

President's Message

Dear friends and colleagues

The planning of the *20th IFP World Congress of Psychotherapy* in Lucerne, Switzerland, June 16–19, 2010 is well under way. The majority of plenary speakers are already confirmed. A number of additional, specially featured sessions, such as key issues debates and preconference workshops, are currently being planned. The Congress website is operational as of now, informing you on the progress of our planning: please visit the Congress website at www.ifp-fmpp2010.com! The call for abstracts will be published in mid August 2009.

Our World Congress will be organized by the Foederatio Medicorum Psychiatricorum et Psychotherapeuticorum FMPP (<http://www.psychiatrie.ch>), which is an umbrella organization that unites the Swiss Societies for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, both for adults as well as for children and adolescents. The conference is also cosponsored by the World Psychiatric Association WPA. The venue will be the 'KKL Luzern', the Culture and Convention Centre Lucerne (<http://www.kkl-luzern.ch>). This magnificent building was designed by the French architect Jean Nouvel. Built between 1995 and 2000, the KKL ranks today as one of the most spectacular modern buildings in Switzerland. The KKL Luzern is centrally located in the town of Lucerne, directly at the Lake Lucerne and right next to the railway station. The old town centre is only a few hundred yards from the KKL Luzern, as is Lucerne's distinctive landmark, the Chapel Bridge.

In my capacity as chair of the scientific program committee, however, I would like to convince you that, apart from Lucerne's great touristic appeal, it will also be worthwhile from a scientific viewpoint to attend the 20th World Congress of Psychotherapy! The theme will be *Psychotherapy: Science and Culture*. Wen-Shing Tseng, President of the World Association of Cultural Psychiatry, and one of the plenary speakers of this conference, defines culture as a dynamic concept referring to a set of beliefs, attitudes, and value systems that derive from early stages of life through enculturation, and become an internal mode of regulating behaviour, action, and emotion. Thus, culture is not static, but changing continuously across generations, responding to ever-changing environmental demands. Culture-sensitive, culture-competent psychotherapy involves trying to understand the cultural components of a patient's illness and help-seeking behaviours, as well as the patient's expectations with regard to treatment.

However, psychotherapy is also a scientifically based treatment. It is practised by academically trained professionals who use empirically supported therapies wherever possible in order to improve their patients' health status and well-being. Given the development and maturation of the field, psychological, neurobiological, and other basic scientific knowledge is required to understand and appropriately treat mental disorders. Thus, psychotherapists are increasingly confronted with the challenge of developing their skills in interdisciplinary and interprofessional communication and knowledge management. In other words, psychotherapists have to constantly engage in mutual, transcultural and interprofessional learning, for which this conference provides a unique opportunity!

While the conference theme will be used to highlight certain issues we intend to focus on, we don't want to be exclusive. Our general aim will be to better understand what our patients are struggling with, and how to treat them. Furthermore, apart from looking into psychopathology and other forms of psychosocial dysfunction, the conference will also address issues such as salutogenesis, resilience, and post-traumatic growth.

Under the guidance of Dr. Sylvia Detri Elvira, a member of the IFP Council, the Indonesian Psychiatric Association Section on Psychotherapy will hold their *3rd National Conference on Psychotherapy in Indonesia* on May 1–2, 2010. The theme of the conference will be *The Healing Power of Understanding: Its Strength and Its Limitation*. Please feel free to contact Dr. Sylvia Detri Elvira (sylvia.d.elvira@gmail.com) for more information!

The Asian Pacific Association of Psychotherapists APAP keeps being active as well. The Philippine Psychiatric Association will host the *6th APAP Conference in Manila, Philippines*, in January 2011. Dr. Alma Jimenez and Dr. Maria Imelda Batar, President of the Philippine Psychiatric Association, will be jointly instrumental in organizing this conference.

The *Secretarial Office in Zürich* is running smoothly under the watchful guidance of Cornelia Erpenbeck. She is responsible for all administrative matters concerning the IFP and may be contacted at her office should there be any queries. To further optimize the visibility of the IFP, I would like to encourage all our members to introduce a link to the IFP website (<http://www.ifp.name>) on your respective homepages. We would be happy to do so vice versa. Please feel free to approach Cornelia Erpenbeck in case you need a hand!

IFP-sponsored master classes, workshops and seminars: The aim of these events is threefold, namely to help disseminate novel, evidence-based psychotherapeutic approaches, to raise the international profile and recognition of the IFP, and to recruit individual IFP members, thus generating income for the IFP. An extremely successful workshop on Positive Psychotherapy was held with Prof. Nossrat Peseschkian (Germany) on Positive Psychotherapy in Zurich, January 16–17, 2009. We also organized a seminar on CBT for Eating Disorders with Prof. Chris Fairburn (UK) in Zurich, March 27–28, 2009. With close to 60 participants, this workshop was a great success as well. More IFP-sponsored master classes, workshops and seminars are to follow! For further information, please visit our website at <http://www.ifp.name>.

Collaboration with other international societies: There is an ongoing collaboration with the European Psychiatric Association EPA: Prof. Möller, EPA President, and Prof. Sartorius, a member of the IFP Council, invited me to be one of the speakers in the Presidential Symposium on ethical issues in psychiatric treatment organized during the forthcoming European Congress of Psychiatry in Munich, February 27 to March 2, 2010. The Presidential Symposium has now become a tradition, regularly dealing with ethical issues related to the theme of the congress. I will be giving a talk on ‘Ethical problems related to the use of psychotherapy’.

Finally, as always, all our members, meaning individual members of the IFP as well as individual members of associations who have membership status with the IFP, are offered the IFP’s official journal, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, at a substantially reduced subscription rate. For details, please contact S. Karger directly at:

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