

ASCH

# 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

Pre-conference Workshops on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>

ASCH

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL HYPNOSIS

**Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> -**

**<https://kellen.zoom.us/j/92223353119>**

**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.
- 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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/imagico 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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

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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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 3:30pm - 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 20<sup>th</sup> 3:30pm - 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 subspecialties, 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

## ASCH Event: 5:05PM – 5:30PM

### **Special Interest Discussion Groups**

At this year's ASCH ASMW, participants are invited to join our **Special Interest Discussion Groups**, an interactive session designed to bring together ASCH faculty, invited speakers, committee members, and ASMW attendees for collaborative, topic-focused dialogue.

During this session, attendees will gather in **five breakout rooms**, each centered on a specialized theme. Participants may choose the room that aligns best with their interests or areas of expertise. Within each group, attendees will explore how their topic intersects with **clinical hypnosis**, including discussions of emerging trends, recent research findings, practical applications, ethical considerations, and recommended approaches in clinical and educational settings.

These dynamic conversations provide a unique opportunity to connect with colleagues, ask questions, share insights, and deepen understanding of how hypnosis can be meaningfully integrated across disciplines.

### **Breakout Room Topics**

- **AI**
- **Nursing & Allied Health, Dental & Medical Applications, Pain Management**
- **Trauma**
- **Child & Adolescent**
- **Metaphysical & Spirituality**