may seem impossible to put into words.

Meetings with Inez, Birgit, and hearing a Brenda Froyen speech, inspired us so much that we began to think about a joint project. Its goals would be two. The first would be to collect and publish conversations with people with experience of psychosis living in Poland. The second: to organize workshops allowing the exploration of experiences. Art would be here the mediating language between experience and naming experiences, body and mind, feelings and thoughts.

I met two people who deal with such activities daily. One of them - Birgit Bundesen from Denmark, is in a group developing a textbook that we will be able to use and can also translate and adapt to Polish conditions. The other person is Inez Risseuw - an artist working in Utrecht, whose sensitivity and openness made a great impression on me. I want to say thank you for the inspiration and new point of view.

I want to thank everyone I could meet. Thanks to you I came back to Poland hoping that it is possible to reverse the proportion between help through contact and understanding and pharmacotherapy.

### **Joanna Obiegałka**

It was not so long ago that I have met Irene van der Giessen in Warsaw in 2013. I attended her session but the most important was my individual conversation with her at ISPS conference in Poland. She and Dutch philosopher gave me hope for healing at that time. I could meet her again in better health, beside the fact I am older 😊 this summer. Thank you, Irene, and all for supporting me in attending Rotterdam conference. Thank you for being and sharing your stories!!!

At the conference there were 5 people from Poland. Unfortunately, the sixth did not arrive. Two people from Katowice, Dr. Radosław Tomalski and Igor Pietkiewicz, PhD, SWPS, presented the poster and session "Development of the Structured Clinical Interview for Voice-hearers (SCIV)". Daria Dembińska-Krajewska, PhD from Poznań had a presentation "Pregnancy and psychosis: A stranger in the strange land." Another person was the chairwoman of the Polish organization ISPS, Professor Katarzyna Prot-Klinger, who presented at the conference "Return of repressed. How history returns in the psychotherapist's office". I was also a representative of people with experience of psychosis and presented a poster of the Warsaw therapeutic group entitled "Each personal story as a brick in the bridge? Is dialogue possible? The free choice of human reconnection".

Thanks to the ISPS members and delegates who purchased items sold in the raffle on the Ferry Boat Dinner of the ISPS Liverpool conference in 2017. The proceeds of this funded my attendance at the ISPS 2019 conference.

### **Judith Varley**

Holland and its people, inside and outside the Conference, were welcoming, friendly and helpful, even the weather obliged with delightfully warm sunny days. At no time did I feel I was a stranger in this city, Rotterdam. It seemed to be a country whose people were at ease with each other and with strangers, in sharp contrast with current life in England. So, thank you Margreet, the Dutch and International organizers; it was a pleasure to enjoy your hospitality.

The Conference as a whole epitomised the healing power of human re-connection. The bio-medical model of mental distress has long been disputed in ISPS and featured again in this Conference. The importance of psycho-socio-cultural connections and the repercussions of their disruption are profound but are too often ignored. Reaching out to the homeless, creating racial harmony, reducing gross inequalities is crucial to mental well-being for everyone. These are achieved by investing in social capital, reducing barriers, building and extending strong supportive networks. Shushrut Jadhav spoke of his work with the homeless in London. He stressed the importance of looking for 'the elephant in the room' and illustrated this literally with film of the experience of tea planters in Assam traumatised and made destitute when their crops, homes and communities are trashed by rampaging elephants; their familiar safety net abruptly destroyed. It's not

a situation most of us will encounter, of course. However, although Western institutions like to see themselves as 'objective', in reality they have their own stories, very much based on dominant white middle class male values, and they are traumatised by the prospect of change and reject it too. Their reality is their safety net, their stability and continuity, relevant to 'us' but meaningless to 'them'. Choice for a traumatised individual means taking on board the total loss of his socio-economic cultural safety net, maybe the loss of all his family too - shattering the very bed-rock of his foundations. It's time to give proper regard to an individual's background and context, and to engage with all the supports we can find, family, culture, community, socio-economic, his background both historical and current. Real life experiences, human stories of suffering are being constantly denied, cleansed, ignored to suit the dominant group everywhere. These stories of survival are waiting to be told, but the teller, whose body keeps the score, may need help to tell them, even to bring them to consciousness.

All that requires a much wider appreciation of context and the rejection of easy labelling. Just as 'dropsy', 'mental retardation' and 'manic depression' have ceased to be used, so 'schizophrenia' may be consigned to the dustbin of history as we gain greater understanding of the role of trauma on the psyche. ISPS, BPS and some members of the Royal College of Psychiatrists have long struggled alongside service user networks to achieve this, and it looks as though that conflict may be nearer resolution. Hurrah!

Another commonly raised issue at these Conferences is the treatment of mental distress with psycho-active drugs, harm reduction strategies and specifically, the choice, safe ways of reducing the dosage, and potentially 'coming off'. So, I welcomed Peter Groot's contribution and his work producing 'tapered drug strips'. He now has 28 drugs in his repertoire. Those who have no first-hand experience of taking these drugs may be unaware of the wide range of adverse impacts they have on the quality of the lives of some for whom they are prescribed. These may be so dramatic that they provoke suicide, or the service user stops taking them and may be labelled as 'non-compliant'. There is now a strong, vocal survivor network demanding inclusion in discussion of their prescription and collating feed-back. 'Person-centred care' must surely include the views of the person intimately affected. And there's the older mantra too 'No decision about me, without me'.

As usual, the Conference, in all its dimensions, was a most rewarding experience. I'm already looking forward to the next.

Judith Varley

Many thanks to the ISPS UK committee for helping fund my attendance

## **Marc Calmeyn**

Let's start with the most important issue. Congratulations to the organizing committee and all coworkers for the creation and realization of this congress.

*Creation* in the first place indeed. The basic assumption of the congress is creative in origin: broadening the scope of the biopsychosocial model for the approach and treatment of the person – so called patient - and significant others touched by psychosis. The many symposia and workshops on Open Dialogue during these days are the touchstones of this open mind, inspiring ISPS for many years already. There is more to it however. The place given to the equally crucial existential dimension is really a step ahead to other 'evidence based' approaches. The latter are necessary, yet not enough. It might even hinder creative new approaches, e.g. existential and spiritual in nature. In that way I was delighted with the presence of Mogobe Ramose with his talk on Ubuntu. Although time was too short to develop the importance of this revealing African philosophy to the full, it's my hope that ISPS will take care to integrate other than Western approaches as well to heal psychosis. Yes, 'to heal' is to my opinion the correct verb on handling psychosis with care and cure.

And *realization* in the second place. As Margreet de Pater mentions in her introduction: 'This conference is about estrangement and connection'. These are the two crucial words for psychosis and for the theory and practice of ... indeed, healing.

First of all *estrangement*. The kernel is the misery of this psychopathology in all its dimensions, biopsychosocial and existential, including spirituality. To make my point, let me take you on a short etymological excursion. The Dutch language has the sharp word 'ellende'. In German it's 'Elend', in French 'misère', in English 'misery'. In Middle Dutch (spoken between 1200 and 1500) it had several meanings. One of them is: living in another country in exile. How actual and accurate does it describe not only the current world-wide migration but also the core of psychosis as an existential – but most of all – living

experienced estrangement from oneself and the world. The importance of this is reflected in some keynote lectures. For instance, the 'Us and Them' that divides the world and by this 'bias' (op)presses ethnic minorities, as expressed by Wim Veling. Or the link between trauma and psychosis, putting persons into exile, as clarified by Françoise Davoine. But most of all the keynote speakers who have experienced, really felt, estrangement are a witness to it. Like Wouter Kusters with his pathoanalysis on how psychosis can reveal and comprehend the present climate catastrophe. Jen Kilyon with the 'embedded' exile as a family member. And surely Brenda Froyen with her own exile story of separate rooms and how she transformed these traumatic experiences into a new way of living, on her own right.

We (Jim van Os, Stijn Vanheule, Brenda Froyen and myself) were also able to bring the advice on DSM 5 classification from the High Council of Health of Belgium. As far as we know it's the first time worldwide that a public body brings an official advice on this subject. Regretfully the DSM 5 classification has the 'potency' to bring estrangement by reification and essentialism in diagnosing.

The second crucial word is *connection*. And how. On the floor: open and friendly conversations, exchanges of ideas, possibilities to meet on the sunny terraces in Rotterdam. To me ISPS conferences are always creative meeting places, every time again. But the many workshops, oral sessions and symposia share the same concern: connection is the word for change. From Soteria (Israel and other countries) to 'Villa Voortman' (Belgium – a shelter place for those persons with psychiatric problems who are refused, even rejected by mainstream psychiatry).

As a conclusion, let's put it straight: *it's the politics stupid*. If we understand politics as the differentiation between inner and outer – with all its tensions - on macro, meso and micro level and if we comprehend psychosis as the struggle between inside and outside, we can imagine the huge importance of this Rotterdam congress.

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[More photos](#) from the ISPS 2019 "Stranger in the City" conference  
Photos by ISPS member Jens Roved

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## ISPS Regional Group Activities

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### ISPS AUSTRALIA

#### The Power Threat Meaning Framework: A focus on psychosis and trauma

ISPS Australia partnered with Blue Knot to bring Dr Lucy Johnstone and Professor John Cromby to Australia to run workshops on the Power Threat Meaning Framework. Adelaide was ISPS Australia's chosen location to host the workshop whilst Blue Knot hosted workshops in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Two ISPS Australia Board Members, Matt Ball and Stephanie Mitchell, and a team of students and volunteers assisted with the preparation and successful delivery of the training. The workshop took place on the 4th and 5th of March 2019.

Lucy is a consultant clinical psychologist, lead author (with Professor Mary Boyle) of the PTM Framework, author of 'Users and abusers of psychiatry' (2nd edition Routledge 2000), co-editor of 'Formulation in psychology and psychotherapy: making sense of people's problems' (Routledge, 2nd edition 2013) and author of 'A straight-talking guide to psychiatric diagnosis' (PCCS Books 2014), along with a number of other chapters and articles taking a critical perspective on mental health theory and practice. She is the former Programme Director of the Bristol Clinical Psychology Doctorate and was the lead author of 'Good practice guidelines on the use of psychological formulation' (Division of Clinical Psychology, 2011.) She worked in Adult Mental Health settings for many years.

Professor John Cromby, co-author of the PTM Framework, is Professor of Psychology, ULSB, University of Leicester UK. His books (authored, co-authored or co-edited) include 'The Handbook of Biology and Society' (Palgrave, 2018), 'Joint Action: essays in honour of John Shotter' (Routledge, 2016), 'Feeling Bodies: embodying psychology' (Palgrave, 2015) and 'Psychology, Mental Health and Distress' (Palgrave, 2013). John has published more than 70 academic journal articles, and over 30 contributions to academic books. He is an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK), and a Chartered Academic Psychologist. An attempt to outline an alternative to the diagnostic model of distress and unusual experiences.

The Power Threat Meaning Framework restores the link between personal distress and social justice promoting social action. It was funded by the Division of Clinical Psychology of the British Psychological Society and is a set of ideas and a conceptual resource for everyone to draw on (professionals, service users, researchers, policy makers, the general public etc). It is not intended as a replacement for all current models and practices. It offers a wider overall framework to support and enhance them.

ISPS Australia decided to make the workshop a two day event which included a presentation by Matt Ball on Psychosis and Trauma, a sharing of personal lived experience of trauma by local indigenous woman, Tanya Hunter and a presentation from Professor Bernard Guerin who is a Professor of Psychology at the University of South Australia.

There was a total of 50 Participants, some whom had travelled from as far away as Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania. Some of the feedback when participants were asked 'what did you most appreciate and enjoy about the workshop' was:

*'having a framework that is more than the medical model and a broader way of working with people to assist them in improving their mental wellbeing'*

*'combination of theory and practical'*

*'Learning the model and the connection with likeminded people who want to de pathologies and empower'*

Amanda Waegeli

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**ISPS-US Invites you to our 18th Annual Meeting**  
***Psychosis, Citizenship, and Belonging: Forging Pathways toward Inclusion and Healing***  
**November 1-3, 2019**

New Haven, CT  
The Omni New Haven at Yale  
[www.isps-us.org/upcoming-conferences.php](http://www.isps-us.org/upcoming-conferences.php)

*Preregister by October 13 or register at the meeting.*

Psychosis is often described as a departure from consensual reality. But who provides the consensus? When our experiences are not validated by those closest to us and are discounted by institutions, our very status as citizens in the communities to which we belong is threatened. Citizenship is not limited to legal status, but includes participation in a world that encompasses acceptance, community integration, and the work of personal and social recovery. Indeed, full membership in society, according to Michael Rowe, Yale Professor of Psychiatry, encompasses the **“5 Rs” of Citizenship: Rights, Responsibilities, Roles, Resources, and Relationships**, accompanied by a sense of belonging. Yet those experiencing psychosis are often excluded from the 5 Rs, and more. Psychosis is one way in which the mind and spirit respond to feelings of powerlessness, danger, and fear. These feelings are often born of trauma, abuse, discrimination, alienation, and isolation. When disbelieved, and then fed by shame and guilt, they can grow to destructive proportions.

As persons with lived experience, advocates, practitioners, family members and researchers, we also populate communities that have languages and customs that can insulate us from certain ideas and practices in the wider world. Our hope for the ISPS-US 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting is to challenge that insularity. While respecting each group's point of view, we also want to reach across the institutional, organizational, and practical divides that have been forged by the groups to which we all belong. We seek to appreciate and understand the common themes that spiritual, social, psychological, and biological approaches offer toward understanding psychosis.

It is significant that this celebration of consensus and difference will take place in New Haven, which in 1984 hosted the first ISPS International Conference held outside of Europe. Here in Connecticut, we are excited not only to be able to showcase the beauty and history of New Haven and Yale, but to celebrate the ways we have begun forging new pathways of discovery, understanding, support, collaboration, opportunity, and research.

Our goal is to present new and more nuanced understandings of the relationships between alienation and isolation and psychosis, and to highlight the degree to which a sense of safety and belonging—to family, to community, and to the world—can foster resilience and promote recovery in vulnerable individuals. Join us in New Haven!

**Keynote Speaker: Marty Cindy Hadge, IPS**  
*Living In The Margins And The Struggle To Reclaim Citizenship*

**Honoree: Larry Davidson, PhD**  
*Recovering the Self in Psychosis*

Cosponsored by:  
New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (NE-MHTTC)  
Connecticut Mental Health Center  
International Recovery & Citizenship Collective

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## ISPS UK NEWS

Watch the video of Sascha Altman DuBrul talking about First Episode Psychosis and Peer Support, at the recent ISPS UK and Soteria Brighton event.

More ISPS UK news can be found on our [website](#)



## Upcoming Events

**The ISPS has over 20 regional networks around the globe**, many of which organise annual events. Take a look at the impressive range of meetings and conferences taking place this autumn and in 2020

[ISPS events listing](#)

### SAVE THE DATE

### **ISPS 2021: The 22nd International Congress of the ISPS**

Wednesday 1st - Sunday 5th September 2021

in Perugia, Italy

More information coming soon at [www.isps.org](http://www.isps.org)

## Haven't joined ISPS yet?

Here are 4 good reasons why you should join us!

- 1) Members enjoy reduced delegate fees for ISPS conferences such as ISPS 2019 'Stranger in the City' in Rotterdam this summer.
- 2) Members receive 4 issues of Psychosis per year and also have online access to previous issues of the journal
- 3) 20% discount on books in the ISPS series published by Routledge
- 4) By joining ISPS you can connect with over 1,500 people around the world - who share your interest in psychosocial treatments for psychosis - through our email discussion groups and regional meetings.

[Further information](#)



ISPS [www.isps.org](http://www.isps.org)

