InterPsych

A network built from conversation

The international mental-health network founded by Ian Pitchford: its origins in 1993–94, rapid expansion, institutional tensions and dispersed legacy. Commissioned by Pitchford, who took part in many of the events described.

December 1993
Conception, in a later history on Pitchford's Sheffield project site

14 February 1994
Documented launch of the first forum

411 source records
Online documents and archived pages

On 29 January 1994, Ian Pitchford posted a proposal to the BIONET neuroscience discussion group. Writing from Sheffield's Department of Biomedical Science, he described a gulf between biological and psychological understandings of mental illness and asked whether anyone wanted a forum in which the competing approaches could meet. This is the earliest contemporary precursor recovered in this investigation. It presents the project as an intellectual intervention: better communication might improve the quality of the field itself. Pitchford's original proposal.

Sixteen days later, on **14 February 1994**, he announced the new, unmoderated `psychiatry@mailbase.ac.uk` list. Its invitation ranged across research methods, clinical practice, philosophy, psychiatric classification and the experience of mental illness. Biomedical, existential and psychodynamic perspectives were explicitly invited into conversation. The announcement already carried the principle that would become InterPsych's motto: **"There is someone wiser than any of us, and that is all of us."** Launch-day announcement.

The familiar uncertainty between 1993 and 1994 can therefore be substantially resolved. A later history on Pitchford's Sheffield-hosted project site, preserved in a December 1998 capture, dates Pitchford's conception of the project to **December 1993**. The operational launch is documented contemporaneously in February 1994. In May, the first newsletter announced that the board had decided to name the expanding group of lists **InterPsych**. The earlier name **PsychNet** survives in its text and in a May announcement. These are stages of the same development, rather than necessarily contradictory founding dates. Sheffield project site, first newsletter, 21 May announcement.

The contemporary record also discourages a simple claim that InterPsych invented online mental-health discussion. A response to Pitchford's January proposal pointed him to the existing `sci.med.psychobiology` newsgroup. What became distinctive was the attempt to organise many specialised conversations into a free, international, interdisciplinary association, supported by a common identity and services. That is a more precise description of the innovation than the later homepage's promotional claim to be the world's first and largest mental-health cyberorganisation. John M. Price's response.

The original infrastructure was email. Mailbase, based at Newcastle and serving the UK academic network, distributed a subscriber's message to everyone on the relevant list. Members did not need a modern website or a permanent connection to take part. Pitchford's recruitment text explained modems, university access and commercial email services alongside the intellectual mission. By May/June 1994 it described an international membership drawn from anthropology, computer science, neuroscience, pharmacology, philosophy, psychiatry, psychology and sociology. The central coordinating list was accompanied by groups on attachment, transcultural psychology, depression, helplessness, traumatic stress, assessment and resources. Recruitment message, posted 3 June and signed May 1994.

The movement from one conversation to a network happened quickly. The June newsletter counted **1,993 subscriptions across eight lists on 4 June**, increasing to **2,250 on 21 June**; three additional groups had just opened. It explicitly warned that subscriptions were not unique people: some belonged to several lists, while redistribution services reached readers absent from the direct totals. Argentina and Brazil were already part of this wider circulation. These qualifications matter. The surviving figures establish rapid growth, but they cannot be converted into a clean graph of unique membership. June 1994 newsletter.

A striking feature was the mixture of institutional seniority and practical initiative. Pitchford was identified as a Sheffield neuroscience student and founder/coordinator; Charles Figley chaired the early board, and Martin E. P. Seligman became founding president. Seligman's own university CV dates that presidency to 1994–95. Other early participants included Thomas Joiner, David DiLalla, Greg Berns and Edward Wakeman; the expanding June board also included Stevan Harnad, Ivan Goldberg, Juan Carlos Garelli and Beth Hudnall Stamm. A student-led project had assembled an international scientific and clinical network within months. Early recruitment board, June board, Seligman's CV.

The newsletter helped turn a collection of discussions into a community. According to the surviving editorial history, Pitchford edited its first three issues alone. From August 1994, Sean Sullivan, Sunkyo Kwon, Joseph Plaud and John Grohol formed the continuing editorial core, with several other volunteers. The volume changed from 1 to 2 to mark that transition. Its reports let members learn what other groups were discussing, discover jobs and conferences, find collaborators and follow the organisation's development. It was simultaneously a publication and a means of keeping a dispersed association in touch. Editorial history.

There were practical examples of what geographical reach meant. In November 1994, Stamm reported that the new Rural-Care forum had attracted more than 180 people in two weeks, including people serving isolated areas in Alaska, Australia, KwaZulu-Natal and northern Canada. Meanwhile the network was trying to organise itself: Charles Stinson chaired its Strategic Planning Committee, Pitchford served as executive secretary, and legal advisers were assisting incorporation. Volunteers were sought to build databases and an InterPsych Virtual Campus. The campus was an announced ambition; the evidence recovered does not establish that the full proposed system was completed. November 1994 organisational report.

The newsletter's July 1995 profile of the transcultural-psychology forum is the fullest surviving account of one list's life. Started at Kirk Zimbelman's initiative in May 1994 and coordinated by Sunkyo Kwon from that October, it had more than 400 members, and its monthly mail rose from about 285 KB in January 1995 to about 588 KB in June. New coordinators and an international board of advisors were being appointed. The same section carried shorter reports from the computers-in-mental-health, emergency-psychiatry, forensic-psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psy-language and Rural-Care forums. These are coordinators' reports on their own lists. Forum reports, July 1995.

Messages that Pitchford sent to other academic mailing lists show the organising work of the second half of 1994. A 22 July update reported more than 2,500 members and listed the forums and the board. Between 15 and 26 August he announced new Mailbase lists for psychoanalysis, forensic psychiatry and emergency psychiatry and a current-issues forum, each with named list owners; a clinical-psychophysiology list followed on 9 September. In September he also circulated a call for volunteers to gather data for the planned InterPsych Virtual Campus, and on 3 October he forwarded the newsletter's request for editors and contributors. By 16 November a roster titled *InterPsych Resources* claimed more than 7,000 members and set out the forums, coordinators, directors and services. Like the newsletter's subscription counts, these are the organisation's own figures, not counts of distinct people. One participant's view survives from the same month: in the ASCAP newsletter, the psychiatrist Russell Gardner wrote that he had been involved for several months in InterPsych's Depression, Helplessness and Psychiatry lists. July update, August announcements, Virtual Campus call, request for editors, November roster, Gardner's column.

The organisation's own membership figures can now be put in sequence. Notices gave more than 1,000 members at the end of May 1994, 2,500 in late August, 6,000 in October and 7,000 in mid-November; on 3 September Benjamin Goldhagen, in the first public notice of his found, put the number of people engaged at over 4,000. The July 1994 newsletter had already estimated total distribution, through redistribution lists, at “probably in excess of 10,000”, and the May 1995 directory of the Association of Research Libraries recorded “8,000+” newsletter subscriptions. In December 1996 Pitchford advertised “The World's First and Largest Mental Health Cyberorganization”, with “fifty professional lists serving ten thousand members”. The figures were counted in different ways and are the organisation's claims, not counts of distinct people; they are also the source of the 8,000 and 10,000 figures that printed guides repeated for years

afterwards. May 1994, August 1994, Goldhagen, October 1994, November 1994, July 1994 estimate, ARL directory, December 1996 advertisement.

Growth soon produced an institutional problem. On **23 September 1994**, Pitchford appealed urgently to UK members, reporting that membership had reached 6,000 and that Mailbase support was threatened. The August–October newsletter reported figures given by Mailbase staff, 6,144 members of whom 5,825 were outside the UK, cited in support of withdrawing support because British subscribers were few compared with American ones. The very internationalism that made InterPsych valuable therefore challenged the assumptions of its original national academic host. The last sentence is a historical interpretation of the documented dispute, not a quotation from Mailbase. Pitchford's appeal, contemporary newsletter account.

InterPsych chose the commercial provider Netcom as an interim home. A December report anticipated a largely transparent transfer before the end of the year. The March 1995 follow-up told a different story: all Mailbase connections had ended on **22 January 1995**, and moving between incompatible systems had interrupted forums, generated unwanted mail and overwhelmed a small group of volunteers. It also prompted technical improvements to distribution and subscription management. These reports document how much work lay behind a service that members had previously experienced as automatic. December migration plan, March account of the migration.

The move involved a further host. From November 1994 several new forums, among them Rural-Care, addiction-medicine, geriatric-neuropsychiatry, hypnosis and youth anxiety and depression, took subscriptions through a Majordomo server at the University of Helsinki. Pitchford's announcements and the December newsletter give the address, and the Association of Research Libraries directories of 1995 and 1996 list the forums there, Rural-Care still in 1996. The December news section, posted to Usenet on 22 December, said that Mailbase was withdrawing support because most members were outside the United Kingdom, called the move to Netcom “an interim step” until InterPsych had a permanent home of its own, and quoted Ben Goldhagen, as Executive Director, expecting it to be “virtually transparent” for members. In the same month Pitchford, signing as Secretary of the InterPsych Board of Directors, advertised volunteer posts as directors of clinical, research and education departments that were “being established”. Rural-Care notice, December update, 1995 directory, 1996 directory, December news, departmental posts.

By March 1995, membership rules were contentious. The joining guide listed open forums alongside groups requiring verified professional or student status; other applicants could also make a written case for admission. The stated rationale was that some subjects benefited from a more restricted audience. Newsletter correspondence challenged exclusions, including the position of experienced participants without the specified credentials. InterPsych consequently contained a persistent tension: an aspiration to knowledge across boundaries, alongside demands for professional confidence and controlled access. Neither a description of it as entirely open nor one of it as uniformly closed fits the surviving rules. Joining guide, admission policy, readers' objections.

On **23 March 1995** a New York not-for-profit corporation, **INTERPSYCH, INC.** (entity number **1906508**), was incorporated; the state record gives Benjamin I. Goldhagen, executive director, as the contact for service of process. The newsletter had reported in November 1994 that the new Strategic Planning Committee was at work on "incorporating InterPsych as a nonprofit organization" and that InterPsych had a new legal team, and in June 1995 Pitchford described InterPsych as registered in New York. The records recovered do not show who authorised the filing or how the board regarded it, and no independent record shows how it related to the dispute of summer 1995. The entity remains listed as active in the state's dataset; that listing says nothing about present-day network activity. Official filing history, status history, November 1994 update.

Robert M. Young's near-contemporary account describes a confrontation that summer over control of the organisation. In a talk delivered in November 1995 and revised in January 1996, he described helping Pitchford during a dispute over an administrator's concentration of organisational and server control. He recalled a vote, an attempted reversal and a face-to-face meeting during the American Psychological Association convention in New York, after which authority returned to forum leaders. This is a supportive participant's account, not neutral minutes, and no account from the other side has been found. Young does not name the administrator or mention the incorporation, and this history makes no finding about any named person's conduct. In October 1995 *Psychiatric News* interviewed Charles Stinson and Goldhagen about InterPsych. Young, "Psychoanalysis and/of the Internet", *Psychiatric News*, October 1995.

Contemporaneous messages add dated points to that account. A forum listing posted on 13 June 1995 is headed with Seligman as President and Pitchford as Founder. Five days later Pitchford, signing as Secretary of the InterPsych Board of Directors, invited neuroscientists to propose forums, describing it as a non-profit body registered in the State of New York that would soon have its own server and a web site, the InterPsych Virtual Campus. On 17 July Robert G. White of Carleton University called publicly for the election of a new president and board, arguing that the initial leadership "was not voted in at any time" and that the board had been "created in an ad-hoc manner". On 4 and 5 August Joseph Plaud moved the clinical-psychologists list to North Dakota and posted his own partisan, second-hand account of the dispute, which reports that the American Psychological Association had withdrawn its financial help and that Seligman had resigned as president; none of its claims has been corroborated or put to those it names. From the August–September issue the newsletter's staff box lists no managing editor and its disclaimer no longer mentions the Board of Directors of InterPsych or describes the newsletter as a publication of InterPsych, and a listing re-posted on 3 December is headed only "Founded in 1994 by Ian Pitchford". None of these sources explains the changes. June listing, Pitchford's invitation, White's call for an election, Plaud's account, July staff box, August–September staff box, December listing.

Other documents show increasing decentralisation without requiring acceptance of every detail of that account. By August–September 1995, Assessment-Psychometrics reported moving independently from Netcom to St John's University. Later bylaws, on a page dated October 1998, describe a federation in which forum leaders elect the board and president, while forums retain authority over their location and operation. These rules should not be backdated to the 1995

dispute. Read together, the sources support a move toward explicit autonomy for constituent communities, though they do not establish the complete sequence of decisions. Forum migration report, archived bylaws.

Pitchford's ambition widened during this period. On **15 October 1995**, he announced the organising effort for the **GlobalPsych Institute**, intended to bring InterPsych and a new European division, EuroPsych, into a broader proposed confederation covering health, behaviour, cognition and education. More than 150 people had joined its charter discussion. The message described proposed publishing and research activities, Human Nature Trust sponsorship, and offers of computing facilities from several institutions. It is evidence of a substantial organising initiative, not proof that every proposal became an operating programme or that a statutory corporate merger occurred. GlobalPsych charter announcement.

Earlier notices show the wider project taking shape while the dispute was running. On 31 July 1995 Pitchford announced EuroPsych, formed by colleagues at Sheffield, the University of Wales and Humboldt University Berlin as a confederation whose members would be professional societies, educational institutions and charities. On 11 September Net-Happenings relayed his notice of the GlobalPsych Institute site at Sheffield, and in October he opened GlobalPsych lists, beginning with CHARTER, on the St John's server. Kwon announced a GlobalPsych Bulletin from Humboldt University in December. These are announcements; they do not show how far the projects operated. EuroPsych, GlobalPsych site, CHARTER, GlobalPsych Bulletin.

Electronic publishing was one of the network's most consequential ambitions. In July 1995, Goldberg argued for rapid, signed responses to research and electronic articles that could be revised as evidence developed. This was an invited editorial, not a binding organisational policy. A concrete publication followed in the wider network: the **International Journal of Psychopathology, Psychopharmacology and Psychotherapy**, published by PsyCom.Net. Its 1996 masthead explicitly identifies PsyCom.Net's affiliation with InterPsych and credits Pitchford as InterPsych's founder. Its first volume included Seymour Fisher's essays previously circulated through the psychopharmacology forum—an example of discussion-list material becoming a more formal publication. Goldberg's editorial, journal masthead, Fisher's original article.

Seligman later traced one outcome of the forums himself. In an invited PsychNews editorial of December 1998 he wrote that he had become involved in InterPsych's email discussions in 1994, and that debates on its psychiatry forum and an APA Division 12 list led him and Donald Klein to conceive the electronic journal *Treatment*, later *Prevention & Treatment*. Pitchford had announced the journal in October 1997. This is a participant's account written four years later, but it connects the forums to a documented later institution. Seligman's editorial, announcement of *Treatment*.

The trauma community provides particularly concrete evidence of activity beyond discussion. In June 1995, Figley reported that the Traumatic-Stress Forum and InterPsych were founding sponsors of **Operation Healing**, launched on 26 April following the Oklahoma City bombing. The report describes a way of coordinating offers of professional help and places the initiative

under the emerging Green Cross banner. It also reports the first issue of **Traumatology**. These are specific organisational contributions; they do not, by themselves, demonstrate treatment outcomes or make every later Green Cross activity an InterPsych programme. Figley's contemporary report.

The journal and the forum maintained an identifiable relationship. In an editorial signed 30 December 1997, Figley called the Traumatic-Stress Forum, an InterPsych member, the journal's primary sponsor and described circulating preprints for discussion. A later editorial traces the journal's subsequent publishing history. There is a metadata trap here: the online upload of the earlier editorial is labelled as a 1995 inaugural note, but its actual text is from 1997. The relationship is documented; the upload label should not determine the date. Actual 1997 editorial in an author upload, 2006 publishing-history editorial.

A 1999 article by Joyce Carbonell and Figley supplies another trace: its authors describe discussions in the trauma forum leading to the selection of treatments for a clinical demonstration, with nominations solicited from InterPsych. Their reported 10,000-person mailing should be treated as a retrospective reach claim, not a verified membership count. The bibliography dates the survey to January–May 1994, which is difficult to reconcile with the February launch and much smaller June subscription totals. The paper nevertheless documents a specific use of the network in organising research. It does not establish the effectiveness of the treatments considered. Article text, publisher record.

The forums were also a route for recruiting research participants. A poster on compassion fatigue, presented by Joseph Rudolph, B. Hudnall Stamm and Henry Stamm at the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies meeting in Montreal in November 1997, drew 19 of its 179 respondents from InterPsych. A 1999 study by J. Michael Bailey and Amy Shriver recruited clinical psychologists through InterPsych's clinical psychology list, which it described as having about 600 members; 22 people responded and 19 returned questionnaires. These are particular studies' sampling routes, not measures of the network's size. 1997 poster, Bailey and Shriver.

There were other forms of professional uptake. A 1995 American Psychiatric Association programme advertised an InterPsych demonstration by Russell Lim and Charles Stinson; Leslie Knowlton's September 1996 reporting describes Lim presenting it at the association's annual meeting. Ben Green's January 1996 *Psychiatric Bulletin* guide also treated it as a substantial resource. InterPsych had become something clinicians were taught to use, not simply a project its own members discussed. 1995 programme, Knowlton's report, Green's article.

Two 1996 journal articles described the network to clinicians. In the *Psychiatric Bulletin*, Carl Littlejohns and Martin Briscoe outlined its lists, its electronically distributed journal and the plan for a virtual campus; in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Milton Huang and Norman Alessi listed its psychopharmacology list and a “Staff Lounge” chat channel. A year earlier Peter Mezciems had introduced the substance-related disorders forum to readers of the American Society of Addiction Medicine's newsletter. InterPsych's traffic also registered in wider internet administration: a 1995 proposal to reorganise the `sci.psychology` newsgroups gave the high

volume of some InterPsych mailing lists as a reason for new groups. That shows the lists were visible beyond their members, not that InterPsych controlled the newsgroups or how its members voted. Littlejohns and Briscoe, Huang and Alessi, Mezciems, newsgroup proposal.

The newsletter meanwhile acquired a separate life. The archive's editorial history dates the decision to continue independently as **PsychNews International** to December 1995; the first surviving issue under that title is dated April 1996. It explicitly tells former InterPsych Newsletter subscribers about the change. The University of Wisconsin's *Scout Report* noticed the renamed publication on 31 May. This was an editorial separation with continuity of contributors and readers, not evidence that InterPsych had ceased to exist. Archive history, April 1996 introduction, external notice.

The separation was gradual. PsychNews International's information page still described it as “associated with the organization InterPsych” in April, May and June 1996, and dropped the phrase from July. On 1 August 1996 Pitchford joined its staff as an editor in a consulting role, heading the team for its web sites; later staff boxes list him as an editorial consultant until May 2001. In October 1998 the staff thanked Plaud, who was stepping back, as one of the newsletter's “founding fathers”. May 1996 information page, July 1996 index, staff notice, 1998 notice.

By 1998, participants offered markedly different assessments of what the association had achieved. John Grohol, writing about the new International Society for Mental Health Online, described InterPsych's organisational success as limited. He pointed to vague goals, restrictions on membership and the difficulty of coordinating independent, asynchronous lists across professions. This is an informed participant's criticism, made while advocating another organisation. It does not show that ISMHO was a legal or organisational continuation of InterPsych. The preserved issue misprints its year as 1997; staff notices and the essay's events establish that it belongs to March 1998. Grohol's assessment, issue notices.

Steven Dubovsky's contribution to the same issue gives a more clinically grounded assessment. He valued the reach of online consultation while describing risks arising from inadequate case descriptions, confidentiality problems, advice without follow-up and confident recommendations whose evidence was uncertain. The significance of this criticism is historical: InterPsych's participants were already confronting problems that arise when professional conversation becomes fast, persistent and geographically unrestricted. It would be wrong to turn their exchange of ideas into an unqualified claim of improved patient care. Dubovsky's editorial.

The St John's hosting story offers a different view of survival. In the July 1998 tribute to Robert Zenhausern, Dubovsky credited him with helping the forums move beyond Netcom. Zenhausern reported more than 45 associated lists, over half hosted at Maelstrom, and acknowledged Pitchford's 1993 conception. The much larger figures elsewhere in that tribute describe the whole St John's mailing-list service, not InterPsych. Its technical patronage mattered: the network's endurance depended on donated infrastructure and people who maintained it, as well as its founders and prominent participants. Zenhausern and Dubovsky's accounts.

A fuller picture of the forum system survives in the Sheffield copy of the InterPsych directory, preserved in captures from December 1998 to April 1999. Its 44 forum pages name coordinators and describe each forum's purpose, host and admission arrangements, from addiction, affective disorders and attachment to thanatology, transcultural psychology and youth anxiety and depression. Some forums were open to the public and others were restricted to professionals; Latin Psych gave Spanish, Portuguese and English as its main languages. The captures show when the pages were preserved, not that every forum was active then. Sheffield directory, Latin Psych.

Statements by forum leaders and the newsletter give the last organisational statements found in PsychNews. A March 1999 forum update by Martin Briscoe and Anne Dietrich described InterPsych as “the brainchild of Ian Pitchford”, said that forum leaders had formed an administration team which developed the bylaws and that InterPsych had bought the interpsych.org domain in 1998, and listed 20 active forums serving “over 5,000 professionals”. In May 2001 PsychNews reported that “the prime website of InterPsych” was temporarily down and pointed readers to the interpsych.net mirror. No notice of closure has been found. The Union of International Associations' yearbook still carries a profile that gives the founding date as 14 February 1994, the day the first list opened. March 1999 update, May 2001 notice, yearbook profile.

There is no defensible single closing date in the records recovered. A directory at `interpsych.net`, captured in August 2001, carries an update date of **10 November 2000** and lists 27 forum headings. Several individual entries were revised in 2000. It includes telehealth, public mental health, rural care, trauma, transcultural psychology and more established subjects. The entries do not establish how active each forum remained. Its 27 headings cannot simply be compared with earlier totals to calculate decline, because the scope and units of the lists differ. Directory updated in November 2000.

An International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies bulletin, datable by its contents to around 2001, still places two co-sponsored forums within InterPsych and names Figley as president. An Idaho State directory carries a November 2001 update, and a gateway page preserved in 2005 has an InterPsych-specific update from May 2003. These are different strengths of evidence: a report of affiliation, a maintained directory, and a surviving gateway page. Domain parking and old university mirrors establish the fate of particular websites, not the date the association or all its forums stopped operating. ISTSS bulletin, Idaho directory, Idaho gateway.

Some influence can be followed into later literature. A 1998 telemedicine poster describes drawing on InterPsych's distributed-information model in designing administration for a multisite clinical trial. A 2005 author manuscript by Stamm and Cunningham remembers it as an early experiment in distributed professional education; this passage needs to be attributed to that manuscript because versions of the published article differ. In a separate line of influence, a 2005 *BMJ* editorial cites Michael J. Cohen's 1995 InterPsych Newsletter article on counselling and nature. These are specific traces of circulation and reuse, not a claim that the network caused all later developments in telehealth or ecotherapy. Telemedicine poster, education manuscript, BMJ editorial.

The printed afterlife is broad but shallow. More than fifty guides, directories and books published between 1995 and 2015 mention InterPsych, its newsletter or its lists, from Ivan Pope's *Internet UK* of 1995, which listed “InterPsych: The Internet Mental Health Research Charity”, to mental-health directories that still listed PsychNews International in 2004. Many repeat the organisation's own self-description, and the membership figures they print trace back to the organisation's own estimates. The most durable trace is Goldberg's psycho-pharm list: guides from 1997 to 1999 cite compilations of postings to it as “Psychopharmacology Tips”, and social-work references still mention the list in 2013 and 2015. A few passages say more. A 1995 trauma-studies volume edited by Stamm reported that, as of April 1995, InterPsych managed over 40 separate forums; a 2005 handbook carries Kwon's first-person account of managing more than twenty mailing lists, among them InterPsych's transcultural-psychology forum; and a 2000 chapter on cybercounselling took up Dubovsky's warning that advice spread on the forums faster than the evidence for it. Most of these books were seen only as search snippets. *Internet UK*, directory, 2004, *Netscape Navigator Gold*, 1997, *Social Workers' Desk Reference*, Stamm, 1995, Maheu and others, 2005, Hughes, 2000.

The social legacy is harder to measure but not wholly lost. Philip Brownell's retrospective account of the beginnings of *Gestalt!* recalls meeting Pitchford through the early online world and credits his creation of InterPsych. German handbooks, a French psychiatric resource commentary and an international missionary-care bibliography also recognised the network. These accounts show that its reputation crossed national and professional boundaries. They require careful reading: the German chapter gives an unsupported 1992 founding date, and the French author openly admits uncertainty about the forums' later status. A citation can preserve a reputation long after it ceases to describe current operations. Brownell's publisher sample, German handbook chapter, French account, international resource bibliography.

A retrospective statement of one role survives from 2006. Declaring his interests in a journal article, the psychiatrist Digby Tantam wrote that he had been a director of InterPsych, “the network of discussion forums on mental health created by Ian Pitchford”. He gives no dates for the directorship; a November 1994 roster had already listed him among InterPsych's board members. November 1994 roster, Tantam's declaration.

This history's interpretation of the evidence is that InterPsych's durable contribution lay in creating relationships and working arrangements that could survive changes of host, title and institutional umbrella. Its central organisation encountered serious limitations, acknowledged by its own participants. Yet the original wish to bring competing approaches into conversation became a practical network, produced publications, supported research and disaster-response organising, and provided an early model of distributed professional education. Its significance is visible in those documented activities and connections; it does not depend on accepting its most expansive promotional claims.

This reconstruction began with a broad public-web and archive investigation. It does not claim to have exhausted the internet or recovered private archival correspondence. The searchable FU

Berlin collection comprises 310 retrieved HTML pages, including navigation and duplicate issue sections, from 329 attempted URLs. Additional research used original mailing-list messages, Wayback snapshots, official records, professional journalism, scholarly material and institutional histories. The accompanying catalogue distinguishes contemporary records and later recollections. Unresolved questions concern the first private discussions in 1993, the complete record of the 1995 dispute and its relation to the incorporation, the extent of realised GlobalPsych projects, and when particular forums or central coordinating activities ended. A further search on 30 October 2026 added 62 source records and the 44 forum pages of the archived Sheffield directory; every added link was retrieved and checked on that date, and leads that could not be verified are listed separately in the research notes. A supplementary search on 31 October 2026 added 179 records, among them Usenet copies of contemporaneous messages, further newsletter pages, directories and printed guides seen through the Internet Archive's full-text search; each was retrieved and checked on that date. A later review on 31 October 2026 added 15 records that were retrieved and checked on that date, mostly later directories and guides that repeat InterPsych's description, together with an August 1994 announcement showing one forum already on Netcom. No formal interviews were conducted. AI-assisted research and synthesis were checked against the linked records. The history was commissioned by InterPsych's founder, Ian Pitchford, who took part in many of the events it describes, including the 1995 dispute.

This reading copy works offline. Following online source links requires an internet connection. AI-assisted archival research; no external peer review. The organisation’s final operating date remains unresolved.