Instructions for Contributors:

*Inter*Action publishes research papers in the area of SF work in organisations. There may also be one paper per edition on other applications of SF. Papers should be submitted in the APA-6 style of formatting and referencing – a good guide to this can be found at www.apastyle.org. Papers should be original work and not have appeared in other printed publications. Submissions will be peer reviewed by members of the editorial board and/or members of the editorial advisory board. If the paper is accepted for publication, the revisions will be sent back to the author who will produce the final version of the text for publication.

We also welcome book reviews, letters and opinion pieces.

Articles should normally be between 1,500 and 3,500 words in length. Shorter submissions will be considered for inclusion. Longer articles may be accepted at the discretion of the editors. Submissions should be received at least three months prior to publication (i.e. February for May and August for November).

Spelling should be anglicised, with -ise endings and English spelling of words such as honour, colour and so on. Solution focus, solutions focus, Solution-Focus etc. should all be abbreviated to SF after the first mention. If in doubt, don't capitalise other terms.

The process for acceptance of a peer-reviewed article is as follows:

- the author(s) send in an article for review by February for the May issue and August for the November issue
- they receive feedback on whether the article is generally suitable for the journal or not
- if the article is suitable, it is checked for APA-6 compliance. If the article is not in APA-6 format, it is returned to the author(s) who re-format the article within a week
- after a suitably formatted article has been received, it is sent to two peer reviewers. Submissions will be peer reviewed by members of the editorial board and/or members of the editorial advisory board
- if the paper is accepted for publication by the reviewers, revisions will be sent back to the author who will produce the final version of the text for publication
- the author(s) should also include a short text on what was amended in the second version of the texts in reaction to the comments of the reviewers

Each submission should be accompanied by a short biographical note for each author of one or two sentences. A mailing address for correspondence must be included on the first page.

Books, videos or materials for review should be sent to the book review editor, Mark McKergow, SF Work, 15 St George's Avenue, London N7 0HB, UK.

Contributors must obtain any necessary permissions and pay any fees for the use of other materials already subject to copyright. Contributors therefore undertake that their material is not in violation of any copyright and undertake to indemnify SFCT for any loss occasioned in the consequence of any breach of this undertaking.

Editorial

Towards useful organising in the SF world

One topic of debate currently exercising the SF world is the question of how communities of SF practice in organisations, education, therapy and social work are best organised. You might also ask the equally valid question whether SF – a practice and philosophy that values diversity and emergence – should be organised at all.

Current situation of organisations representing SF practice

There are many different forms of organisation: for example, the SOLworld community (which has no membership, no bank account, no governance structure apart from the steering committee which is open to all interested), the SFCT (officially constituted as a non-profit organisation with explicit governance, membership, bank account and publicly available financial statements), EBTA and SFBTA (which are technically only their Boards) which support annual conferences and offer research grants, local associations like UKASFP and business alliances like IASTI.

Important questions

Here are a few hopefully useful questions that we have been asking ourselves: how should we move forward now that the leadership given so naturally by Steve and Insoo has gone? What will enable useful progress? How will we harvest and support the value of the diversity that exists in the different communities of practice?

Of course, SFCT cannot and would not wish to answer these alone and develop a future perfect or miracle picture by ourselves for the whole community of SF practice in

organisations, therapy, education and social work – but talking together could make that happen. However, we did put our heads together and came up with some ideas around what could be usefully done with the energy and enthusiasm that is around.

SF research library

Currently there is no repository of available knowledge on SF to make available SF writings, foundational literature for researchers and to act as an archive of writings, audio or video material. Alasdair McDonald collects relevant papers and studies and summarises them on his website, SFBTA provides access to Steve and Insoo's commercial videos and Kirsten Dierolf has made available a full bibliography of their writings. Wouldn't it be wonderful if any doctoral student or researcher had one place to turn to for access to SF material? Research is one of the main ways in which an approach can move from the stage of "a rumour" to full credibility as a philosophically and empirically well-founded (and organised) practice. A "repository" does not necessarily mean that there is a need for one archive with gate-keepers, with the danger of it burning down or losing all its servers and thereby its material. A first step could be a collection of what exists, some hub / database / library catalogue that would list where you can go to access relevant literature, CDs and DVDs around SF practice.

Legal representation with regards to trademarking of SF

There seems to be a common understanding and acceptance of the idea that the words "Solution Focus" or "Solution Oriented" and the tools of our trade like the miracle question or scaling belong to no one person or organisation. However, there are cases in which people attempt to trademark these words for their own businesses – we are currently aware of three such cases. SFCT has contacted some of them, phoned the relevant authorities to determine the legitimacy of such

claims and a peaceful resolution has been found or is being developed. At the moment we can do this because we know lawyers who are willing to donate their time and professional expertise pro bono and we haven't yet had to take anyone to court to prevent them from trademarking words that we think belong to everybody. Having an overall organisation with the ability to fund this could be helpful should this issue arise. Also, if there were an official organisation of "all things SF" it would be much harder for anyone to claim that they came up with the idea and much easier for the trademark registration authorities to reject any such claims.

A legitimate contact for other organisations

The fact that SFCT is a democratic officially constituted organisation has enabled us to establish valuable contacts with people in similar and different fields. We have been able to contact and exchange ideas with people at universities, in philosophy, in complexity research etc. Also other approaches take us more seriously and InterAction continues to provoke interest from other fields. SFCT acts as one contact point for SF practice in organisations – we can imagine that a similar structure would be useful for many other fields as well. For example, currently when legislators want information about the validity and evidence base of SF therapy, there is no real place to turn to. We imagine that having an organisation to represent SF therapists internationally could be very helpful and facilitate the accreditation of SF therapy in many countries. It could collect experience from countries in which SF is an accredited approach, make argumentation accessible to interested law-makers, collect funds for international advocacy etc.

A platform for exchange for SF practitioners

There are currently many platforms for exchange for SF practitioners: the SOLUTIONS-L listserve, the SOLworld ning-group, the SFCT Facebook and Linkedin groups, the

SFT-list, the EBTA ning group, local lists like neloko in Germany, SF in Canada Linkedin group, UKASFP discussion group, private discussion groups like Coert Vissser's Linked-in group and IASTI, which is apparently planning a platform for its members' graduates. Having one central place for exchange for SF practitioners in all applications or one place per application that could cross-reference would be a fantastic resource for all. It would also be helpful if whoever is thinking of developing another platform thought about whether it offers something new and usefully different, something that does not exist already in other places. Of course, there will always be useful additions and new ideas and we welcome these!

Moving forward

There are many ways in which we could start to move forward on these possibly useful ideas. What will be crucial is keeping a balance between retaining what works and doing differently what does not work. Of course, what we currently have "works" at some level, and we have to avoid the trap of repairing what isn't broken. However, when we look at the potential that SF practice has for making the world a better place and the desire for more recognition of many SF practitioners, improvement is possible. It might not be "broken" – but neither, for example, is the situation of our coaching clients. Their lives are working well AND they could be better and we help them do it.

Something like an international federation of officially constituted SF communities of practice could be one way in which what is working in the different organisations is retained while the potential to move forward toward the above-mentioned goals is realised. Getting together and developing further what "could be better" – maybe around the above mentioned parameters: official legal representation, support of research, repository of information, contact point for accreditation officials, etc. would be one possible step. SFCT is willing to support and collaborate with all

organisations which want to further SF practice in any field and we would love to be able to discuss possible ways of moving this forward.

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