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

 VIRTUAL

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Mindful Hypnotherapy: The Basics for Clinical Practice

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Disclosures

ASCH and ASCH-ERF jointly provided this program.

No staff or committee members involved in the development, planning or execution of educational content have any financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.

Gary Elkins, PhD, ABPP disclosures include he is the co-author of Mindful Hypnotherapy published by Springer Publishing Co., and is a consultant with Mindset Health regarding the Evia app (hot flashes and sleep) and Finito app (smoking cessation).

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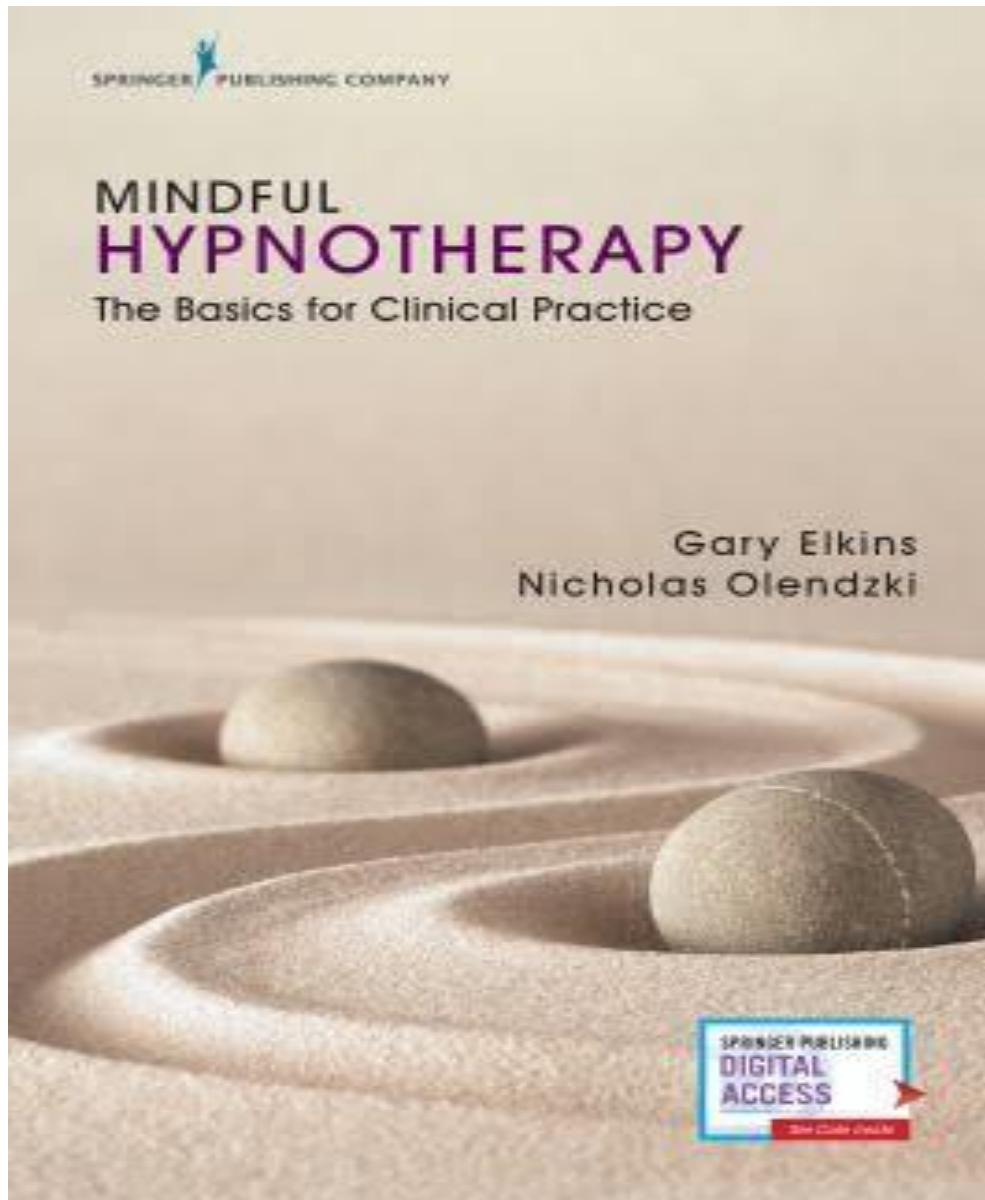
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Learning Objectives:

- 1. Discuss definitions and relationship between mindfulness and hypnosis.**
- 2. Discuss at least one core concept related to mindful hypnotherapy.**
- 3. Identify a mindful hypnotherapy protocol.**
- 4. Discuss hypnotic suggestion and mindful hypnotherapy for anxiety and stress reduction.**
- 5. Identify one or more benefits of mindful hypnotherapy.**

What is Mindful Hypnotherapy?

- Mindful hypnotherapy (MH) is the use of hypnotic suggestion and induction to integrate mindfulness in hypnotherapy and self-hypnosis practice.
- The primary focus of the therapy is to deliver the tools of mindfulness to the patient in an effective and lasting way.
- Mindful hypnotherapy intentionally utilizes hypnotic suggestions to achieve positive goals associated with mindfulness.

Definitions (Relationship between Mindfulness and hypnosis)

- **Mindfulness**

- Focus of attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally.

- **Hypnosis**

- “A state of consciousness involving focused attention and reduced peripheral awareness characterized by an enhanced capacity for response to suggestion.”

Relationship between Hypnosis and Mindfulness

Mindfulness

- A state of focused attention
- Present moment awareness
- Non-judgmental noticing
- Goal of acceptance
- Standard practice regardless of symptom
- Conscious mind
- Individual differences not considered
- No active use of suggestion
- Expectancy not actively utilized

Hypnotherapy

- A state of focused attention
- Present moment awareness
- Non-judgmental noticing
- Goal of change
- Practice varies depending on symptom
- Conscious and Unconscious mind
- Individual differences considered
- Active use of suggestion
- Expectancy actively utilized

Relationship between Mindfulness and Hypnotherapy

- **Mindfulness tends to focus on ACCEPTANCE and non-judgmental awareness and observing.**
- **Hypnotherapy tends to focus on CHANGE, meaning goal directed suggestions and empowerment of the patient and therapeutic change in symptoms.**

Definition of Mindful Hypnotherapy

- **Mindful Hypnotherapy (MH) is defined as “*an intervention that intentionally uses hypnosis (hypnotic induction and suggestion) to integrate mindfulness for personal and therapeutic benefit*” (Elkins & Olendzki, 2020).**

Essential Concepts: Mindfulness and Hypnotherapy Integration

”Until you are willing to be confused about what you already know you, will never grow bigger, better, or more useful”.

-Milton H Erickson (1980)

Core Concepts Related to Mindful hypnotherapy

1. Uses hypnotherapy as a “delivery vehicle” for mindfulness.
2. Facilitates understanding of mindfulness more readily through hypnotic experience.
3. Integrates both *acceptance and change*.
4. Hypnotic inductions based upon mindfulness goals.
5. Based upon hypnosis research and mindfulness research.
6. Utilizes Buddhist philosophy and beliefs.
7. Discourages being too dogmatic about either mindfulness or hypnosis.

Mindfulness Hypnosis and it's Relationship to Buddhist Thought



- Mindfulness Hypnosis (MH) employs Buddhist philosophy in a secular manner, making it usable universally.
- These philosophies are pragmatic and methodical, focusing on the nature of suffering and how to remedy this.
- To understand how Mindfulness and Buddhism relate to MH, a basic knowledge of history and origins must be had.



The Origin of Mindfulness: Formation of The Buddha

- The Buddha, the enlightened cornerstone of the practice, was born Prince Siddhartha Gautama around 2,500 years ago.
- After experiencing a life of opulence, Siddhartha left his city and went on a spiritual journey, living a highly ascetic life.
- During his journey he experienced the reality of life and the suffering that occurs within it and adopted a “**middle path**” between opulence and ascetism.

Four Noble Truths

The truth of **suffering**

The truth of the **cause** of suffering

The truth of the **end** of suffering

The truth of the **path to the end** of suffering.

- The Four Noble Truths are the primary mechanism for the reduction of suffering in the Buddhist practice.
- They are used to promote understanding of what suffering is, where it comes from, and how to end it.
- These truths are listed in the image to the left and will be expanded upon in the following slides.



The First Noble Truth: Recognition of Suffering

- This first truth seems obvious to many; as humans we are subject to suffering and pain. Succinctly, to live is to experience suffering-life is difficult.
- This recognition of suffering has begotten many fields, including medicine and psychotherapy. It is also a key drive of Buddhism.
- It is important to know that Buddhism does not suggest that this is the only true experience, rather one of the many inescapable flowing experiences of human life.

The Second Noble Truth: The Origin of Suffering



- The second truth is over the origin of suffering; all suffering comes from craving.
- This craving can be seen as two subgroups, attachment (desire or want of something), and aversion (fear or want for distance).
- The suffering in life comes when the individual pursues these cravings, fighting *against* life to achieve them rather than experiencing *through* life.

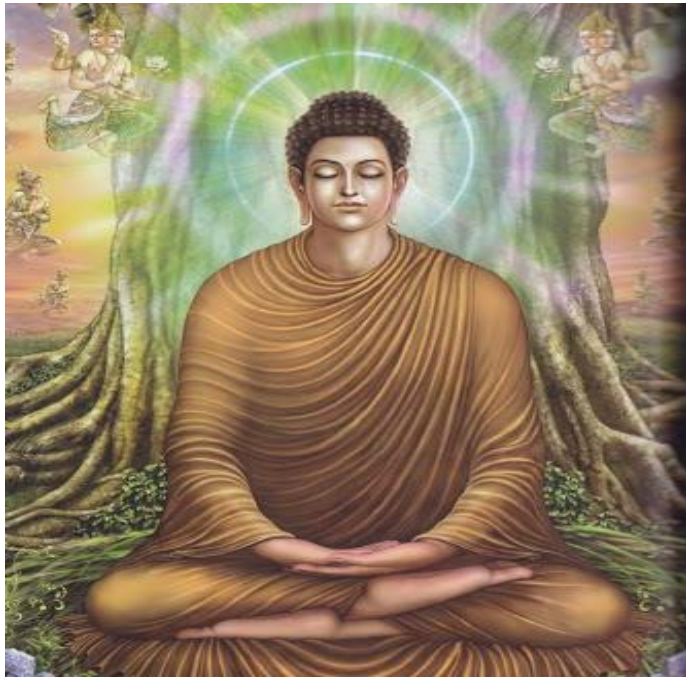


The Third Noble Truth: Relief from Suffering



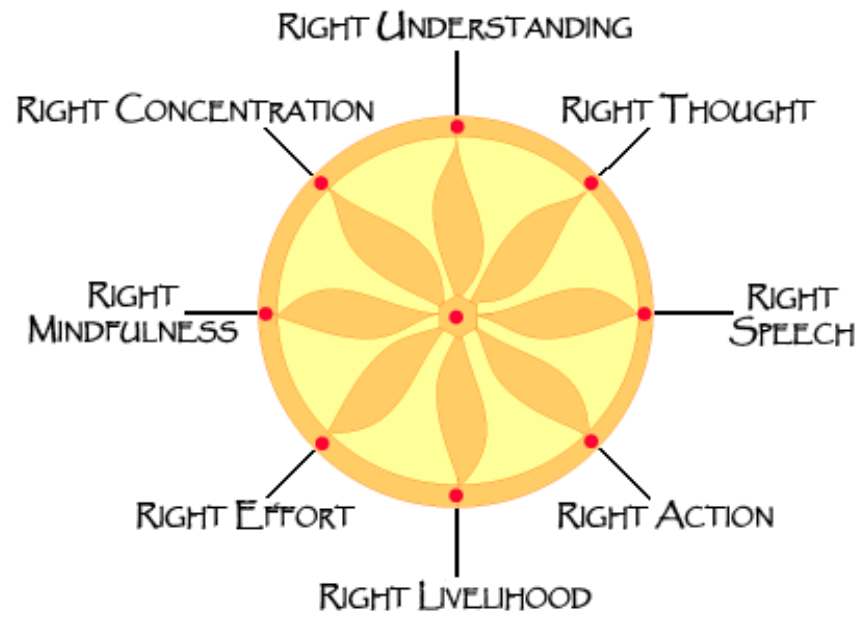
- The formula for cessation of suffering proposed in Buddhism is simple; if life plus craving results in suffering, one must remove the cravings from life.
- This ideal is better summarized in acceptance and practice of non-judgmental experience
- By focusing the mind on the reality of life as opposed to the cravings had, suffering can be reduced.

The Fourth Noble Truth: The Middle Path



- The Middle Path is the application of the eight-fold path as a lifestyle in order to reduce suffering; it is the how-to truth.
- The application of the eight points, seen earlier, aims to promote acceptance of the first three truths and, ultimately, enlightenment.

The Origin of Mindfulness: The Eight Fold Path



- The *eight fold path* is a manner of living that aims to provide the same enlightening experience that the Buddha had
- The path focuses on a lifestyle of self care without overindulgence, and pursuit of its ideals.
- The ideals of mindfulness and concentration are key parts taken by mindful hypnotherapy.

The Origin of Mindfulness: Mindfulness and Concentration training

- Concentration training in the Buddhist tradition is similar to hypnosis in that it focuses on focusing the mind and promoting change.
- Mindfulness focuses on perceiving the world as it is without elaboration. That is, without judgement.





Mindfulness (MBSR etc.) uses Buddhist Concepts as Secular Interventions (originally referred to relaxation).

- **By removing much of the mysticism and moral reformation of Buddhist thought, mindfulness and concentration practice is accessible to all persons.**
- **The practice of integrating one's experience and reducing elaboration of cravings is a poignant practice.**
- **Mindfulness is a long-term intensive practice. All persons may not benefit equally.**
- **Mindfulness tends to be time-intensive such as 2 ½ hour sessions, all day retreats, etc.**
- **Mindfulness programs such as MBSR are well defined, and can be replicated, but often lack flexibility in addressing various conditions.**
- **Mindfulness is directed toward non-judgmental acceptance, not directly change. However, many clients desire change.**

Mindful hypnotherapy is based upon buddhist philosophy but also integrates research and clinical practice of hypnotherapy



- Mindful hypnotherapy is an intervention based on the mindfulness and concentration tenants of the Buddhist philosophy of the eight-fold path.
- The eight-fold path is a part of the response to suffering, proven to exist by the four noble truths.
- Integration and use of the MH method in client treatment can reduce suffering and increase quality of life.

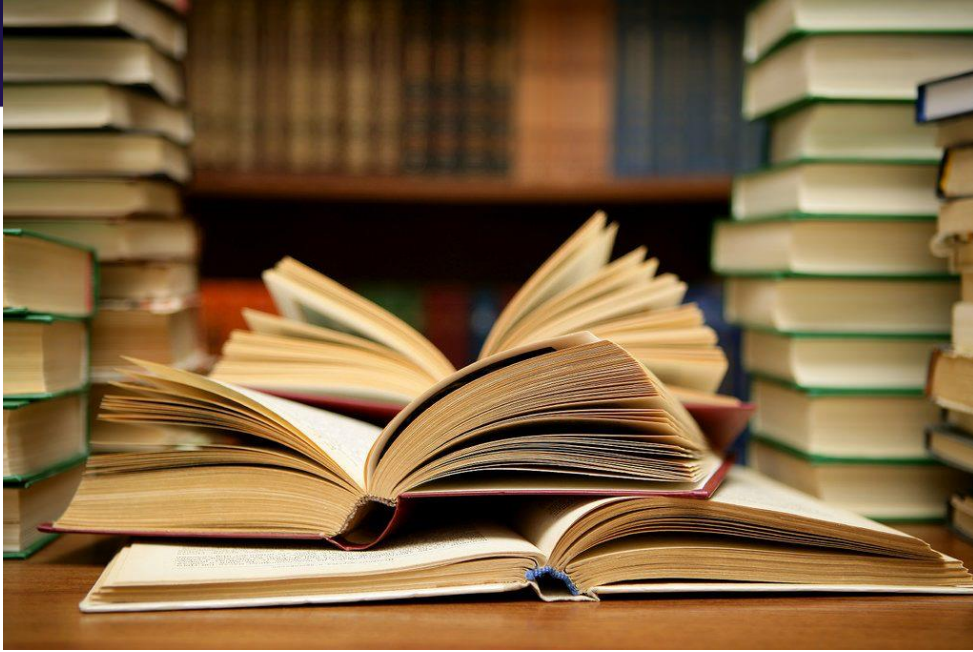
Advantage of mindful hypnotherapy versus mindfulness alone

- Mindfulness has been shown to be effective for stress management but is time intensive. Mindfulness interventions are time intensive (2 – 2.5 hours and all-day retreat). **Mindful Hypnotherapy is more time efficient.**
- Mindfulness intervention has not been shown to be more effective than standard CBT. **Combining hypnosis and mindfulness results in improved treatment gains.**
- Mindfulness may be conceptualized as involving hypnotic state and skillful use of therapeutic suggestion. **Mindful Hypnotherapy is more flexible and direct in use of goal directed suggestions for pain, anxiety, hot flashes, positive personal growth.**

Metaphors , story telling, and Reframing Thought are methods of hypnotic suggestion



- Buddhist tradition often uses stories and metaphors to illustrate proper and improper responses to events in life.
- This is a key method used in Mindful Hypnotherapy. Goals can include such things as: ***change in the client's relationship with their experience, reducing their suffering, facilitating change, fostering insight, development of new coping skills. – Example.***



FURTHER ADVANTAGES OF INTEGRATING MINDFULNESS AND HYPNOTHERAPY

- **Hypnosis and mindfulness are synergistic processes.**
- **Practitioners of Mindful Hypnotherapy, learn about the complimentary hypnosis and mindfulness understandings and research for more effective practice**

Advantage of Mindful hypnotherapy versus Mindfulness alone

- ***”Until you are willing to be confused about what you already know what you know will never grow bigger, better, or more useful”. -Milton H Erickson (1980)***
- **Mindfulness may be conceptualized as involving hypnotic state and suggestions with self-hypnosis.**

An Eight Step Mindful Hypnotherapy protocol



Establishment of Rapport and the Therapeutic Relationship

- It is important to establish rapport with the client in the first session.
- While it is desirable to introduce the goals of the session, these can be postponed until a later time.
- It is important to know that hypnotherapy without a solid rapport will be difficult or impossible.



here.

Relaxation and Present
Moment Awareness

now.

1:

The Strategy of Session 1



The goal of the first session is the introduction of non-judgmental present moment awareness through hypnotic suggestion.



Urging even the most busy and anxious of clients to practice mindful self-hypnosis daily will make benefits self evident.



The promotion of present-moment awareness should, ideally, be a self-perpetuating cycle - **Example.**

Be curious, not
judgmental.

Walt Whitman

Session 2:

Mindful Hypnotherapy and

Nonjudgmental Acceptance of Sensations

Review of Home Practice



- Reviewing the experience of the client through the past week aids in tailoring training.
- Be prepared for many to report difficulty integrating awareness, or of little benefit from the practice.
- Assure the client that over time, similar to other exercise, the practice will become easier, and the benefit more apparent.

Strategy of Session 2



The focus of the second session is the extension of nonjudgmental awareness of sensations.



The core goal is to let go and sit with sensations, notice their change, flow, qualities.



Integrating this practice, mindful self-hypnosis can be long or very brief (and can vary over time and with goals).

A pencil sketch of a person walking, carrying a heart on a pole balanced across their shoulders and a brain on a pole balanced across their hands. The background is a textured, golden-brown surface.

Session 3:

**Nonjudgmental Acceptance
of Thoughts and Feelings**

Strategy of Session 3



The focus of the third session is the extension of nonjudgmental awareness from sensation to thoughts and emotions.



The core goal is to illustrate how, by removing the need to escape or alter an experience, the client can have greater peace.



Continuing to cultivate this practice, the client should be able to self-soothe effectively by accepting their experience.

Session 4:

**Empowerment and
Self-Guided Mindful
Hypnosis Sessions**

Strategy of Session 4



Self-hypnosis is a skill that, if used with the previously taught ideals, can allow the client to develop MH skills further.

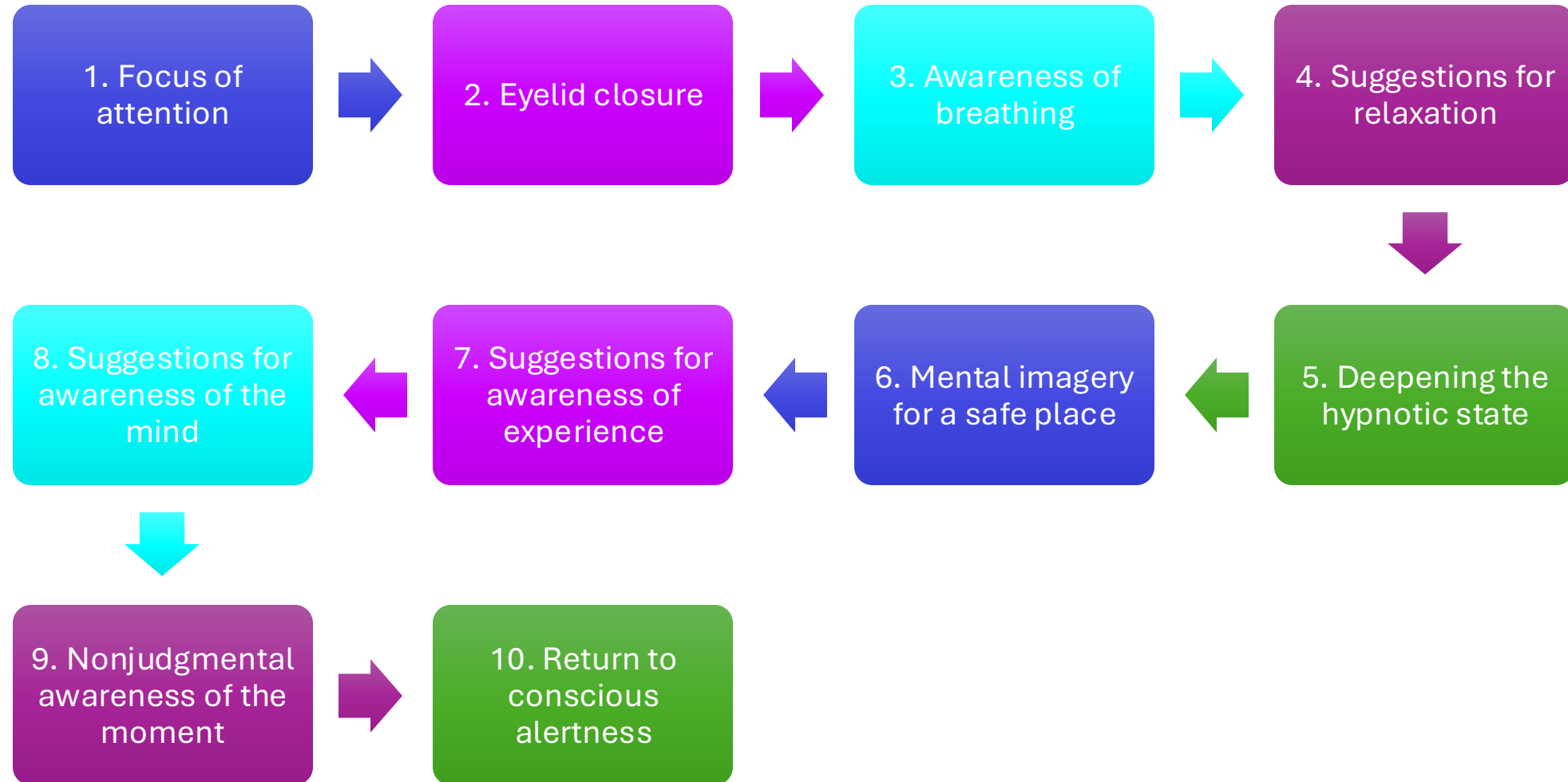


The process of self-hypnosis will be explained thoroughly by giving a “guided self-induction” session.



During this session the 10 steps for self-hypnosis will be demonstrated.

The 10 Steps of Self-Hypnosis



Session 5:

**Mindful Hypnotherapy for
Compassion**

Strategy for Session 5



The goal of session 5 is to introduce self-compassion and compassion for others in regards to mindfulness.



This may be, for some clients, the change of mindfulness from a “trick” into an effective and meaningful practice.



However, be mindful that this integration should be gradual, and avoid overloading the client.



Compassion for Self

- A helpful metaphor for self-compassion is the concept of a gift; a gift of love.
- A gift meets needs or interests, demonstrates love and care, does not harm the recipient, and allows for thriving.
- Internalization of self-compassion as a provider of all these things makes it easier for the client to integrate.
- Example

Compassion for Self and Others



- Compassion for others can be a helpful tool in healing and transformation as well.
- A key concept is removing the artificial power of anger from the mind of the client and promoting compassion as true power.
- Be aware of individual traumas and issues in the client, these may affect compassion for others due to defense in response to trauma.

Session 6:

Mindfulness Hypnotherapy and Awareness of Values



Strategy for Session 6



Session 6 is quite introspective, asking the client to analyze what their personal values are.



This step is important as that, now that they are approaching life mindfully, they can see these without compensating for experience



A successful session will create within the client a deeper feeling of purpose and meaning and allow them to live with greater authenticity.

Exploration of Meaning and Values

- A key to the session is helping the client to find what experiences are meaningful to them and bring purpose.
- Discovery of the underlying values and meanings of these experiences help to empower the client to achieve.
- These revelations should ideally lead the client to pursue their values and feel more fulfilled in life.



Strategies to Finding These Values



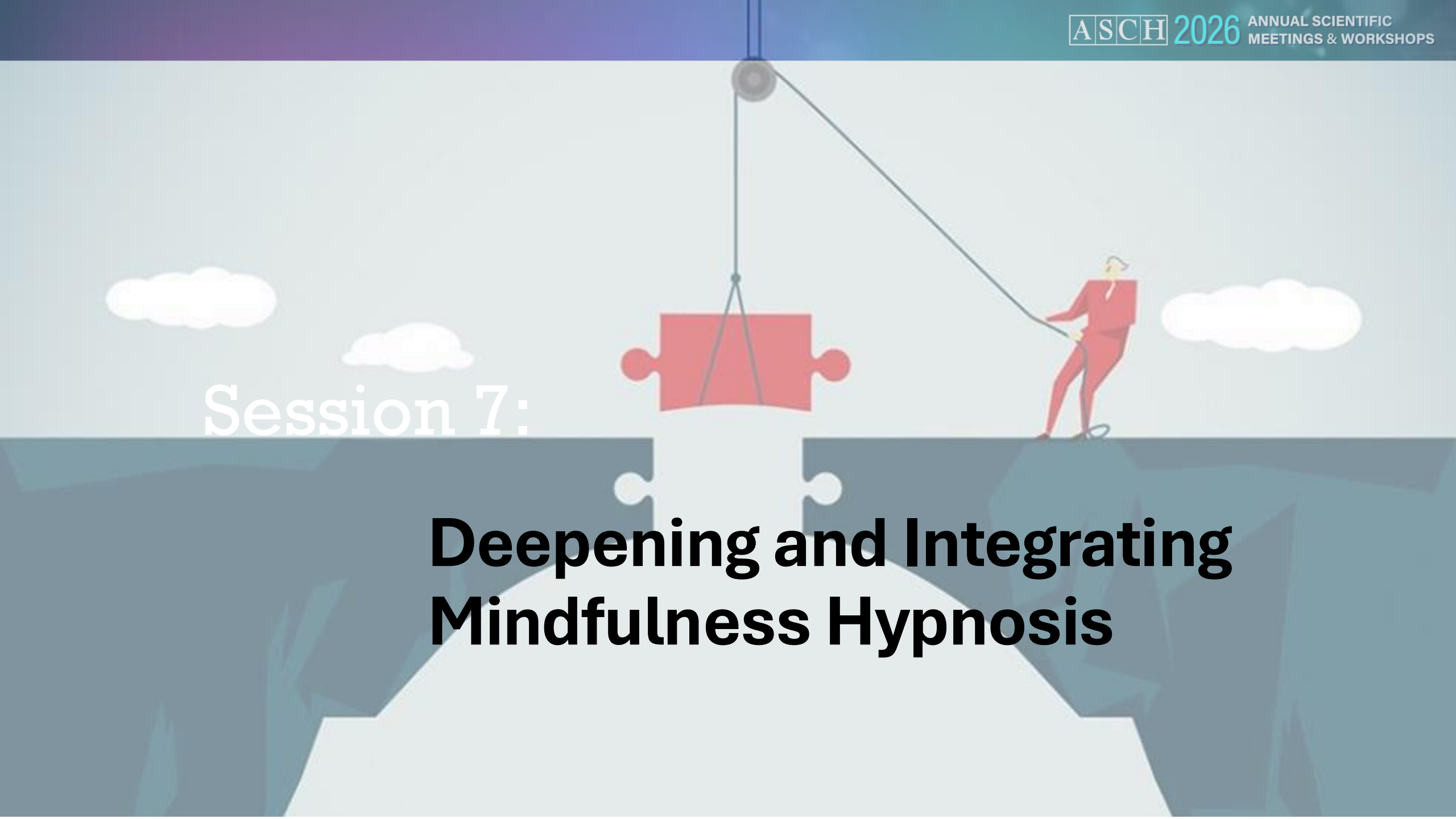
- Process of Elimination
 - Have the client make a list of every attribute that they encompass, then have them strip them away one by one until they find the most basilar cluster of “me”.



- Existential Bravery
 - Ask the client what they would do if they did not fear failure. What would they do? Where would they go? What risk might they take? This exercise can help stir repressed aspirations and goals.

Session 7:

Deepening and Integrating Mindfulness Hypnosis



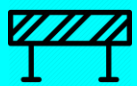
Strategy of Session 7



The primary goal of session 7 is the assured understanding of the client and progression towards their goals.



For this reason, refining of treatment and strategies may be a key component of the session.



In addition to this, it is an opportune time to address any barriers the client has noticed.

Integration and Deepening of Mindfulness Hypnotherapy

- This is largely dependent on the client.
- For some this may include further discussion on previous sessions, or correction of technique/strategies.
- In addition, the deeper a client delves into mindfulness the more certain topics may make themselves known.



Session 8:

Transition to the Long-Term Practice of Mindful Hypnosis

Seeing Progress and Renewing Goals

- At this point in the therapy the client should be aware of the progress they have made, and the benefits of mindfulness.
- Aid the client in seeing how to integrate what they've learned into the future and how they can continue progress.
- Continue to cultivate the curiosity of the client and allow them to create goals for their private pursuit.



Mindful Self-hypnosis and integration with psychotherapy



- Experiencing MH can impart lifechanging skills, it is likely that a significant bond has formed between clinician and client.
- Awareness and respect for this bond and its dissolution is the best practice; allow the client to feel and respond accordingly.
- Make the client aware of the significance of the work done together, and of the skills they take forward with them.

Training in Clinical Hypnosis

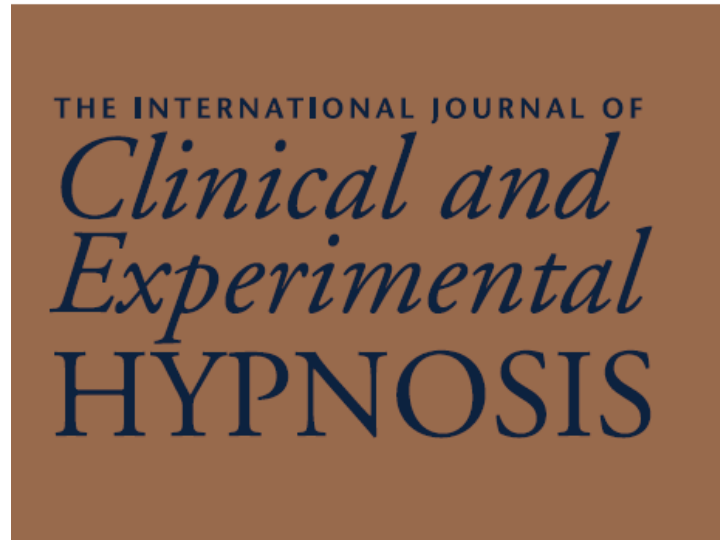


AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL HYPNOSIS



- Hypnosis training requires both understanding of the technical skills and academic thought as well as consistent practice using hypnotic intervention
- Training should be in line with the standards in place that outline core competencies for clinical hypnotists.
- Organizations such as the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH), American Society for Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH), and the International Society of Hypnosis (ISH) hold seminars and workshops that can assist in this training.

Contemporary Research on Mindful Hypnosis



Official Publication of The Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis

Official Journal of the Canadian Society of Clinical Hypnosis – Ontario Division

The Official Journal of the Society of Psychological Hypnosis (American Psychological Association Division 30)

The Official Journal of the International Society of Hypnosis



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL HYPNOSIS
2020, VOL. 68, NO. 2, 139-143
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EDITORIAL

Contemplative Practices and Hypnosis: Emerging Perspectives and Future Directions

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ABSTRACT
A distinctive feature common to many contemplative practices is a focus of attention and procedure of induction toward achieving an altered state of consciousness. In recent years, practices like mindfulness have become increasingly popular, and there has been increased interest in the relationship between hypnosis and mindfulness-based practices as well as other contemplative practices including meditation, music, and spirituality. However, questions remain such as: *What are the similarities and differences between hypnosis and mindfulness/other contemplative practices? What is the role of suggestion in mindfulness-based interventions? Do some contemplative practices have hypnotic-like aspects in their application? What is the role of words, images, and intentions in contemplative practices? Can hypnosis be integrated with music and spiritual practices for beneficial effects?* This special issue includes eight articles that provide insights and empirical research into contemplative practices and hypnosis. Emerging perspectives and future directions for research and practice are presented.

Contemplative practices such as meditations, yoga, contemplative spiritual practices, and focus on music or sound have been practiced for centuries and are found in cultures around the world (Walsh, 2013). A distinctive feature common to most contemplative practices is a focus of attention and a procedure of induction toward achieving an altered state of consciousness. Hypnosis has been defined as "a state of consciousness involving focused attention and reduced peripheral awareness characterized

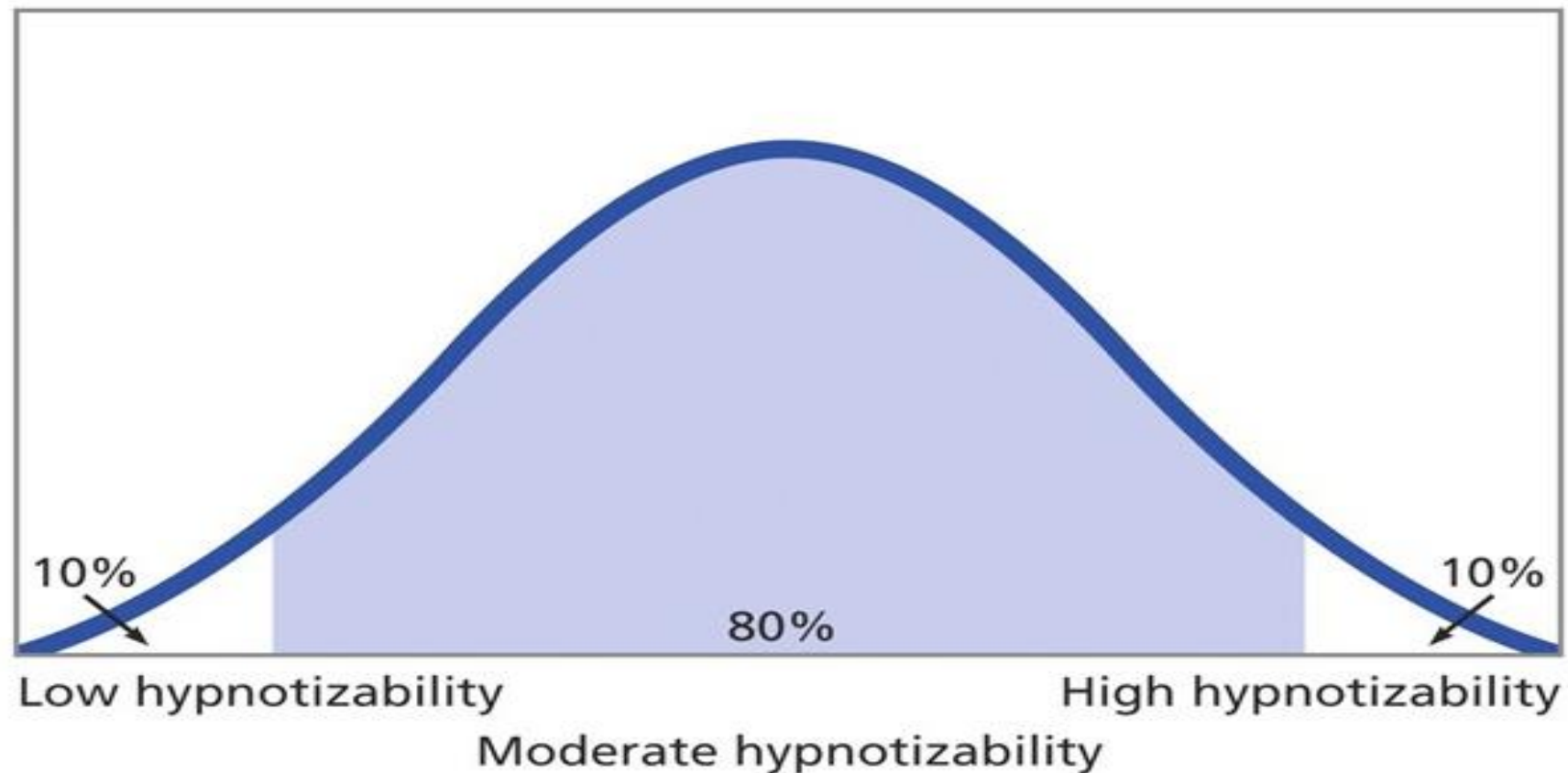
to ensure delivery to your inbox, please add USA Customer Service@routledge.com to your contacts

Sarah Williams
Re: Revised Specific Aims - R01AT013380: 2:35 AM

The Integration of Psychotherapy and

**Assessment of Hypnotizability and
Mindful Hypnotherapy –
Hypnotizability refers to individual
differences and can aid in planning,
individualizing, and encouragement.**

Hypnotizability varies in the general population with some people being more readily able to experience altered thoughts or sensations from hypnotic suggestions.



Elkins Hypnotizability Scale (EHS)

- 20 Min. to Administer
- User Friendly/Clinical Use
- Pleasant
- Full EHS range of scores 0-12
- **EHS-CF range of scores 0-9.**
- Strong reliability and validity.



EHS – Clinical Form items:

EHS 1 (Subjective Arm Heaviness)

EHS 2 (Arm Immobility)

EHS 3 (Subjective Arm Lightness)

EHS 4 (Arm Levitation)

EHS 5 (Elbow Lift)

EHS 6 (Clear Imagery)

EHS 7 (Dissociation Experience)

EHS 8 (Faint Rose Smell)

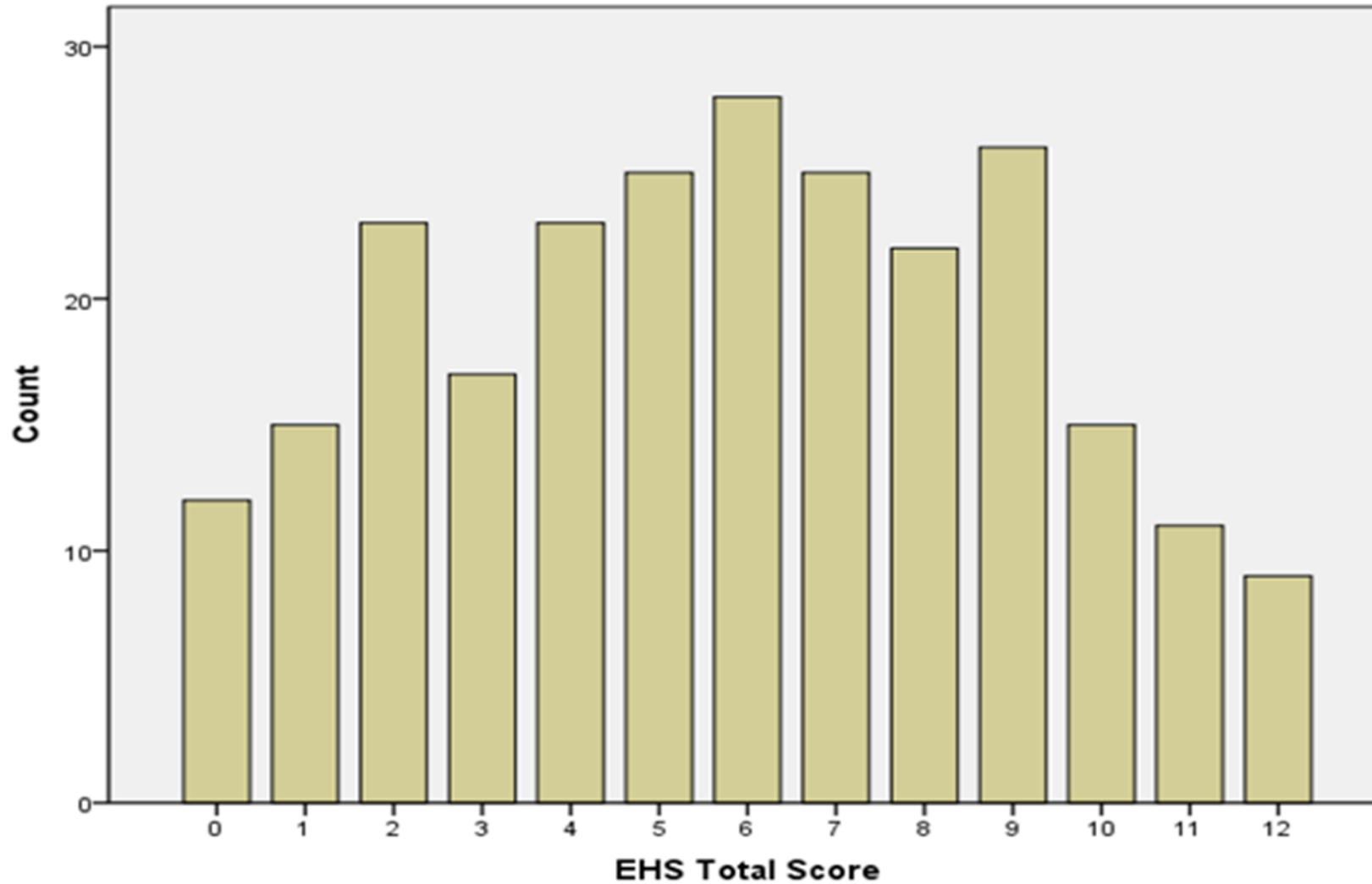
EHS 9 (Distinct Rose Smell)

Table 3. Correlational analyses for convergent validity

	9 Item EHS:C	EHS	Stanford
9 Item EHS:C	1.00		
EHS	.962**	1.00	
Stanford	.789**	.821**	1.00

***Correlation is significant at $p < .001$*

EHS Distribution of Scores



Previous Validation Study of EHS

- **General Adult Sample**
 - $N = 252$; administered EHS and SHSS: C
 - **Internal consistency, $\alpha = .84$**
 - Convergent validity with SHSS: C, $r = .82$
 - **EHS: C F convergent validity with SHSS: C, $r = .78$**

- **Collegiate Sample**
 - $N = 230$; administered EHS and SHSS: C
 - Internal consistency, $\alpha = .78$
 - Convergent validity with SHSS: C, $r = .86$

Training in Mindfulness



Center for Mindfulness
in Medicine, Health Care, and Society



Center for
Mindful Self-Compassion

- Mindfulness, unlike hypnosis, does not have standardized metrics and developing as a practitioner of mindfulness is a journey of continually expanding expertise
- In terms of opportunities, there are several organizations such as the Center for Mindfulness or Center for Mindful-Self Compassion that provide trainings, as well as stand-alone workshops put on by practitioners, and a growing body of resources hosted online.
- Similar to hypnosis, adequate understanding of mindfulness requires not only a scholastic pursuit, but also self-practice and experience.

Developing as a Mindful Hypnotherapist



- Development as a mindful hypnotherapist is largely based on the embodiment of the core-traits and practice.
- Informed evidence-based practice
- Therapeutic relationship
- Authentic
- Empathic
- Compassionate
- Calm
- Non-judgmental
- Attuned to client issues and goals
- Skilled in clinical hypnosis, metaphors, and mindfulness practice
- Practice of mindful self-hypnosis
- Humble and grateful
- Open to new learning - Flexible



The Future of Mindful Hypnosis

- Randomized clinical trials.
- Examining mechanisms.
- Role of the therapeutic relationship.
- Hypnotizability as a moderator.
- More research into: GAD; Anxiety; Depression; Stress; Resiliency; Positive Growth; Mindfulness; Objective Measures; fMRI; Spirituality; Integration with Diet and Exercise; Integration with psychotherapy.

Closing Thoughts

- Development of mindfulness hypnotherapy skills requires both learning and practice (in both clinical hypnosis and mindfulness) in order to be effective; personal practice is invaluable in the cultivation of these skills.
- Self-practice of mindful hypnotherapy is strongly encouraged as it allows for deeper understanding of the model and allows for easier manifestation of the core-traits during sessions with clients.
- Utilization of mindfulness hypnotherapy has been seen to be effective in initial testing, and as the body of research over the topic expands its efficacy will be more cemented and its uses more clearly defined.

Q & A

An icon depicting two stylized human figures in white. The figure on the right has a speech bubble above it containing a question mark, symbolizing a question and answer session.

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Section Slide

