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Letter from the Chair

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Letter from the Chair

Dasha Grajfoner

AT THE TIME OF WRITING THIS 'Letter from the Chair' we have had some time to reflect on our 10th anniversary year and a very successful 4th International Congress of Coaching Psychology, which took place last December. A very big thank you to all who contributed to organising the event and to all who attended it.

In my Chair's address at the Congress I spoke about taking the SGCP forward and my key message was and is to celebrate inclusivity, diversity and to further strengthen coaching psychology through research, training and collaborations.

My message echoes the themes that have come out of the survey completed by a number of Congress delegates. This is one of the first steps to unequivocally emphasise how crucial your participation in developing our Special Group is. Very soon this will be followed up with a more comprehensive member survey, which has been developed by our new Chair Elect Donna Willis, who has also pulled together the information from the current survey and I would like to share some of it with you.

Our last Congress was certainly a success! It is fantastic that 95 per cent of respondents would attend the event again and 93 per cent would recommend it to a friend. Some of the topics suggested for the 5th European Coaching Psychology Conference 2015 were positive psychology coaching, inclusivity and coaching in education. What really stands out though is the preference for focusing on practice and the application of coaching psychology.

A cluster of questions on benefits of SGCP membership, including the Register of Coaching Psychologists, elicited some interesting insights. Eighty-five per cent of

respondents indicated that they were not on the Register and questioned its value for the members. This clearly is something we need to reflect on when considering accreditation and external recognition of the SGCP and coaching psychology.

In regards to the future provisions for our members, the respondents suggested inclusive accreditation routes, CPD for members without a psychological background, training programmes and opportunities for collaborations amongst others. When ranking the priority areas for future developments research/evidence was the highest, followed by networking, journals, a training route, collaboration with other coaching organisations and peer supervision.

As the British Psychological Society is undergoing a member network review and potential structural changes are ahead of us, we are considering the future standing of the SGCP. The survey, therefore, also asked about the SGCP becoming a Division and whether our members would support this direction. Sixty-four per cent of respondents said yes, and 36 per cent said maybe, emphasising the benefits, for example, increased recognition for coaching psychology, the first step towards a coaching psychology qualification and strengthening and developing the discipline. Seventy-five per cent agreed that coaching psychologist should be a protected title and 80 per cent agreed that establishing training routes is mildly to very important.

As we are looking forward towards the respondents suggested a few opportunities for the SGCP, for example, strengthening the identity of coaching psychology and the SGCP, encouraging collaborations, addressing accreditation, training and developing research.

I am very pleased to say that these responses and my key message are coherent with the SGCP 2015–2020 strategic plan:

1. Promote and advance coaching psychology by further developing Coaching Psychology Research Network (established December 2014).
2. Develop coaching psychology as a profession through establishing training routes for coaching psychologists.
3. Engage our members and the wider community and communicating the views of our coaching psychology community through the Society to the wider public.
4. Support our members and the profession of coaching psychology by listening to their views and promoting coaching psychology and making it accessible to all the Society's member networks.

I would like to conclude my first 'Letter from the Chair' with a few invitations. The first one is for the 5th European Coaching Psychology Conference, which will take place in London, on the 10th and 11th of December 2015 – please attend and support your Special Group. The second invitation is for our CPD events – we have a number of interesting topics, including 'Essential neuro-linguistic skills for coaching psychologists' on the 27th May and 'Self-compositioning coaching' on the 26th of June. Finally, the third invitation is an open invitation to get in touch should you have any comments, suggestions or concerns. Looking forward to hearing from you and seeing you at one of the future events.

Dr Dasha Grajfoner

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