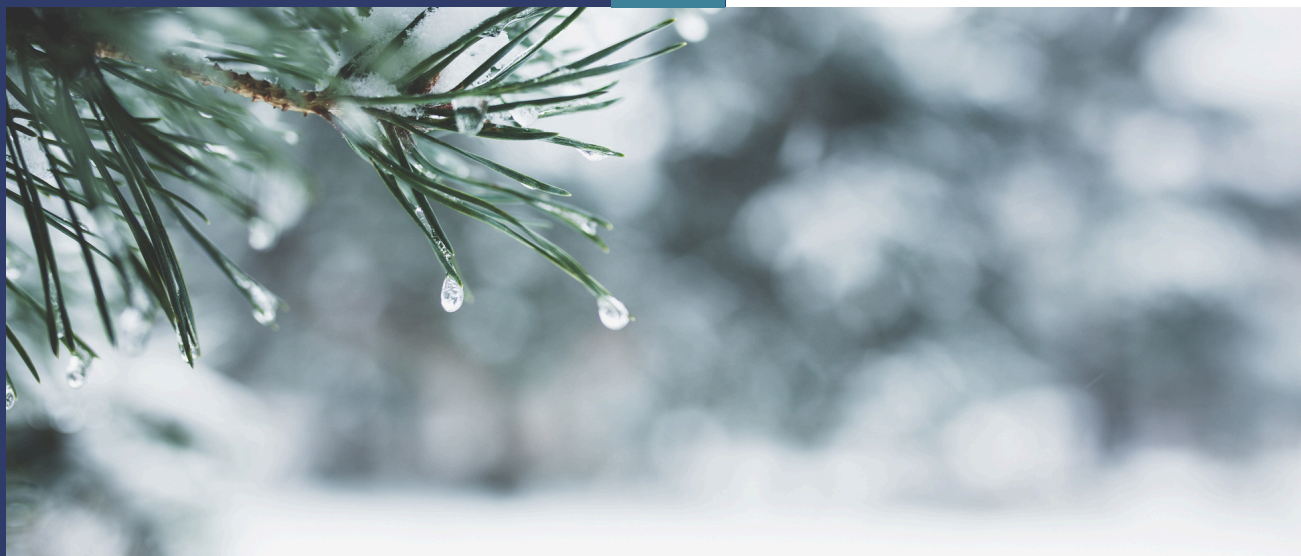


FOCUS

DEC 2025



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FOCUS is published quarterly and features news and information for members of the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH).

This issue prepared by:
Cassandra Jackson, PhD
Kaitlin Seidenberg, BS
Victor Julian Padilla, ScM
Alex Hood, BA

Message from the President



Greetings SCEH Members,

Thanks to our Immediate Past-President: Dr. Barbara McCann has now completed her two-year term as SCEH President. Her accomplishments are many! She is truly committed to expanding the reach of clinical hypnosis in the medical profession. During her term, she successfully arranged for medical continuing education for our annual meeting and midyear training workshops. She personally recruited several physicians to join as SCEH members and as instructors in our workshops and meetings.

She has encouraged a new generation of clinicians and researchers to become involved with SCEH and made space for many of them in SCEH leadership. She expanded the size of the SCEH executive committee, by two members at large. Under her guidance, the EC added three women and two BIPOC members. She also developed significant donor interest in the SCEH scholarship program. In addition, Barbara is an outstanding and gifted teacher, and a scholar who has made major contributions to publications on evidence-based clinical practice. I extend the gratitude of the SCEH membership to Barbara McCann for her service.

Message from the President

Women's Forum: I am interested in sponsoring a series of special events for Women in the Science and Practice of Hypnosis. Several other organizations have set up intermittent online Forums at specific times, to begin a dialogue among women in the field. Repeat attendees become members of a Working Group dedicated to promoting the place of women in our Science and Practice. We may also want to create a space on our website for profiles of Women in the Science and Practice of Hypnosis. I am calling for women (female-identified) members interested in organizing such a Forum. If you are willing to work on this, please contact me at: dmoss@saybrook.edu

Mark your Calendars: Our 2026 SCEH Midyear Clinical Hypnosis Workshops will be April 24 to 27, 2026. The first two days, Friday and Saturday April 24 and 25, will include simultaneous workshops on 1) the Foundations of Clinical Hypnosis and 2) Intermediate Hypnosis.

Sunday and Monday April 26 and 27 will provide the Advanced Workshops. Sunday will provide workshops on Hypnosis in the Treatment of Anxiety and Depression. Monday will provide workshops on Hypnosis for Habit Control, Addictions, and Impulse Disorders.

Mark your calendars now for these useful workshops, and please inform your colleagues of the availability of the beginning and intermediate training workshops. Updated information on the workshops is available at: <https://www.sceh.us/2026-midyear-workshops>

Mark your Calendars: The SCEH Annual Conference for 2026 will be held from October 14 to 18, 2026, with the meeting theme: "Circuits of Consciousness: Hypnosis, AI, and Psychedelic-Assisted Change." This meeting will be virtual, so no travel is required. Plan now to attend and enjoy what will be our 77th Annual Workshops and Scientific Program.

At your service,
Donald Moss, PhD
SCEH President



**Join SCEH &
Help us grow!**

Annual Membership Renewal Campaign Underway

- It's that time of year to **renew your Society dues**. Your annual dues fund SCEH operations and allow us to work toward delivering events and member services in aid of advancing our mission to promote excellence and progress in hypnosis research, education, and clinical practice.
- If you have already renewed, thank you for your support of the Society! If you have yet to do so, we ask that you **kindly complete your renewal before the last week of December** so that we can attain a strong year-end finish. If you are looking for your dues renewal notice, check your inbox for an email from us with the subject line "SCEH - Annual Dues Renewal" then click on the attached invoice link. Or just reach out to us at info@sceh.us and we will send you a copy of your invoice. If you opt to pay by check, please mail it to us postmarked before December 14 to allow time for it to be received in the mail and processed before year's end.

Renew or Update your Member Profile



Keep Your SCEH Member Profile Up to Date

At renewal, we also recommend that you review and update your membership profile with any change of address, new degrees or designations, updated specialties, or any change of employer. To update it, log in to your member profile here:

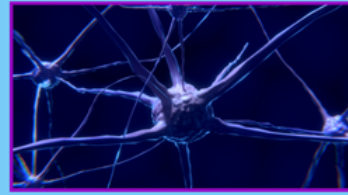
SCEH Member Login



Thank you for your support and loyalty to SCEH and all you do to support the field of hypnosis. We hope you will continue to be an active and committed member for a long time to come.

We also invite you to upload a photo and include a Directory Email and/or Directory Phone to make it easier for colleagues to find and reach out to you. To update your profile, login and follow the prompts. If you have forgotten your username or password, follow the link to reset these, or if you need additional assistance, [please contact our office.](#)

2025 Annual Conference Recap



The Future of Healing Hypnosis in Multidisciplinary Care

76th Annual Workshops & Scientific Program

October 8-12, 2025

Live online - live attendance required

76th Annual Workshops and Scientific Program The Future of Healing: Hypnosis in Multidisciplinary Care October 8-12, 2025 (Wednesday-Sunday) Held live online via Zoom #SCEH2025

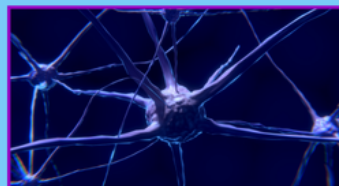
October 8-12, 2025 – Live online (Wednesday-Sunday)

- October 8-9 – Scientific Program
- October 10-12 – All Workshops

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the 76th Annual Workshops and Scientific Program of the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, themed The Future of Healing: Hypnosis in Multidisciplinary Care. This year's program highlighted the exciting integration of hypnosis into collaborative healthcare settings. We invited submissions that showcased how hypnosis enhances outcomes in areas such as trauma recovery, pain management, chronic illness, behavioral health, and integrative therapies. We appreciate you for joining us in exploring how hypnosis is shaping the future of patient care and advancing the art and science of healing.

Cheers to another successful conference!

2025 Annual Conference Recap



The Future of Healing Hypnosis in Multidisciplinary Care

76th Annual Workshops & Scientific Program
October 8-12, 2025
Live online - live attendance required



Keynotes: Left to right, in order of appearance: Katalin Varga, PhD, DSc; Audrey Van Haudenhuyse, PhD, and Carol Ginandes, PhD, ABPP

Keynote sessions:

Psychological Support Based on Positive Suggestions:
Possibilities in Various Medical Settings
Katalin Varga, PhD, DSc

Modified States of Consciousness: From the Bench to
the Bedside of Patients
Audrey Van Haudenhuyse, PhD

Traveling in the Land of Trance: A Personal Odyssey
Carol Ginandes, PhD, ABPP

Right: Some of our wonderful
attendees from the Intro
program!



SCEH Awards Recognize Achievements in the Hypnosis Community



On September 10, 2025, the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis held its Annual Awards Celebration, live online. The event recognizes achievements within the hypnosis community. Hosted by SCEH President Barbara McCann, PhD, the awards program acknowledges contributions to clinical hypnosis, education and training, hypnosis research and publication, and volunteer contributions that advance the organization's mission to promote excellence and progress in the field.

Nominations were sourced via a member Call for Awards, then selected by the Society's Awards and Fellowship Committee. The 2025 Awards Committee was chaired by Immediate Past President Ciara Christensen, PhD and included committee members Gary Elkins, PhD, ABPP, ABPH, Don Moss, PhD and David Reid, PsyD. (Committee members recused themselves from voting in certain categories if nominated for an award.) The SCEH Awards Program also includes Presidential Awards which are selected by the current SCEH President.

SCEH celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of this year's award winners!

- Stanley Krippner Award for efforts supporting the field of hypnosis by students or early career professionals to Cassandra Jackson, MA.
- Crasilneck Award for the best first paper presented by a graduate student or young scientist at a SCEH meeting to Yeganeh Farahzadi, MS in recognition of her paper, Predicting Hypnotic Depth using Transfer Learning, delivered at the Scientific Program of the SCEH Annual Conference, October 2024.
- Roy M. Dorcus Award for the best paper in clinical hypnosis is presented to Nicolino Ramondo; Carmela F. Pestell; Susan M. Byrne & Gilles E. Gignac for their paper, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Hypnosis in the Treatment of Major Depressive Disorder: A Randomized Control Trial. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 72(3), 229-253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207144.2024.2354722>.

· Henry Guze Award for best research paper on hypnosis is presented to Charlie W. McDonald; Joseph P Green; Fiona G Sleight; Isabella T Seibert & Steven Jay Lynn in recognition for their paper, The Lynn Hypnotic Engagement Scale (LHES): A Multi-Study Validation. International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, 73 (3), 247-273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207144.2025.2508404>.

· Reviewer of the Year Award for significant contribution to the Society's peer-reviewed quarterly, the International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis to Joseph Green, PhD.

· Arthur Shapiro Award for the Best Book on Hypnosis to Amir Raz, PhD in recognition of his book, The Suggestible Brain – The Science and Magic of How We Make Up Our Minds. Balance Publishing. October 2024.

· Shirley Schneck Award to a physician who has made significant contributions to the development of medical hypnosis to Jessie (Kittle) Markovits, MD.

· Erika Fromm Award for excellence in teaching to Louis Damis, PhD, ABPP.

· Bernard Raginski Award, the Society's highest honor, for leadership in the field of clinical hypnosis to Zoltan Kekecs, PhD.

Presidential Awards

Singled out this year by President McCann for a Presidential Award were the following:

· Zoltan Kekecs, PhD for service as a valued member of our Executive Committee, and for continued and dedicated service as Treasurer, providing ongoing oversight and attention to SCEH finances, and helping to ensure the current and future financial sustainability of the Society.

· David Reid, PsyD for service as a valued member of our Executive Committee, serving as SCEH Secretary and Certification Chair.



· Ciara Christensen, PhD for service as a valued member of our Executive Committee, as Immediate Past President, and Chair of three committees: Awards & Fellowship, Student Trainee Affairs & Scholarships, and Nominations.

· Donald Moss, PhD for service as a valued member of our Executive Committee, as President-Elect, and as Chair of two committees, Education and Publications, and for continuing to develop an excellent Midyear Workshops event each year as well as a successful ongoing Webinar Series.



· Gary Elkins, PhD, ABPP, ABPH for his leadership and professionalism as Editor-in-Chief of our International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, delivering a highly regarded peer-reviewed publication that shares and highlights the latest research supporting the evidence base of hypnosis.



· Flavio Epstein, PhD for his continued dedication and service as Credentials and Membership Committee Chair, overseeing our member approval process and annual member retention campaign.

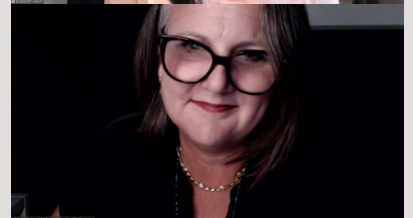
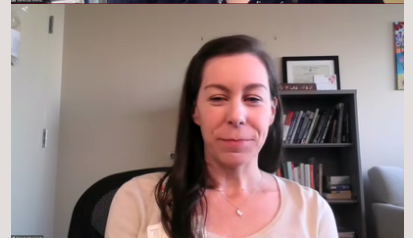
· Deanna Denman, PhD for service as 2025 Annual Conference Overall Co-Chair and Scientific Program Co-Chair, helping to grow our understanding of hypnosis, and for stepping into the role of Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee.



· Jillian Ballantyne, PhD, ABPP for serving as 2025 Annual Conference Advanced Workshop Co-chair, helping to advance the training of those who use hypnosis in their work; for service as a Member of the FOCUS Newsletter Team, in recognition of her efforts to create new content and publish relevant topics to keep our members informed and engaged, and for stepping into the role of Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee.

· Jessie (Kittle) Markovitz, MD for serving as 2025 Annual Conference Overall Co-Chair and Scientific Program Co-Chair, helping to grow our understanding of hypnosis. I of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis

- Yeganeh Farahzadi, MS for stepping in to serve as the Student Representative on the Executive Committee
- Victor Padilla, ScM for service as a Member of the FOCUS Newsletter Team, in recognition of her efforts to keep SCEH members informed and engaged.
- Kaitlin Seidenberg, BS for service as a Member of the FOCUS Newsletter Team, in recognition of her efforts to keep SCEH members informed and engaged.
- Cassandra Jackson, MA for continued service as a Member of the FOCUS Newsletter Team, in recognition of her efforts to publish relevant topics to keep our members informed and engaged.
- Vanessa Muniz, MA for serving as the Managing Editor of the International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis; and for advancing the field of hypnosis through the media attention received for her work on hypnosis, women, and hot flashes.
- Katherine Scheffrahn, BS for serving as Assistant Managing Editor of the International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis
- Ilyse Spertus, PhD for service as a member of the Education Committee, contributing to the recruitment of excellent speakers for the Midyear Workshop and the ongoing Webinar Series.
- Elizabeth G. Walsh, PhD for service as a member of the Education Committee, contributing to the recruitment of excellent speakers for the Midyear Workshop and the ongoing Webinar Series.
- Betsy Gaines, PsyD for service as a member of the Education Committee, contributing to the recruitment of excellent speakers for the Midyear Workshop and the ongoing Webinar Series.
- Eric Willmarth, PhD for service as a Co-Chair of the 2025 Midyear Introductory Workshop, helping advance the educational mission of SCEH



· Chandler Broadbent, PsyD for service as a Co-Chair of the 2025 Midyear Introductory Workshop, helping advance the educational mission of SCEH.

· Louis Damis, PhD, ABPH for service as a Co-Chair of the 2025 Midyear Intermediate Workshop, helping advance the educational mission of SCEH.

· Akira Otani, EdD for service as a Co-Chair of the 2025 Midyear Intermediate Workshop, helping advance the educational mission of SCEH.

· Shawn Criswell, PhD, LPC for serving as 2025 Introductory Workshop Co-Chair, introducing hypnosis to clinicians and researchers.

· Cameron Alldredge, PhD for serving as 2025 Annual Conference Intermediate Co-Chair, helping advance the educational mission of SCEH.

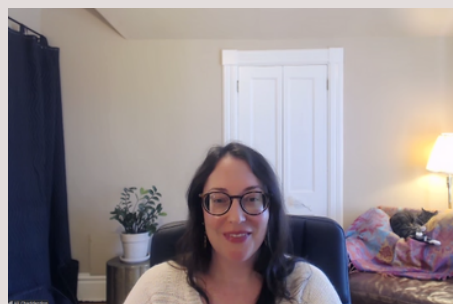
· Nicholas Olendzki, PsyD for serving as 2025 Annual Conference Intermediate Co-Chair, helping advance the educational mission of SCEH.

· Alexandra Chadderdon, PsyD for serving as the 2025 Annual Conference Advanced Workshop Co-Chair, helping to advance the training of those who use hypnosis in their work.

· Anne Doherty Johnson for her continued work in supporting the Society through her role as Executive Director.

The Society congratulates all nominees and award winners, and we thank the Awards and Fellowship Committee.

The Call for Nominations for each year's SCEH Awards Program is issued in the spring of the year. More information can be found at www.sceh.us/awards or by contacting the SCEH office.





Congratulations to all of our 2025 SCEH Awardees!!



2026 Midyear Clinical Hypnosis Workshops

April 24-27, 2026



Live online; live attendance required; Offering CE & CME

For details: www.sceh.us/2026-midyear-workshops

Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced Workshops

Workshops meet accepted Standards of Training in Clinical Hypnosis and count toward SCEH Hypnosis Certification Programs. Workshops are designed to empower attendees with evidence-based skills and training in the application of hypnosis for mental health, medicine, and general wellness.

Friday and Saturday, April 24-25 (two day workshops)

**Introductory Workshop in Clinical Hypnosis – Earn 12.5 CE/CME
OR**

Intermediate Workshop in Clinical Hypnosis – 12.5 CE/CME

Sunday, April 26 and Monday, April 27

ADVANCED Workshops – Earn up to 12 CE/CME

Attend one or all; choose from among several workshops on varied topics.

- Sunday theme: Hypnosis in the Treatment of Anxiety and Depression
- Monday theme: Hypnosis for Habit Control, Addictions, and Impulse Disorders



Member News

SCEH member Syed Shariq Hasan, MBBS, MPH, MCPS, FRSPH, PhD, was awarded the 'Psychosomatic Specialist Certificate' by the International College of Psychosomatic Medicine. He received the award from Professor Hochang Lee at the 27th World Congress of the International College of Psychosomatic Medicine.– ICPM Congress held in Tübingen, Germany, from 19th to 21st September 2024.



Syed Shariq Hasan

Dr. Syed Shariq Hasan was awarded the 'Certification by Prior Experience' (CPE) by the Society of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis on the 14th of March 2025.

Raphael Luz

Together with three colleagues, all physical therapists who work and study pain, I have recently started a podcast about pain called **Pod Aliviar**. We are now on the third episode of our first season. Our goal is to bring contemporary ideas about pain to the general public as well as to health professionals who may not be up to date with the latest evidence.

The podcast is already available on YouTube and Spotify (currently in Portuguese only).

[Click here](#) to watch it on YouTube.



Jesse Markovits



Dr. Jessie Markovits Joins the **Stanford Center for Integrative Medicine**

The Stanford Center for Integrative Medicine, directed by Dr. David Spiegel, recently welcomed Dr. Jessie Markovits to its clinical team. Dr. Markovits will be providing medical hypnosis as part of Stanford's evidence-based integrative care offerings.

Her practice focuses on hypnosis for a wide range of indications, including symptom management for pain, anxiety, insomnia, gastrointestinal disorders, and perioperative recovery, among others. Appointments are available at the Stanford Center for Integrative Medicine and via telehealth throughout California, with insurance accepted.

For more information or to schedule a consultation, visit <https://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-clinics/integrative-medicine-center.html> or call 650-498-5566.

Member News

Brooke Hallowell, PhD

Interested in using applied improvisation to practice hypnosis skills?

The "YES, AND" principle of improvisational acting enhances clinical training in many fields by fostering attunement and spontaneous therapeutic communication. When clinicians practice hypnotic techniques through improv exercises, they can develop confidence, presence, and rapport-building skills, ideally improving patient outcomes. Improv experiences can provide rapid, varied interpersonal practice across multiple scenarios, build cohesion among learners, and make training processes engaging and enjoyable. Dr. Brooke Hallowell will host two free and lighthearted one-hour brainstorm sessions for exploring this topic and trying out some techniques in December 2025 and January 2026.

If you are interested in participating, please let her know via email at [**brookehallowell12@gmail.com**](mailto:brookehallowell12@gmail.com).

SCEH Executive Committee 2025–2027 Committee Update

Welcome Our New Executive Committee Term of Office: October 2025– October 2027

Officers

President: Donald Moss, PhD Professor and Dean Graduate College of Integrative Medicine and Health Sciences Saybrook University Pasadena, California

Treasurer: Zoltan Kekecs, PhD Researcher Hungarian Academy of Sciences ELTE, Department of Affective Psychology, Hungary Lund University, Department of Psychology, Sweden

Secretary: Tova Fuller, MS, MD, PhD, Assistant Clinical Professor University of California San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

President-Elect: Jessie (Kittle) Markovits, MD
Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, and of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Stanford School of Medicine
Stanford, CA

Immediate Past President:

Barbara S. McCann, PhD Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Mental Health Counseling and Hypnosis Endowed Chair, University of Washington Seattle, WA

Members

Term of Office: November 2025– October 2026

Voting Members at Large:

- Jillian Ballantyne, PhD, ABPP
- Deanna Denman, PhD

Non-Voting Student Member:

- Yeganeh Farahzadi, MS

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT HYPNOSIS?

Please join us for these upcoming SCEH Webinars:

January 9, 2026

The Impact of Language on Healing

Presenter: Holly Forester-Miller, PhD

Details and registration: https://tcspofficeofce.com/jan_9_2026

February 13, 2026

Hypnosis: Improv Fun with Hypnotic Techniques

Presenter: Brooke Hallowell, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, FNAP, ASHA Fellow and Honors

Details and registration: https://tcspofficeofce.com/feb_13_2026

February 27, 2026

Reading Between the Lines: How to Spot True and False Evidence in Research Papers

Presenter: Zoltan Kekecs, PhD

Details and registration: https://tcspofficeofce.com/feb_27_2026-2

March 27, 2026

Understanding Meta-Analysis for the Clinician

Presenter: Barbara McCann, PhD

Details and registration: [September 12, 2025](https://tcspofficeofce.com/march_27_2026-2)

Details and registration: https://tcspofficeofce.com/march_27_2026-2

April 10, 2026

Creating Reliably Effective Hypnosis Interventions for Chronic Physical Symptoms

Presenter: Olafur S. Palsson, PsyD, Professor Emeritus of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Details and registration: https://tcspofficeofce.com/april_10_2026/

Sign up or find more information at this link: <https://www.sceh.us/webinars>

LATEST NEWS FROM

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
*Clinical and
Experimental*
HYPNOSIS

Recent Issue: Volume 73, Issue 4

We are excited to announce that our October issue of the International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (IJCEH) features a special issue highlighting the “intersections of Psychedelics, Psychedelic and Mystical Experiences, and Hypnosis.” This very timely and thought-provoking issue focuses on the therapeutic potential, psychological mechanisms, and theoretical frameworks that underpin both psychedelic experiences and hypnotic states. Readers can expect a thorough discussion and answers to questions such as: What are the similarities and differences in hypnotic and psychedelic contexts?; What is the clinical utility of mystical experiences that may be facilitated without drugs?; Do suggestion effects play a role in psychedelics?; Can mystical experiences be induced through hypnosis and meditation?; What is the potential of psychedelic and hypnosis to enhance creativity and spiritual inspiration/growth? Read more about this issue, and the abstracts of included articles at the end of this column.

Sneak Peak into the following issue:

The International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (IJCEH) is also pleased to announce an upcoming special issue dedicated to Ericksonian Psychotherapy, scheduled for publication in January 2026. This issue will explore the wide-ranging influence and contemporary relevance of Milton H. Erickson’s approach to psychotherapy and hypnosis, highlighting its enduring impact on theory, practice, and empirical research. For more information on this and any future call for papers and special issues of the IJCEH, visit our journal’s website at: https://think.taylorandfrancis.com/special_issues/ericksonian-psychotherapy/. Thank you to all of our contributors for making these special issues possible!

Interested Authors

Submissions are accepted and article are published on a rolling basis. The International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis receives all manuscript submissions electronically via Taylor & Francis' submission portal located at <https://rp.tandfonline.com/submission/create?journalCode=NHYP>

Instructions to authors can be found at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?show=instructions&journalCode=nhyp20> Contact us at: IJCEH@baylor.edu

As a reminder, the IJCEH accepts many types of papers, including

Empirical research (e.g., clinical trials, neurophysiological studies, mechanistic studies, feasibility studies, replications); Clinical papers (e.g., well-designed multiple or single case studies); systematic reviews, meta-analyses, research-informed theoretical papers, & significant historical or cultural material. Topics can include: Hypnosis, hypnotizability, and hypnotherapy in psychology, psychotherapy, psychiatry, medicine, dentistry, wellness, nursing, and related areas; and studies relating hypnosis to other phenomena (e.g., mindfulness, contemplative practices, & consciousness).



Editor-in-chief: Gary R. Elkins, PhD

OPEN SCIENCE BADGES:

Consider publishing your research with an Open Science Badge! These Badges are implemented to acknowledge open science practices and serve as incentives for researchers around the world to share data and materials associated with the publication. Publishing with an Open Science Badge signals to the reader that the content has been made available and certifies its accessibility in a consistent location

Have you considered what Open Access Publishing can do for your research?

Open Access publications are a great way to extend the reach of your work. Publishing your accepted article in the IJCEH is free, but some authors elect to cover the costs of publishing, making their paper freely available to anyone online. The number of authors electing to publish their articles with Open Access in the IJCEH has been increasing. Open Access papers have many more views, more readers, and usually more citations. This is beneficial to the authors and to the journal! If your manuscript is accepted, consider Open Access publishing, and email us with any questions

X Follow us on X (formerly Twitter)

Here are some X (Twitter) accounts to follow! You can keep up to date on recent articles, event information, the latest news from hypnosis societies, and discussion on hypnosis research.

- YouTube: [@IJCEH](#)
- The IJCEH's Official X (Twitter) Account: [@IJCEH](#)
- Follow the Editor of the IJCEH: [@ElkinsGary](#)
- Taylor & Francis Research Insights' Official Twitter Account: [@tandfonline](#)
- Find us online at: www.tandfonline.com/nhyp

Stay in the know when new articles or issues are published by signing up for new content alerts at the IJCEH publisher's website: <https://tandfonline.com/ijceh>. Click "New Content Alerts", enter your email, and select your preferred frequency!

**We are pleased to share abstracts from the articles
published in the most recent issue of**

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
*Clinical and
Experimental*
HYPNOSIS
Volume 73, Issue 4

Editorial: Intersections of Psychedelics, Mystical Experiences, and Hypnosis

The potential therapeutic benefits of psychedelic, mystical experiences, and peak spiritual experiences are of increasing interest among clinicians, researchers, and the public. Several studies have proposed potential parallels between the altered states of consciousness associated with psychedelics and hypnosis. Although there has been increased interest in psychedelics, mystical experiences, hypnosis, and non-ordinary states of consciousness, much remains unknown. The present special issue addresses many of these questions, such as: What are the similarities and differences in hypnotic and psychedelic contexts?; What is the clinical utility of mystical experiences that may be facilitated without drugs?; Do suggestion effects play a role in psychedelics?; Can mystical experiences be induced through hypnosis and meditation?; What is the potential of psychedelic and hypnosis to enhance creativity and spiritual inspiration/growth?. The reader will find thought provoking answers to these questions and deepen knowledge of the intersections among psychedelics, mystical experiences and hypnosis.

Mind-Manifesting Hypnosis: Phenomenological Similarities and Differences in Hypnotic and Psychedelic Contexts

Etzel Cardeña

In the 1970s, researchers and theoreticians of states of consciousness jointly discussed hypnosis and psychedelic alterations of consciousness, but recent research has mostly kept these topics apart. This paper discusses the similarities and differences of hypnosis and psychedelic alterations of consciousness, stressing that states of consciousness should not be defined by their preceding contexts. Predictors of positive responses to psychedelics (e.g., absorption, openness to experience) also predict hypnotic responsiveness. Most experiential changes (e.g., changes in bodily sensations and image, increased simple and complex imagery, and transcendent phenomena) produced by psychedelics are also reported within minimal suggestion hypnosis by highly responsive participants. Yet, there are differences in single sessions in that, as compared with hypnosis, psychedelic experiences typically last longer, are less controllable but more intense, and might produce more negative outcomes but also have a greater potential for positive long-term effects. Hypnosis, psychedelic research, and clinical work can enrich each other and should be more integrated than has been the case recently.

Feasibility of a Hypnosis Intervention for a Mystical Experience

Chris E. Corlett, Cameron T. Alldredge, & Gary R. Elkins

The purpose of the present study is to determine feasibility and acceptability of a standardized hypnosis-oriented intervention for a mystical experience based on a conceptual framework including cognitive expectancy, demand characteristics, the induced hypnotic state, and the role of hypnotizability. Ten college student participants provided informed consent and underwent a hypnosis-based exercise designed to facilitate a mystical experience. The hypnosis-oriented intervention was provided in a setting similar to that used in psychedelic drug research. All participants were in the mid-to-high range of hypnotizability. Results revealed that the hypnosis-oriented intervention was feasible and acceptable based on a composite acceptability score of 9.45 and no dropouts. All participants indicated that they would participate again if given the opportunity. Additionally, 70% of participants met criteria for a “complete mystical experience” as measured by the Mystical Experience Questionnaire (MEQ30). While these results are encouraging, additional research is needed, including replication with a larger sample.

Clinical Utility of Mystical Experiences: An Overview and Conceptual Framework

Cameron T. Alldredge, Meredith Vagner, Chris Corlett & Gary R. Elkins

Mystical experiences (MEs) are often profound and transformative encounters with a transcendent reality. Reported across many cultures and religions, these experiences are commonly characterized by a sense of unity, transcendence of time and space, positive mood, ineffability, and a noetic quality. Theoretical models have emphasized psychological, neurological, and sociocultural explanations to account for their positive effects on individuals, and psychometric tools have been developed to offer standardized methods to assess experience intensity and impact. MEs indicate significant potential in clinical psychology and have demonstrated psychotherapeutic benefit in the treatment of various conditions. We propose a novel conceptual framework to guide future use of MEs in therapeutic contexts, as interest in the mystical realm exponentially grows. The framework centers around the ME itself highlighting a requisite non-ordinary state of consciousness to foster intensely felt experiences occasioning profound psychological impact. The framework posits that MEs require three pre-state factors: invitation, context, and individual aptitude. After experiencing an ME, a necessary mediating factor in experiencing beneficial change is the process of integration.

Suggestions effects in psychedelics: Confounds and opportunities

Madeline V. Stein & Devin B. Terhune

The resurgence of interest in psychedelics has led to their widespread, and often uncritical, promotion within both popular media and scientific communities. This heightened enthusiasm complicates assessments of the neurocognitive effects of psychedelics as well as their efficacy as adjuncts to psychotherapy. A key challenge for this nascent field involves understanding how suggestion effects can both act as a significant confound in research on psychedelics but also improve outcomes in therapeutic interventions. By critically examining how suggestion effects operate within psychedelic experiences, we aim to draw greater attention to their role as a source of bias but also as a tool that can be leveraged to maximize therapeutic benefits. We argue for more careful consideration of, and rigorous experimentation into, the role of suggestion effects in response to psychedelics.

Exploring Mystical-type Experiences through Auto-Induced Cognitive Trance

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Mystical-type experiences can be induced through techniques that may induce altered states of consciousness like hypnosis and meditation. These experiences are often linked to paranormal beliefs and near-death experiences (NDE). This study explored auto-induced cognitive trance (AICT) as a method to induce mystical-type experiences, examining the influence of factors like religious/spirituality practices, paranormal beliefs, and NDEs-like outside of a life-threatening situation. Twenty-seven participants capable of self-inducing AICT were studied. Before the experiment, their religious/spirituality practices and paranormal beliefs were assessed. Participants underwent five conditions: rest, rest with auditory stimulation, imagination, AICT, and AICT with auditory stimulation. Experience intensity, mystical-type experiences, and NDEs-like were measured before and after AICT and rest. Results showed that AICT induce mystical-type experiences more frequently (29%) compared to the rest condition (0%). More specifically, the intensity of the experience and the degree of NDEs-like during AICT were linked to mystical-type experiences during AICT only. This is the first study to demonstrate that AICT can induce mystical-type experiences in healthy individuals.

Hypnosis, psychedelics, and Creativity: An Overview and Analysis

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Alterations in consciousness have long been used to enhance creativity. Here, we focus on the ways in which hypnosis and psychedelics alter consciousness to enhance creativity, drawing on both research and first-hand accounts. The research utilizes standard measures of creativity as well as assessments of artistic, musical, and work-related problem-solving ability. First-hand accounts of scientific discovery offer individual perspective on creativity via personal experience. Various mechanisms of how altered states may enhance creativity are explored including the roles of positive mood, flow, heightened senses, tapping into the unconscious, variations in thought processes (i.e. the Dynamic Framework of Thought Theory), and spiritual inspiration. Finally, limitations and future directions are addressed.

