



2026 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

New Frontiers in Hypnosis: Human Ingenuity,
AI Innovation, and Ethical Boundaries

March 20-22, 2026

ASCH 2026 Annual Scientific Meetings and Workshops (ASMW)

Conference Sessions - Program

Friday, March 20 to Sunday, March 22, 2026,

Pre-conference Workshops on Thursday, March 19th



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL HYPNOSIS

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Pre-Conference Workshops - Thursday, March 19th

You must register for these individually or as a bundle in addition to your conference registration. To register, please visit <https://asch.net/asch-annual-scientific-meeting-and-workshops-2/pre-conference-asch-asmw-2026>

Workshop #1: 10:00AM ET – 12:00 PM ET

The Impact of AI Technologies on Patient Communication and Care

CE Credit: 2.0 | Speaker: Daniela Huetwohl, MD | Zoom Room: Main

This workshop examines how artificial intelligence is reshaping clinical practice for physicians and mental health providers, including its potential to deliver life-saving diagnostic and treatment support while also introducing new uncertainties into clinical communication. We will explore how AI systems enhance efficiency as well as decision-making and how they may influence trust, rapport, and the flow of information between clinician and patient. The session highlights how medical hypnosis and hypnotic communication strategies can support therapeutic presence in technologically mediated settings. Participants will learn how AI tools can assist in developing therapeutic language frameworks and how hypnosis-informed approaches help maintain clarity, empathy, and patient-centered care.

In this workshop, participants will also experience how the development of hypnotic trances can be influenced by AI. We will examine whether the hypnotic structure and linguistic nuances are preserved and how the disclosure of AI assistance affects the therapeutic frame. Participants will have the chance to directly evaluate AI's impact on communication, rapport, and hypnotic responsiveness in real-world clinical contexts.

At the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- Describe core mechanisms and current evidence for AI technologies—such as Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS) and Large Language Models (LLMs)—and identify at least two clinical applications and two profession-specific benefits and risks for mental health and medical practice.
- Analyze how AI systems may affect cognitive, emotional, and subconscious processes in clinicians and patients/clients, and explain at least two ways these effects can influence clinical reasoning, therapeutic dynamics, or patient engagement.
- Identify and discuss at least three ethical and evidence-based strategies for integrating AI into psychotherapeutic and medical care while maintaining clinical judgment, informed consent, and a strong therapeutic or doctor–patient relationship.
- Apply AI-informed communication and clinical interaction skills to case examples in order to enhance patient/client understanding, trust, and overall care experience across healthcare and behavioral health settings.

Presenter: Neurologist and hypnotherapist **Daniela Huetwohl, MD** serves as a senior physician in the emergency department and as the Deputy Medical Director of the center for AI, medical informatics and American Society of Clinical Hypnosis | www.asch.net

data science at Knappschaft Kliniken University Hospital Bochum. Specializing in medical AI, she aims to refine the healthcare field, balancing digital innovation and human elements. Through AI integration, she aspires to provide clinicians with more time to focus on patients, emphasizing the significant role of medical hypnosis in patient communication during their hospital journey. Her approach reflects the harmonization of emerging technology and the invaluable importance of therapeutic relationships.

Workshop #2: 12:15PM ET – 3:15PM ET

Mindful Hypnotherapy: The Basics for Clinical Practice

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Gary Elkins, PhD, ABPP / Zoom Room: Main

Mindful hypnotherapy is an intervention that intentionally uses hypnosis (hypnotic induction and suggestion) to integrate mindfulness for personal or therapeutic benefit. In this workshop, participants will learn about the conceptual basis and theoretical foundations of mindful hypnotherapy and hypnotically oriented interventions in psychotherapy. Research on mindful hypnotherapy will be reviewed as well as applications. Mindful hypnotherapy will be considered in regard to stress and anxiety management. Hypnotherapy presents an intriguing synchronicity with some aspects of mindfulness, in that both practices involve focused attention, experiencing the world differently, and relaxation. A combination of lecture, case examples, and experiential practice will be utilized to meet learning objectives in the workshop.

At the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- Describe at least 1 core concept related to mindful hypnotherapy
- Discuss the relationship between mindfulness and hypnosis.
- Identify 1 mindful hypnosis intervention from an eight-step mindful hypnotherapy protocol.
- Discuss at least 1 hypnotic suggestion based upon mindful hypnotherapy concepts for anxiety and stress reduction.
- Identify at least 1 advantage of mindful hypnotherapy versus mindfulness alone.

Presenter: Gary Elkins, Ph.D., professor of psychology and neuroscience, directs the Mind-Body Medicine Research Laboratory at Baylor University where he conducts research into hypnosis for stress and mindfulness, sleep, trauma, smoking cessation, and hot flashes. Based upon his research and publications, Dr. Elkins is the leading researcher and expert on hypnosis for hot flashes and sleep disturbances as well as other clinical applications. His research into hypnosis interventions has been funded by NIH grants for over 25 years. Dr. Elkins has over 100 publications which include the books: Mindful Hypnotherapy: The Basics for Clinical Practice; and the Handbook of Medical and Psychological Hypnosis. His latest book, Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy: What you Need to Know provides a research evidence-based understanding of hypnotherapy. In recognition of his research, Dr. Elkins has received major awards from the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, American Society for Clinical Hypnosis, and the Distinguished Contribution to Science Award from Division 30 of the American Psychological Association.

Workshop #3: 3:30PM ET – 6:30PM ET

Explorations in Trauma Treatment Through Ericksonian Hypnosis, Mindfulness, and Core Creativity

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Ronald Alexander, PhD / Zoom Room: Main

The work of Milton Erickson brought new insights and methodologies to the field of hypnosis and mind-body healing. Erickson's therapeutic use of rapid and deep induction that integrated storytelling, metaphors, and deep trance to engage the patient's unconscious mind towards healing was a pioneering contribution to this new paradigm of thought. Therefore, within this new view, affective experience has taken on an entirely new meaning, one in which symptoms are now seen as the body's wisdom pathways for creating communication between the unconscious and the self for promoting healing.

For 2500 years, Buddhist meditation practices have developed what is referred to as "skillful methods" for the study and transformation of the mind-body process. These meditation and visualization practices help to cultivate self-regulation through awareness training to develop concentration, release painful affects, and apply the principles of Buddhist psychology to resolve afflictive factors of mind-body trauma.

This workshop will address solutions for treating trauma by utilizing Ericksonian Hypnosis, Buddhist Mindfulness, and Core Creativity. We will review the clinical skills of tracking, pacing, and utilization of the symptom as the pathway for accessing the creative unconscious with trance for the rapid treatment of trauma. The workshop will highlight Milton Erickson's use of storytelling, metaphor, and rapid trance induction as well as the use of framing, re-framing, and de-framing for the immediate reorganization of transforming somatic-affective experience into new healing rhythms in the body. Through trance exercises, participants will learn how to access their core creativity to help their clients visualize a path forward into the future after experiencing trauma.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate more creative and resourceful skills when treating body symptoms, trauma, pain, mood, and somatic disorders.
- Utilize the symptom to access the unconscious and its healing inner resources with deep trance, visualization, and mindfulness meditation.
- Apply experiential exercises to help clients integrate their body-mind and access their core creativity, enabling them to move forward into the future after experiencing trauma.
- Utilize new clinical skills for tracking, pacing, and reframing trauma into new learnings for healing and resolution

Presenter: Ronald A. Alexander, PhD, MFT, SEP (Somatic Experiencing Practitioner) is a psychotherapist, leadership coach, and international trainer in the fields of Mindfulness Meditation, Ericksonian Mind-Body Therapies, Core Creativity, Gestalt Therapy, and Somatic Experiencing. He is the Executive Director of the OpenMind® Training Program, which offers personal and professional training programs in mindfulness-based mind-body therapies, transformational leadership, and meditation. He received consultation and treatment from Milton H Erickson MD. He personally trained with Ernest Rossi, PhD,

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and Steven Gilligan PhD in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy, and Daniel P. Brown of Harvard Medical in hypnosis and hypno-analysis. He is the author of *Core Creativity: The Mindful Way to Unlock Your Creative Self*, and *Wise Mind, Open Mind: Finding Purpose and Meaning in Times of Crisis, Loss, and Change*.

Friday, March 20th

Opening Plenary - 10:30AM ET – 11:30AM ET

Artificial Intelligence and its Growing Utility in Medicine

CE Credit: 1.0 / Speaker: Matthew Wong, MD / Zoom Room: Main

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly visible in medicine, yet its real-world clinical value is often misunderstood. This session provides a clear, non-technical overview of AI in medicine, explaining key concepts such as machine learning, deep learning, and large language models using clinically relevant examples. It reviews how AI in medicine has evolved from early rule-based decision systems to modern tools for imaging analysis, clinical decision making, and clinical documentation, while also highlighting important limitations and well-documented failures. Emphasis is placed on why many AI systems struggle in real clinical environments, including issues of bias and poor validation. Attendees will leave with a balanced understanding of where AI may genuinely support clinical practice today.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Describe the various definitions of artificial intelligence used in medicine and technology.
- Differentiate between artificial intelligence, machine learning, and deep learning.
- Identify the major challenges and barriers to implementing artificial intelligence in healthcare.

Presenter: **Matthew Wong, MD** is a clinical neurologist and Clinical Assistant Professor specializing in neurology and epilepsy care at Wake Forest University School of Medicine. He earned his medical degree from McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, and completed his neurology residency as well as a fellowship in clinical neurophysiology and epilepsy at the University of Virginia.

Concurrent Sessions - 12:00PM ET – 3:00PM ET

Clinical Hypnosis for Attachment Repair

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Louis Damis, PhD / Zoom Room: A

Saturday, March 21st 12-3pm ET

This workshop focuses on the use of the Ideal Parent Figure protocol (Brown & Elliot, 2016) for attachment repair. The characteristics of the secure and three insecure attachment styles will be outlined, along with the caregiver behaviors that fostered them. The majority of the session will be dedicated to training techniques, with an emphasis on demonstrations. The Normative Implicit Clinical Hypnosis approach taught facilitates modification of implicit memory and Internal Working Models that underlie attachment disorders and Complex PTSD. Mental health therapists and physicians will benefit from this training.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Delineate three criteria for adequate acquisition of attachment repair.

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- Outline two strategies for establishing a neurophysiological substrate for trauma processing and attachment repair.
- Describe the importance of prioritizing neglect repair and related strategies for modifying implicit memory through hypnosis.
- Describe and apply positive opposites to repair specific attachment wounds.

Presenter: **Louis Damis, PhD** is a Diplomate with the American Board of Professional Psychology, a Fellow of the American Academy of Clinical Health Psychology, the Biofeedback Certification International Alliance, the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, and the Florida Society of Clinical Hypnosis. He is a licensed psychologist, ASCH-certified Clinical Hypnosis Consultant, and an Ego State Therapy International-Certified Ego State Therapy Therapist. Dr. Damis is the Treasure of ASCH, a Past President of the American, Florida, and Washington, DC Societies of Clinical Hypnosis, and is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the UCF College of Medicine. He has taught hypnosis for over 25 years

“Minding Your Client’s Mind”: Using Various Clinical Interventions across Clients of Differing Hypnotic/Imagoic Responsivity

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Ron Pekala, PhD / Zoom Room: B
Friday, March 20th 12-3pm ET

This clinical workshop will focus on acquainting therapists with a methodology for accessing your client’s mind during relaxation-based interventions, including hypnosis, and then using that methodology to differentially tailor interventions to your client’s subjective experience. The methodology uses “noetic analysis” (the Greek word for “mind” is nous) to generate a noetic “snapshot” of your client’s mind during an intervention and then identifying those individual differences factors of the client to better tailor treatment interventions to the client’s phenomenological world. Various clinical interventions with clients of low, medium, and high hypnotic/imagoic responsivity will be reviewed and discussed.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Review and describe the noetic model for “minding your client’s mind:” i.e. “paying careful and proactive attention to your client’s thoughts, feelings, needs, and overall experience,” via the use of the PCI/PCI-HAP assessment protocols
- Describe the rationale for a phenomenologically based assessment of hypnotic/noetic talent via the PCI (Phenomenology of Consciousness Inventory) and the PCI-HAP (Phenomenology of Consciousness Inventory – Hypnotic Assessment Procedure)
- Describe how to integrate various relaxation-based strategies into your client’s treatment plan based on noetic analysis: pranayama (breathing strategies), meditation; visualization; heart rate variability (HRV) biofeedback; hypnosis
- Demonstrate how to utilize information about a client’s phenomenological world during hypnosis (or other relaxation-based strategies) to generate suggestions/interventions congruent with that world with particular reference to clients of varying hypnotic/imagoic responsivity.

Presenter: **Ron Pekala, Ph.D.**, is in Private Practice in West Chester, PA. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis. Dr. Pekala is the author of over 80 professional publications, numerous national presentations, and one book: "Quantifying consciousness: An empirical approach" (1991). He is the author of the PCI (Phenomenology of Consciousness Inventory), a self-report questionnaire that is used to quantify states of consciousness, including hypnosis. Research on the PCI has generated three Milton H. Erickson awards and one Clark Hull award from ASCH for "scientific excellence in writing on clinical/experimental hypnosis."

A Gathering of Healers: How to work with clients who report paranormal/non-ordinary experiences such as clairvoyance, telepathy, mediumship, OBEs and NDEs

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Paul Schenk, PsyD and Philip Accaria, PhD / Zoom Room: C

Friday, March 20th 12-3pm ET

This workshop will address options for integrating clients' paranormal/non-ordinary experiences into your clinical work. Presenters will speak to the many decades of research dealing with numerous forms of paranormal phenomena and illustrate with examples, how they incorporate them in their clinical work. Attendees will have opportunity to share their own case examples. The presenters will offer their conceptualizations of (1) the value of helping clients acknowledge their non-ordinary experiences, (2) how both clients and clinicians can incorporate these experiences into their daily lives, and (3) the various clinical benefits for both the client and the practitioner.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Define 6 different forms of paranormal experiences
- Describe how these experiences can manifest for clients
- Discuss 2 clinical benefits such experiences can have for clients
- List 2 strategies to help clients identify these experiences

Presenters: **Dr. Paul Schenk** mostly retired in 2019 after 43 years in private practice. He has been an Approved Consultant with ASCH for many years and is a former president of the Georgia Hypnosis Society and former Chairperson of the Division of Independent Practice of Georgia Psychological Association. He still enjoys teaching and consulting with clinicians regarding the varied uses of hypnosis. His journal articles have appeared in the American Journal of Nursing, the Australian Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, the ASCH Newsletter, Journal of Personality Assessment, the ADHD Report, as well as numerous articles in lay journals and a book published by Crown House. **Dr. Philip L. Accaria** is a licensed psychologist in both New Jersey and Tennessee and is credentialed through APIT to conduct "teletherapy" in approximately 44 states. He has been utilizing clinical hypnosis since 1981. He is Past-President of the ASCH and Past-Chair/Moderator of its Board of Governors for 4 years is a Life Fellow and Approved Consultant. He also served as President of the Clinical Hypnosis Society of New Jersey for 15 years. He is also specialized in Indigenous/Shamanic Energy Medicine practices. He has been practicing Past-Life Regression Therapy and teaching ideomotor signaling methodologies since 1992.

Harnessing Utilization, Metaphor, and Visualization Techniques for Trauma Recovery

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Huaiyu Zhang, Ph.D. / Zoom Room: D

Friday, March 20th 12-3pm ET

Individuals suffering from post-traumatic stress often experience both psychological and physiological disturbances. While various evidence-based trauma processing treatments have proven effective in facilitating recovery, clinical hypnosis offers additional benefits in alleviating the psychological and physiological symptoms associated with trauma. This workshop will explore the application of three clinical hypnosis techniques - utilization, metaphor, and visualization - in the context of trauma recovery. I will present the latest evidence on these techniques and share case examples that illustrate the effectiveness of integrating them with established trauma treatments, highlighting their role in promoting recovery and fostering post-traumatic growth for individuals who have experienced medical and/or interpersonal trauma.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the common psychological and physiological disturbances associated with post-traumatic stress that can be alleviated through the application of clinical hypnosis
- Acquire skills to implement specific clinical hypnosis techniques aimed at enhancing the psychological and physiological well-being of trauma survivors
- Explore how to effectively integrate hypnosis with other therapeutic modalities, such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), to support the recovery and post-traumatic growth of trauma survivors.

Presenter: **Huaiyu Zhang, PhD**, is a clinical psychologist at Stanford University School of Medicine. Previously, she supported survivors of interpersonal violence at the University of California San Francisco. Currently, as a cardiac psychologist at Stanford, Dr. Zhang focuses on providing care to individuals with cardiovascular conditions through an integrative, contextualized, evidence-informed, and strengths-based approach. She specializes in treating cardiac patients who have experienced medical and/or interpersonal trauma. To help her patients achieve their trauma recovery goals, Dr. Zhang employs clinical hypnosis along with various therapeutic techniques, including Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT).

Concurrent Sessions – 3:30 PM ET – 5:00PM ET

The Rhythmic Architecture of Hypnotic Communication

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: Anita Jung, LPC-S, LPA / Zoom Room: A

Friday, March 20th 3:30 - 5pm ET

Exploring the rhythmic architecture of hypnotic language reveals how precise cadence deepens regulation, strengthens resilience, and heightens the impact of therapeutic suggestions. Drawing on the

Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC) and its role in processing rhythm and surprise, participants discover how intentional phrasing elicits resonance, engagement, and highly effective therapeutic communication. In a time when physicians/clinicians increasingly depend on AI-assisted tools for drafting language and notes, maintaining rhythmic structure becomes essential for preserving nuance, presence, and attunement. Through immersive practice, attendees learn to design and deliver structured repetition patterns—including the "Hypnotic Tihai," engineered to make suggestions more memorable and neurologically resonant.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Apply at least two linguistic pacing or phrasing strategies that deepen regulation, enhance resonance, and strengthen the effectiveness of hypnotic communication in medical or behavioral health practice.
- Identify and practice at least two structured repetition patterns—including the Hypnotic Tihai—to increase memorability, engagement, and unconscious integration of suggestions in medical/clinical communication.
- Explain the role of the Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC) in timing, attention, and expectancy, and describe two ways AI-assisted language tools influence clinical/medical presence, nuance, and attunement.

Presenter: **Anita Jung, LPC-S, LPA**, is a psychotherapist and author whose work integrates clinical hypnosis, attention training, somatic awareness, and musicality to support psychological and medical healing. She is the past President of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH), the current President of the Central Texas Society of Clinical Hypnosis (CTSCH), and a newsletter editor for the International Society of Hypnosis (ISH). She teaches nationally and internationally on unconscious processes, trance, and the therapeutic relationship. Her work includes contributions to the Routledge International Handbook of Clinical Hypnosis, peer-reviewed articles on hypnosis and depression, and a series of hypnosis-and-music audio recordings used in clinical and wellness settings.

AI Applications in Clinical Hypnosis Publications: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: David B. Reid, PsyD / Zoom Room: B

Friday, March 20th 3:30 - 5pm ET

Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents a multitude of advantages for the professional publishing industry: expediting processes, enhancing accuracy, and facilitating the efficient management of intricate data. However, several concerns also arise that pose challenges to the professional publishing sector, including the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis. These concerns encompass the generation of fabricated citations, the potential for plagiarism, issues related to authorship and accountability, and risk of confidentiality breaches. Additionally, identifying AI-generated text and data presents significant obstacles to the preservation of academic integrity. This workshop will explore the positive, negative, and complex aspects of AI's influence on clinical hypnosis publications.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- identify three (3) advantages to using AI when writing and submitting clinical hypnosis manuscripts for publication.
- Identify three (3) disadvantages and challenges generated by the use of AI within the hypnosis publication community.
- Identify three (3) mitigating interventions that editors, reviewers, and publishers can employ to assist and guide authors given the complexities of AI.

Presenter: **David B. Reid, Psy.D.**, is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Fellow and Approved Consultant of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH). Dr. Reid is an Award-Winning author of Hypnosis for Behavioral Health: Professional's Guide to Expanding Your Practice (Springer Publishing Company). He is also the Editor-in-Chief for the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis. Dr. Reid received 11 Presidential awards from ASCH and SCEH for his contributions to both societies, as well as awards for his published papers on clinical hypnosis. He is an adjunct professor at Saybrook University and Past President of Division 30 of the American Psychological Association.

A Collaborative Approach for the Development of an Effective Hypnotic Strategy for Patient Mastery of an Invasive Medical Procedure

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: Katie Simpson, Health Psychologist / Zoom Room: C

Friday, March 20th 3:30 - 5pm ET

The presenter describes the benefits of clinical hypnosis for a 31-year-old female inpatient who required VAC (vacuum-assisted closure) dressing changes for Fournier's gangrene of the perianal region. VAC dressing changes for deep tissue wounds must be performed regularly and are often associated with significant pain and anxiety. A method for preparing patients for the procedure, design of a hypnotic strategy based on patient collaboration, which was highly successful, will be outlined. The process of collaborating and integrating a patient-identified strategy will be outlined. Medical and mental health providers will benefit from adopting this approach.

At the completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify three steps for facilitating patient engagement in the process.
- Describe a method for creating an individual hypnotic strategy in advance.
- List two ways to ratify the experience during debriefing.

Presenter: **Katie Simpson** is a Senior Health Psychologist who has been working in General Surgery and Gastroenterology for nearly 10 years. Her primary role is psychologist for General Surgery at Auckland City Hospital working with patients across all subspecialities, particularly colorectal and bariatrics. In private practice, Katie works alongside gastroenterologists and dieticians providing assessment and intervention for patients with a range of GI issues, particularly disorders of gut-brain interaction. Using the developing field of psychogastroenterology, Katie provides GI specific psychological formulations and

treatments to patients with the primary aims of symptom reduction and improving psychological wellbeing.

Utilizing AI as a Consultation & Training Resource in Ericksonian Hypnosis and Therapy

CE Credit: 1.5 | Speaker: Dale E. Bertram, PhD | Zoom Room: D

Friday, March 20th 3:30 - 5pm ET

This presentation explores how artificial intelligence (AI) can enhance consultation and training in Ericksonian hypnosis and psychotherapy. Participants will learn how AI tools can serve as reflective partners, offering case conceptualization support, skill refinement, and supervision-like feedback consistent with Ericksonian principles of utilization and responsiveness. Demonstrations will illustrate how AI can foster creative problem-solving, strengthen clinical decision-making, and support ethical, evidence-informed practice. Emphasis will be placed on integrating AI as a collaborative learning ally - augmenting, not replacing, the human relationship at the core of therapeutic growth. Practical applications for clinicians, educators, and supervisors will be highlighted.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify ways AI technologies can be utilized to support consultation, supervision, and skill development within the framework of Ericksonian hypnosis and psychotherapy
- Demonstrate how AI tools can foster clinical creativity, case conceptualization, and therapeutic utilization consistent with Ericksonian principles
- Evaluate ethical and professional considerations when integrating AI as an adjunctive resource in clinical training and consultation.

Presenter: **Dale E. Bertram, PhD**, is a Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy at Campbellsville University (since 2019). He previously chaired the Department of Family Therapy at Abilene Christian University and served as Dean of the School of Human Services and PhD Program Director at Amridge University. A Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, AAMFT Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor, Bertram is also a member of CAPS, ASCH, and SCEH. His research focuses on family therapy dialogue, integration of faith and learning, professional ethics, and technology-assisted mental health services.

Saturday, March 21st

Plenary 10:30AM ET –11:30AM ET

Ericksonian Choice Architecture: Crafting Strategic Communication for Hypnotic Practice

CE Credit: 1.0 / Speaker: Dan Short, PhD / Zoom Room: Main

This plenary introduces Ericksonian Choice Architecture (ECA), a framework that extends Milton H. Erickson's legacy by framing hypnotic communication as the strategic design of preconscious choice. Participants will learn how ECA differs from traditional directive approaches by emphasizing autonomy, context sensitivity, and indirect influence ("nudges"). Practical examples will illustrate how ECA enhances engagement, deepens hypnotic responsiveness, and is supported by newly emerging research. Attendees will leave with clear, applicable concepts for shaping communication that honors client agency while increasing the precision, flexibility, and effectiveness of hypnotic interventions in contemporary clinical practice.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Define the core principles of Ericksonian Choice Architecture (ECA) and distinguish how they differ from traditional directive models of hypnotic communication
- Identify and analyze at least three ECA strategies that enhance client autonomy, engagement, and responsiveness during hypnosis
- Apply ECA principles to a clinical vignette by formulating at least one intervention that demonstrates choice-centered communication and strategic framing

Presenter: **Dan Short, PhD** is a practicing clinical psychologist who also serves as Co-Director for the Milton H. Erickson Institute of Phoenix, adjunct faculty for the Milton H. Erickson Foundation Intensive Training program and the originator of the training program in Ericksonian Choice Architecture (ECA). Dr. Short also teaches medical hypnosis for Sonoran University of Health Sciences. Dr. Short has published four books, served as guest editor for American Journal of Hypnosis (AJCH), and authored dozens of scholarly articles and book chapters. Dr. Short's research interests have focused on Ericksonian hypnosis resulting in a research-based treatment manual for Ericksonian therapy (ET), which is used by training institutes around the world

Concurrent Sessions - 12:00PM ET – 3:00PM ET

Hypnosis in Dealing with Grief, Death and Spirituality

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Ran Anbar, MD, FAAP / Zoom Room: A

Friday, March 20th 12-3pm ET

In this presentation, Dr. Anbar will discuss his experiences over his career as a physician and counselor that taught him about how to deal with grief and death, as well as helped him develop a better

understanding of spirituality. As he has been extensively using hypnosis in his practice over the past 28 years, many of his insights arose as a result of using hypnosis with his patients as well as self-hypnosis. The presentation also will review hypnotic techniques that can be used to help patients cope better with grief and end-of-life spiritual challenges.

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to

- Facilitate a discussion of death with their clients
- Teach how to use a hypnotic state to help move forward through the grief process
- Use interactions with the subconscious to help clients incorporate spirituality into their dealing with end-of-life issues.

Presenter: **Ran D. Anbar, MD, FAAP**, is board certified in both pediatric pulmonology and general pediatrics, offering hypnosis and counseling services at Center Point Medicine in La Jolla, California, and Syracuse, New York. Dr. Anbar is also a past President, fellow, and approved consultant of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis. Dr. Anbar is author of more than 70 articles, abstracts, and book chapters on pediatric functional disorders and pediatric hypnosis. He is the author of the acclaimed *Changing Children's Lives with Hypnosis* (2021) and *The Life Guide for Teens* (2025).

Organized Extreme Abuse: Terms, Complexities and Creative Strategies

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Rachel Sage, LCSW-C / Zoom Room: B

Saturday, March 21st 12-3pm ET

Organized Extreme Abuse is the structured manipulation of attachment needs through extreme conditioning and sadistic torture, involving methods to exploit victims by leveraging their belief systems and core values to indoctrinate victims to an established ideology. This form of systematic abuse can induce dissociative identities that serve the perpetrators. Similarities and differences in both clinical presentation and therapeutic work between organically formed dissociative self-state systems and systematically induced identity systems will be outlined. Physicians and mental health therapists will acquire strategies for establishing safety, harm-reduction, internal world development/communication, and cautions regarding some therapeutic modalities. An understanding of complex dissociation is recommended.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three ways clinicians can assist clients with internal world exploration/development and internal communication
- List at least three indicators of potential Organized Extreme Abuse (OEA) history
- Describe at least three ways clinicians can address safety concerns and/or assist clients with establishing safety

Presenter: **Rachel Sage, LCSW-C**, licensed clinical social worker in private practice located in Baltimore, Maryland, and primarily works with complex dissociation and survivors of Organized Extreme Abuse. Rachel received a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Maryland (2019) and a Master's

degree in Fine Arts from Towson University (2012). They are an EMDRIA Approved Provider and Consultant, hold ASCH certification in Clinical Hypnosis, and are fully trained in Deep Brain Reorienting (DBR). Rachel teaches as a member of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation Professional Training Program staff.

Chronic States with Better Fates

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Bart Walsh, MSW / Zoom Room: C

Saturday, March 21st 12-3pm ET

Learn the basics of Functional Systemic Negotiation. This approach encompasses ego state therapy, ideomotor questioning, psychosocial genomics, strategic therapy, and more: a simple, non-invasive process of resolving acute and accumulated emotion precedes identification of the source of a chronic problem state, through communication with the unconscious. The source of the problem state can then be resolved, managed, or transformed depending on its type. The sources of chronic problem states, be they emotional or physiological, and their resolution will be illustrated. Experiential exercises and demonstrations will enhance participant learning.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Participants will understand three familiar sources of chronic problem states.
- Participants will understand at least three functional dynamics of ego states (parts).
- Participants will understand how to apply ideomotor questioning to promote emotional and physiological change.

Presenter: **Bart Walsh, MSW**, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Diplomate in Clinical Social Work, offering treatment since 1987. He conducts a private clinical practice and directs The Milton H. Erickson Institute of Portland (Oregon, USA), affiliated with the Milton H. Erickson Foundation. In addition to direct clinical work with individuals, couples, and families, Bart offers hypnotherapy training to qualified professionals and conducts workshops in the United States and Europe. His articles have been published in The American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis and The International Journal of Psychosocial

Imagination as the Regenerative Time Machine: Healing the Past and Spontaneous Imaginal Life Experiences in Clinical Hypnosis

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speakers: Marina A. Smirnova, Ph.D. and Eric K. Willmarth, Ph.D. / Zoom Room: D

Saturday, March 21st 12-3pm ET

Imagination continues to claim its place in the 21st century healing. According to Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited; while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand." This workshop explores human imagination as the time machine with regenerative potentials. It focuses on healing the past and spontaneous imaginal life experiences using hypnosis. Moreover, it examines the art of Hypnotic Regression Therapy (HRT) as delineated by C. Roy Hunter and Bruce N. Eimer (2014) in their modern classic, "The Art of Hypnotic Regression Therapy: A Clinical Guide."

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Delineate and substantiate the central role of human imagination in healing within the contexts of clinical hypnosis
- Examine the process of healing the past and spontaneously occurring imaginal life experiences in clinical hypnosis
- Explicate skillful hypnotic strategies, sound ethical considerations, and Hypnotic Regression Therapy (HRT) essentials for facilitating clients' process of healing the past and spontaneous imaginal life experiences in hypnosis

Presenters: **Marina A. Smirnova, Ph.D.**, is a 2013 graduate of Sofia University (formerly, the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology). She serves as a Full Professor of Psychology at Saybrook University and oversees Consciousness, Spirituality, and Integrative Health specialization. Outside of the halls of academia, Marina supports adults, who are questing for spiritual vitality, fulfillment, joy, longevity, and ascension. She helps them to re-contextualize, recalibrate, reclaim, and fully integrate their deeply evocative, Exceptional Human Experiences (EHEs). Marina lives and creates in Sedona, Arizona.

Eric K. Willmarth, PhD is a past-president of The American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis and the Society for Psychological Hypnosis (APH Div. 30). He has been teaching hypnosis workshops for over 40 years. He is currently a full professor at Saybrook University, where he teaches, among other courses, both Basic and Advanced Hypnosis. He remains in clinical practice, working primarily with patients with chronic pain and other chronic pain conditions. His areas of academic interest include hypnosis, biofeedback, and music.

Concurrent Sessions – 3:30 PM ET – 5:00PM ET

Becoming an ASCH Educator

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: Mary Wells, PhD / Zoom Room: A

Saturday, March 21st 3:30pm – 5pm ET

This program is designed to introduce or refresh participants' understanding of how ASCH approaches its education mission and to prepare faculty for teaching within ASCH programs. Through this session, attendees will explore the principles that guide ASCH's training development and learn practical steps for engaging as faculty or small group facilitators

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Understand and appreciate the importance of adult learning theory as it pertains to development of professional training opportunities
- Acquire basic understanding of how ASCH training was developed and continues to be reviewed
- Describe the ASCH workshop development process and roles of faculty and small group facilitators

Presenter: Dr. Mary Wells is a licensed clinical psychologist who has been in practice for over 30 years in the areas of rehabilitation and pain management. She completed her graduate work at George

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Washington University and started her career at the Washington Pain and Rehabilitation Center in Washington, DC. She went from there to VCU Health System in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation as a rehab psychologist, providing services to a full range of rehabilitation patients on both the inpatient and outpatient service. She left VCU to work in an interdisciplinary pain clinic in the community and later went into private practice. In 2000, she joined the medical psychology department at Sheltering Arms Hospital, first as a staff psychologist and later as director of the department, a post she held for 10 years. She has recently returned to the VCU Dept. of PMR and is currently working as part of an interdisciplinary team of medical professionals at Virginia Commonwealth University Health System to provide services to patients with chronic pain due to a variety of medical conditions. She provides evaluations and psychological treatment for the management of chronic pain.

Integrating Pain Reprocessing Therapy Principles with Clinical Hypnosis for Chronic Pain

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: Michael Spertus, MD / Zoom Room: B

Saturday, March 21st 3:30pm – 5pm ET

Pain Reprocessing Therapy (PRT) is rapidly gaining recognition as a leading, evidence-based approach in pain psychology and chronic pain management, supported by emerging clinical research and real-world success. Clinical hypnosis has long been used to treat chronic pain with favorable, although sometimes variable results. This presentation aims to integrate PRT principles with clinical hypnosis to enhance both efficacy and scope. Attendees will learn how PRT's core principles of pain neuroscience education, safety reappraisal, addressing emotional threats, and positive affect induction can enhance hypnotic efficacy, and in turn, learn how using hypnotic language and techniques can deepen the effects of PRT.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Describe the core principles of Pain Reprocessing Therapy (PRT)
- Compare the theory, mechanistic basis, and research between PRT and clinical hypnosis in improving chronic pain
- Apply the principles of PRT in hypnotic interventions and vice versa

Presenters: **Michael Spertus, MD**, is a physician, board-certified in Family Medicine, Integrative Medicine, and Lifestyle Medicine. He went to medical school at the University of Miami and residency at Columbia University Medical Center. He completed fellowships in Integrative Medicine, Health Education, and Primary Care Psychiatry. He has extensive training in leadership, clinical hypnosis, acupuncture, mindfulness, psychotherapy, and coaching. Currently, Dr. Spertus is in private practice, focusing on mind-body medicine and professional coaching. He is affiliated with the University of Miami School of Medicine. Previously, he was a Chief Clinician Well-Being Officer with the Veterans Administration and implemented an integrative pain clinic.

Hypnoanesthesia

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: Brice Lemaire, PhD / Zoom Room: C

Saturday, March 21st 3:30pm – 5pm ET

Hypnotic anesthesia is a powerful clinical application of hypnosis that supports patient comfort and procedural pain management. Drawing on 25 years of experience using hypnosis in dental surgery, this workshop demonstrates practical hypnotic strategies that clinicians can integrate into medical and dental settings. Participants will explore rapport-building, assessing hypnotic responsiveness, rapid induction methods, self-deepening techniques, and deep trance management for analgesia. Hypnotic phenomena relevant to pain modulation will be demonstrated and practiced. This workshop is designed for healthcare professionals working in medical hypnosis, particularly those involved in procedural care and pain management, and presents these methods as adjuncts to standard clinical protocols

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three hypnotic anesthesia techniques and describe how each can function as an adjunct to standard clinical pain management.
- Demonstrate at least two methods for inducing and stabilizing deep trance states suitable for procedural care.
- Apply at least three hypnotic strategies—such as rapid inductions, self-deepening procedures, or analytic reframing—to support patient comfort during painful procedures.
- Evaluate at least two indicators of effectiveness when using hypnotic techniques to modulate pain responses and determine their appropriate use within a patient's treatment plan.

Presenter: **Brice Lemaire, PhD**, is a Dental Surgeon, private practitioner, author, international speaker, and trainer in Medical Hypnosis. Creator of and teacher in the postgraduate program in Dental Hypnosis at the University of Nice. He is the President of the Dave Elman Hypnosis Institute France President of the French Society of Dental Hypnosis and Member of ISH, SCEH, and ASCH.

Step-By-Step Guide to Using AI to Enhance Your Hypnosis Practice

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speaker: Cameron Alldredge, PhD / Zoom Room: D

Saturday, March 21st 3:30pm – 5pm ET

Attendees will discover practical ways to integrate artificial intelligence into their hypnosis practice. This workshop will provide a step-by-step guide on how to use AI tools to generate personalized hypnosis scripts, design and produce professional-quality audio recordings with voice cloning, and efficiently summarize hypnosis-related research for clients. Participants will also learn how AI can streamline administrative tasks - such as note-taking, correspondence, and documentation - saving valuable clinical time. This workshop blends demonstration with guided practice to help you ethically and effectively leverage AI to expand your impact and accessibility as a hypnosis practitioner.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Employ AI in two ways to summarize and translate hypnosis-related research into client-friendly educational materials.
- Employ AI to summarize and translate hypnosis-related research into client-friendly educational materials.
- Apply two practical strategies for integrating AI into clinical and administrative workflows to improve efficiency, documentation quality, and overall practice management.

ASCH Event - 5:15PM ET - 6:15PM ET

ASCH Awards and Passing of the Gavel

Zoom Room: Main

Sunday, March 22nd

Concurrent Sessions – 10:30AM ET – 12:00PM ET

The February Man Revisited: Milton H. Erickson, MD's Deep Trance Phenomena

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speakers: Kathryn Rossi, PhD and Jan Dyba, MA / Zoom Room: A

Sunday, March 22nd 10:30am – 12pm ET

Developing deep trance expertise can help therapists explore a client's deeply seeded issues with greater ease and comfort, simultaneously stimulating many levels of emerging consciousness. In *The February Man* (1989/2009), Milton Erickson, MD recorded verbatim the case of Ms. S who was troubled but did not know the origin. MHE utilized every source of classical hypnotic phenomenon skillfully including fractionization, dissociation, amnesia, and time distortion while introducing himself as an active hallucination and supportive imaginary family friend called the February Man. We will explore how to recreate deep trance phenomena in today's time supported by research and science.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Explain the importance and relevance of deep trance phenomena in psychotherapy.
- Describe the use of clinical hypnosis for recovering and resolving unconscious traumas.
- Describe the importance of establishing an implicit processing heuristic sense of safety and the criteria for adequate establishment.
- Demonstrate how creating dissociation and fractionization allows for a multilevel of conscious, subconscious, and unconscious brain processing and empowerment.

Presenters: **Kathryn Rossi, PhD** is a licensed Clinical Psychologist who has edited or co-authored 20 books, and 35 chapters in the field of psychotherapy including co-editing 16 volumes of *The Collected Works of Milton H. Erickson* with Ernest Rossi and Roxanna Erickson-Klein. She has authored 80 peer reviewed scientific papers on Psychosocial Genomics, and therapeutic hypnosis along with other current topics of social and spiritual significance. She is passionate about bringing innovative body-mind therapies into the field of psychotherapy including Story Yoga. She enjoys helping people overcome addictions. Kathryn has taught innovative psychotherapy internationally for more than 35 years. **Jan Dyba, MA**, is a psychologist, sociologist and psychotherapist practicing in Zakopane, Poland. He is an author of publications on strategic utilization of deep trance states in psychotherapy. He was a student and a close collaborator of Ernest Rossi, PhD. Together with Kathryn Rossi, PhD, he develops science-based approaches to brief strategic therapy and hypnosis. He is an author of *Changing Patterns of Human Behavior* and a Polish translator and interpreter of the work of Milton H. Erickson, MD, Ernest Rossi PhD and Michael Yapko, PhD.

Integrating Acupressure & Traditional Chinese Medicine Meridians with Clinical Hypnosis: A Practical Workshop

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speakers: Michael Spertus, MD and Prachi Garodia, MD / Zoom Room: B

Sunday, March 22nd 10:30am – 12pm ET

Acupressure and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) come from an ancient body of knowledge to support healing and balance. Clinical hypnosis can amplify relaxation, suggestibility, and symptom modulation. This workshop synthesizes acupressure point protocols and guided meditations with hypnotic language and techniques to enhance clinical response for stress, focus, and headaches. After an overview on mechanisms and evidence, participants will practice short acupressure sequences for stress relief and participate in hypnotic meditations based on TCM meridians and acupoints that target stress, mental focus, and headache control. Attendees will leave with scripts and point locations for direct clinical use and self-care.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Describe evidence and proposed mechanisms for acupressure and meridian-based interventions and how they complement hypnotic processes
- Demonstrate two brief self-administered acupressure sequences for stress relief and headache reduction and lead a hypnotic meridian meditation for mental focus
- Implement clinic-ready materials to integrate acupressure and meridian-focused hypnotic meditations into routine practice

Presenters: **Michael Spertus, MD**, is a physician, and is board-certified in Family Medicine, Integrative Medicine, and Lifestyle Medicine. He went to medical school at the University of Miami and residency at Columbia University Medical Center. He completed fellowships in Integrative Medicine, Health Education, and Primary Care Psychiatry. He has extensive training in leadership, clinical hypnosis, acupuncture, mindfulness, psychotherapy, and coaching. Currently, Dr. Spertus is in private practice, focusing on mind-body medicine and professional coaching. He is affiliated with the University of Miami School of Medicine. Previously, he was a Chief Clinician Well-Being Officer with the Veterans Administration and implemented an integrative pain clinic. **Prachi Garodia, M.D., ABIM, ABIHM, DipABLM, IFMCP, NBC-HWC**, is a board-certified physician in internal medicine, integrative medicine, lifestyle medicine, and functional medicine, as well as a nationally board-certified health and wellness coach. She is ASCH certified in clinical hypnosis. With over 25 years of clinical experience, she has held leadership roles in Whole Health implementation within the VA system, where she also offered clinical hypnosis to veterans. She currently serves as medical director of The Healing MD, LLC, where she provides patient-centered, integrative care, including clinical hypnosis sessions. Dr. Garodia continues to advance medical education, clinician well-being, and community health, and is also a published author.

Power of Words

CE Credit: 1.5 / Speakers: Linda Thomson, PhD, MSN, APRN, ABMH, ABHN, FASCH / Zoom Room: C

Sunday, March 22nd 10:30am – 12pm ET

This workshop will give participants the tools they need to return to their communities and offer a presentation to colleagues on how to use the hypnotic language of healing to help reduce their patients' anxiety, stress and pain and enhance their healing. The workshop, Power of Words: Bring it Home, will provide the structure for participants to develop a workshop on the power of language. Participants will be able to download a PowerPoint presentation on the Power of Words to bring it home so that they can adapt it for teaching other professionals in their local health care communities.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Describe 2 exercises that can be used in a group to demonstrate the importance of establishing rapport
- Compare and contrast effective and ineffective communication
- Discuss how to develop a workshop on the power of hypnotic language

Presenter: **Dr. Linda Thomson** is a pediatric nurse practitioner. She is a Past-President and Fellow of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis. Linda is an Approved Consultant in Clinical Hypnosis, and Diplomate of both the American Board of Medical Hypnosis, and the American Board of Hypnosis in Nursing. Linda has published books, chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles, lectured and taught workshops across the country and around the world and has been an integral part of ASCH's education and recipient of ASCH's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Panel Discussion: When New Minds Enter Care: AI, the Unconscious, and the Future of Clinical Presence

CE Credit: 1.5 | Speakers: Panel: Anita Jung, LPC-S, LPA; Ran Anbar, MD, FAAP; Daniela Huetwohl, MD and Ronald Alexander, PhD | Zoom Room: D

Sunday, March 22nd 10:30am – 12pm ET

Artificial intelligence is entering clinical spaces where unconscious processes already shape healing. While often described as a tool, the unconscious mind responds to it as a presence with rhythm, authority, and symbolic weight. This panel asks: What shifts occur in the clinician's and patient's unconscious when new forms of intelligence enter care? Perspectives from psychology, pediatrics, neurology, emergency medicine, and hypnosis explore intuition, imagery, expectancy, and therapeutic communication. Physicians and clinicians will gain clinically relevant insights to support communication and preserve clinical presence as AI becomes integrated into care.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify and describe at least three ways in which the presence of AI can create subtle shifts in a practitioner's unconscious mind - influencing intuition, authority, expectation, and the internal process of choosing a course of care.
- List two ways patients/clients including children, may unconsciously respond to intelligent systems in clinical environments, and how these responses can influence trust, expectancy, and safety

- Describe three ways AI's presence can alter the overall unconscious field of care, including shifts in the relational space between physician/clinician and patient and the felt quality of clinical presence.

Panelists: **Anita Jung, LPC-S, LPA**, is a psychotherapist and author whose work integrates clinical hypnosis, attention training, somatic awareness, and musicality to support psychological and medical healing. She is the past President of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH), the current President of the Central Texas Society of Clinical Hypnosis (CTSCH), and a newsletter editor for the International Society of Hypnosis (ISH). She teaches nationally and internationally on unconscious processes, trance, and the therapeutic relationship. Her work includes contributions to the Routledge International Handbook of Clinical Hypnosis, peer-reviewed articles on hypnosis and depression, and a series of hypnosis-and-music audio recordings used in clinical and wellness settings. **Ronald A. Alexander, PhD**, is a psychotherapist, leadership consultant, and Executive Director of the OpenMind Training Institute. He is internationally recognized for his integration of clinical hypnosis, mindfulness, and creativity in psychotherapy. A long-time Zen practitioner and meditation teacher, Dr. Alexander is the author of Wise Mind, Open Mind and Core Creativity. His work focuses on the transformation of unconscious patterns and the cultivation of creative resilience across clinical and organizational settings. Neurologist and hypnotherapist, **Daniela Huetwohl, MD** serves as a senior physician in the emergency department and as the Deputy Medical Director of the center for AI, medical informatics and data science at Knappschaft Kliniken University Hospital Bochum. Specializing in medical AI, she aims to refine the healthcare field, balancing digital innovation and human elements. Through AI integration, she aspires to provide clinicians with more time to focus on patients, emphasizing the significant role of medical hypnosis in patient communication during their hospital journey. Her approach reflects the harmonization of emerging technology and the invaluable importance of therapeutic relationships. **Ran D. Anbar, MD, FAAP**, is board certified in both pediatric pulmonology and general pediatrics, offering hypnosis and counseling services at Center Point Medicine in La Jolla, California, and Syracuse, New York. Dr. Anbar is also a past President, fellow, and approved consultant of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis. Dr. Anbar is a leader in clinical hypnosis, and his experiences with hypnosis since 1998 have allowed him to successfully treat over 8,000 children. He served as a professor of pediatrics and medicine and the director of pediatric pulmonology at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York, for 21 years. Dr. Anbar is author of more than 70 articles, abstracts, and book chapters on pediatric functional disorders and pediatric hypnosis. He is the author of the acclaimed Changing Children's Lives with Hypnosis (2021) and The Life Guide for Teens (2025), and a long-standing contributor to Psychology Today.

Concurrent Sessions – 12:30PM ET – 3:30PM ET

Hypnosis Applications to the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

CE Credit: 3.0 | Speakers: Kaloyan Tanev, PhD and Carolyn Daitch, PhD | Zoom Room: A

Sunday, March 22nd 12:30pm – 3:30pm ET

PTSD is a mind-body problem. As a mind-body treatment, hypnosis seems well-suited for its treatment. Hypnosis can move PTSD patients into a state of calm, downregulate their emotional reactivity, and facilitate altering maladaptive beliefs. Combined with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) approaches, hypnosis may magnify their effects. This workshop presents specific hypnotic interventions for PTSD matching them to the PTSD symptom clusters they treat. Participants will learn hypnotic interventions aimed at decreasing reexperiencing symptoms, emotional reactivity, dissociation, negative beliefs, negative feelings, hypervigilance, and insomnia. Participants will also learn how adding hypnosis to CBT-based PTSD treatment protocols can boost their impact.

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Apply one hypnotic technique for the treatment of flashbacks.
- Apply one hypnotic technique for the treatment of emotional reactivity to trauma reminders.
- Apply one hypnotic technique that utilizes cognitive restructuring within the context of hypnotherapy.

Presenters: **Kaloyen Tanev, PhD** is a psychiatrist, neuropsychiatrist, and psychotherapist. He is faculty at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School. He works with veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. He practices psychotherapy and hypnosis at his private practice and at MGH. Dr. Tanev has received training in hypnosis through ASCH and the Milton Erickson Foundation. He has attended Ericksonian psychotherapy masterclasses with Jeffrey K. Zeig, Ph.D. Dr. Tanev has been a member of the New England Society of Clinical Hypnosis (NESCH) since 2005 and is a Past- President of NESCH. **Carolyn Daitch, PhD** is a prominent clinical psychologist and the director of the Center for the Treatment of Anxiety Disorders in West Bloomfield, Michigan. She is a certified and approved consultant, and a Fellow of both ASCH and the Michigan Psychological Association. Dr. Daitch is well known for her practical interventions in treating anxiety. She has authored four books on anxiety and affect regulation. Her first book, The Affect Regulation Toolbox was awarded book on hypnosis by the Society of Clinical Hypnosis. She has received multiple awards for her teaching including the Understanding and Application of Clinical Hypnosis from ASCH.

Altered States of Consciousness Experiences Related to Spiritual and Religious Aspects of Skin and Skin Disorders

CE Credit: 3.0 | Speaker: Philip Shenefelt, MD, ABMH | Zoom Room: B

Sunday, March 22nd 12:30pm – 3:30pm ET

Skin and skin disorders have had spiritual and religious dimensions often derived from created altered states of consciousness experiences since ancient times. Skin, hair, and nails are visible to self and others. The skin is a major sense organ for touch, pain, itch, heat, cold, pressure, and vibration. Skin also expresses emotions detectable by others through pallor, coldness, "goose bumps", redness, warmth, or sweating. How much skin is covered, scalp and beard hair cutting, shaving, and styling, skin and nail and

hair coloring and decorating, tattooing, and intentional scarring of skin all have had and continue to have spiritual and religious significance, often derived originally from mystical experiences.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Explain the connection between building resilience and altered states of consciousness and spiritual and religious experiences.
- Recognize the culturally specific contexts in which the spiritual and religious experiences occur.
- Describe the interaction between skin and psyche and their spiritual and religious dimensions.
- Assess the influence of spiritual and religious dimensions on personal and cultural ramifications of skin disorders.

Presenter: **Philip D. Shenefelt** is a retired dermatologist at the University of South Florida in Tampa. He used hypnosis in his practice and authored numerous publications related to skin and hypnosis, including a randomized control study on hypnosis for anxiety reduction during skin surgery, and an article on spiritual and religious experiences related to altered states of consciousness with respect to skin and skin disorders.

Hypnotic Biohacking: Therapeutic Utilization of Embodied Communication for Enhancing Vitality and Longevity

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Marina A. Smirnova, PhD and David B. Reid, PsyD / Zoom Room: C

Sunday, March 22nd 12:30pm – 3:30pm ET

This workshop is designed for clinical hypnosis practitioners and scholars/researchers who are interested in rediscovering and re-engaging the therapeutic power of language. It positions optimal hypnotic communication as a biohacking technology of transformation and a living therapeutic tradition. This session explicates the role of mindful communication in hypnosis and self-hypnosis for healing, transformative (re)learning, (self-)regulation, resilience, individuation, healthspan, and joyspan. Furthermore, it equips clinical hypnosis practitioners with (1) holistic linguistic options and strategies, (2) biopsychosocial-spiritual awareness in ethical decision-making, and (3) viable linguistic practices and resources for supporting their own and their clients' journey toward enhanced vitality and longevity.

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Examine hypnotic, embodied communication - verbal and non-verbal - as a bio hacking technology of transformation and as a living therapeutic tradition.
- Delineate the role of mindful communication in hypnosis and self-hypnosis for healing, transformative (re)learning, (self-)regulation, resilience, individuation, healthspan, and joyspan
- Provide mental health practitioners with holistic linguistic options and strategies, biopsychosocial-spiritual awareness in ethical decision-making, and viable linguistic practices and resources for enhancing vitality and longevity.

Presenters: **Marina A. Smirnova, Ph.D.**, is a 2013 graduate of Sofia University (formerly, the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology). She serves as a Full Professor of Psychology at Saybrook University and

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oversees Consciousness, Spirituality, and Integrative Health specialization. Outside of the halls of academia, Marina supports adults, who are questing for spiritual vitality, fulfillment, joy, longevity, and ascension. She helps them to re-contextualize, recalibrate, reclaim, and fully integrate their deeply evocative, exceptional human experiences and other rich transpersonal phenomena. Marina lives and creates in Sedona, Arizona. **David B. Reid, Psy.D.**, is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Fellow and Approved Consultant of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH). Dr. Reid is an Award-Winning author of Hypnosis for Behavioral Health: Professional's Guide to Expanding Your Practice (Springer Publishing Company). He is also the Editor-in-Chief for the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis. Dr. Reid received 11 Presidential awards from ASCH and SCEH for his contributions to both societies, as well as awards for his published papers on clinical hypnosis. He is an adjunct professor at Saybrook University and Past President of Division 30 of the American Psychological Association.

Collaborative Storytelling in Pediatric Hypnosis: Integrating AI-Assisted Creativity to Foster Safety, Mastery, and Healing

CE Credit: 3.0 / Speaker: Samantha Silverberg, PhD, LPC / Zoom Room: D

Sunday, March 22nd 12:30pm – 3:30pm ET

Storytelling is a natural and developmentally attuned form of hypnosis for children, blending imagination, ego-strengthening, and indirect suggestion into a safe, playful experience. This workshop teaches clinicians how to co-create hypnotic stories that reflect a child's language, imagery, and metaphors. With AI-assisted creativity tools, therapists can tailor narratives in real time—for example, transforming a child's drawing of a dragon guarding her stomach into a co-authored story of courage and digestion. Participants will actively build one AI-enhanced hypnotic story using provided templates and guided prompts, leaving with a completed script they can adapt for clinical use.

Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe the developmental and neurobiological foundations of collaborative storytelling in pediatric hypnosis.
- Differentiate collaborative storytelling from directive suggestion by identifying at least 3 distinct therapist behaviors that foster mastery, safety, and regulation (e.g., child-led plot elements, graded exposure within metaphor, co-created coping scripts)
- Identify ethical and practical considerations when using AI tools to support creative hypnotic storytelling.
- Utilize AI-generated templates to personalize hypnotic imagery, symbols, and metaphors in age-appropriate ways.
- Apply principles of collaborative storytelling to strengthen therapeutic alliance and enhance the child's sense of agency in the hypnotic process.
- Create and leave with one AI-enhanced therapeutic storytelling script using workshop templates and guided practice.

Presenter: **Dr. Samantha Silverberg-Stout** is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) who earned her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Fielding Graduate University and is currently accruing post-doctoral hours toward licensure as a clinical psychologist. She provides integrative, trauma-informed care across the developmental lifespan, specializing in supporting clients managing complex health concerns as well as those navigating fertility trauma, reproductive and perinatal mental health, and parent-infant relationship challenges. She is certified in EMDR (EMDRIA), clinical hypnosis (ASCH), IMH-E, and HypnoBirthing. Her collaborative style draws from CBT, DBT, ACT, IFS, expressive arts, and attachment-based approaches to promote nervous system regulation, resilience, and symptom relief.

Closing Plenary – 3:45PM ET – 4:45PM ET

Brave New World: Navigating AI in Behavioral Health

CE Credit: 1.0 | Speaker: *Trina Histon, PhD* | Zoom Room: Main

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology continues to evolve rapidly in the behavioral health space. This presentation will provide a historical overview of the evolution from rule-based to generative models and discuss how AI-based digital tools are being considered for behavioral health care, both for assessment and interventions. Finally, strategies to balance innovation with ethical considerations to optimize therapeutic value while reducing risks will be discussed.

- Understand different AI-based behavioral health models and the pros and cons of each.
 - Differentiate between rule-based artificial intelligence systems and generative AI models, including their mechanisms, capabilities, and limitations in behavioral health settings
- Understand how AI technology currently supports clinical assessment and interventions in behavioral health care in clinical and wellness settings.
 - Describe at least three evidence-supported applications of AI in behavioral healthcare, including conversational agents, clinical decision support, and documentation augmentation.
- Understand strategies to optimize clinical value while minimizing risk.
 - Apply practical evaluation criteria to assess whether an AI tool is clinically appropriate, safe, and aligned with professional standards, including questions related to evidence, data governance, crisis management, and bias mitigation.

Presenter: **Dr Trina Histon** is a health psychologist and digital health strategist with a decades-long career at the intersection of behavioral science, healthcare innovation, and technology. A former Vice President of Clinical Product Strategy at Woebot Health and a longtime leader within Kaiser Permanente, Trina has spearheaded national initiatives that have scaled evidence-based digital mental health tools across complex health systems to reach hundreds of thousands of users. Their work has shaped the design, deployment, and reimbursement strategies for digital mental health treatments (DMHTs) through various roles at the Digital Therapeutic Alliance. They are also published contributors to the field, co-authors of the 2025 Digital Mental Health Treatment Implementation Playbook and Equity in Digital Mental Health Interventions in the United States.

As Director of Percolating Health, Trina now advises start-ups and organizations on partnering with US-based clients (payers, health systems, employer groups, D2C) to enable clinical use, define deployment strategies, and implement digital therapeutics and AI-enabled digital mental health tools in real-world settings. They are frequent speakers and moderators at international forums—from the Society for Digital Mental Health and ISRII to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences—and serve as co-lead of the Society's Special Industry Group. Trina serves on the Board of the Society for Digital Mental Health and serves as co-lead for the UK's Digital Adoption Workgroup of the Mental Health Goals Programme. Trina brings a uniquely practical lens, grounded in behavioural psychology, implementation science, and lived system experience. This makes them a trusted partner to those seeking to build effective, equitable, and scalable digital mental health ecosystems. Trina completed their undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at University College Cork, Ireland, and has recently relocated to Ireland after several decades in the USA.