

# Editorial

## **Extending the mind, extending SF practice**

As InterAction enters its eighth year of publication, we are delighted to welcome members of ASFiO, the new *Association for Solution Focus in Organisations*. ASFiO members will be receiving the InterAction journal as part of their membership package, and we are delighted to both have you as readers and invite you to consider contributing to future issues.

This issue we are taking a step back to look at some fascinating areas which underpin the success of SF practice in organisational work and elsewhere. Guy Shennan has written a paper based on his Masters thesis which looks at the Extended Mind hypothesis, embodied and enactive approaches and how they connect with SF practice with regard to how we think about personal identity. This leads to a potential broadening of our focus of work, from conversation “beyond talking, beyond the clinic or office and beyond the individual”.

To go along with this paper, we are delighted to include a genuine philosophy classic paper, *The Extended Mind* by Andy Clark and David Chalmers (1998). As well as being excellent background for Guy Shennan’s work, this paper shows brilliantly how a simple idea can be used to cast new light on centuries of thinking – how mind might not be contained within the skull but may include the environment. Mark McKergow’s new introduction to the paper builds more of the connection with SF work.

Mark McKergow also has a new peer-reviewed paper where he takes a closer look at the stance with which SF practitioners sit down with their clients. What are we trying to do, what are we trying to focus on? The distinctions he makes between third-person analysis and first-person engagement shines a light on some of the special features of SF practice which, while they may seem like second nature to us, look

rather odd to other practitioners. Mark also connects this work with new developments in philosophy of mind.

We have no new case studies in this issue. Instead, case studies editor Anton Stellamans has produced an excellent guide to how to produce case studies! The methods he outlines are many and varied, and we would be delighted to receive some submissions from new authors for future editions.

Our interview this time is with the legendary guardian of effective therapy, Scott D. Miller. Scott was a key member of Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg's team at BFTC Milwaukee for several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and has gone on to a career examining in the broadest terms what makes for effective talking cures. Kirsten Dierolf asks him about extending this work into the coaching field, and brings out a lot of fascinating points in their lively exchange. This interview is worth reading and re-reading.

The review section of the journal contains our usual fascinating mix. Hannes Couvreur has written up an excellent Research Review including a piece entitled 'Towards a living library of useful misunderstandings', where he looks at the relationship between subject-scientific research and SF. We have news of a Piece of Work review from Sirkkaliisa Heimonen of Finland, and our book reviews combine the (relatively) old and the brand new by featuring *The Power of Positive Deviance* alongside Todd Rose's fascinating *The End of Average* and Jon Harvey's great little consultant's book *Cracking Questions*.

Finally, we welcome three new members to our Editorial Advisory Board: Dr Wendel Ray, Jim Duvall and Prof Max Woodtli.