

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL HYPNOSIS (ASCH)

CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

The ASCH Code of Conduct is comprised of two sections, Ethical Principles and Ethical Standards. The Ethical Principles serve as philosophical guidelines that help to structure a members' practice of hypnosis. The Ethical Standards serve as practical or applied guidelines for the members' practice.

Acceptance of membership in, or Certification by, ASCH commits the member or certified clinician to the Code of Conduct. For the purposes of this document, both ASCH members and those non-members certified by ASCH will be referred to as "members."

In subscribing to this Code, members are required to cooperate in its implementation and abide by any disciplinary rulings based upon this Code. Members should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct unethical conduct of colleagues. Additionally, members should be equally available to defend and assist colleagues unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

The Code should not be used as an instrument to deprive any member of the opportunity or freedom to practice with complete professional integrity; nor should any disciplinary action be taken on the basis of this Code without maximum provision for safeguarding the rights of the member(s) affected.

Ethical Principles

- I. Competence: Members strive to attain the highest levels of professional competence.
 - A. members use hypnosis in the treatment of patients only within the bounds of their training and expertise; within their primary discipline; and within the context of a professional relationship;
 1. A "professional relationship" is defined by the member's primary discipline and includes consultation or supervision of colleagues.
 - B. member's expertise is determined, in part, by their professional education, training, licensure, and experience;
 - C. members recognize, and are respectful of, any limitations to their expertise;
 - D. members strive to maintain current knowledge of research, issues, and methods in hypnosis;
 1. members participate in continuing education activities.
- II Professional Responsibility: Members serve the best interests of their clients or patients.
 - A. members accept responsibility for the care of their clients or patients consistent with their discipline and licensure;

- B. members seek out consultation and/or supervision when in doubt regarding their clinical practices or when questioned by others about their clinical practice;
- C. members participate and cooperate with inquiries regarding their practices;
- D. members accept responsibility for, and when necessary the consequences of, their behavior;
- E. members accept responsibility to monitor and make appropriate changes in their practice to comply with the Ethical Principles or Ethical Standards of this Code;
- F. members seek to educate the public about the proper and scientific use of hypnosis.

Ethical Standards

- I. ASCH members uphold the professional standards, ethics, and codes of conduct of their primary discipline.
- II ASCH members remain in good standing in the association or society that oversees the member's primary discipline.
- II ASCH members maintain a license to practice at the independent, unrestricted, or unsupervised level.
- IV ASCH members do not support the practice of hypnosis by laypersons.
 - A. The "practice of hypnosis" means the provision of services, or the offer to provide services, utilizing hypnosis to individuals or groups regardless if a fee or honorarium is charged, offered or paid.
 - B. A "layperson" is:
 - 1. an individual lacking professional education and clinical training in a health care discipline, including but not limited to those recognized by ASCH for membership and/or certification,
 - or
 - 2. an individual not pursuing a degree, from a regionally accredited institution, in a health care discipline including but limited to those recognized by ASCH for membership and/or certification.
 - C. members do not provide hypnosis training to laypersons.
- V. Public and Media Presentation:
 - A. ASCH members do not use hypnosis for entertainment purposes.
 - B. When members do appear in public forums, such as on television or some other audio or video format, they take care to ensure that any demonstration of hypnosis is done in such

a way as to prevent or minimize risk to unknown audience participants.

1. For example, when a videotape demonstration is shown on television, the member takes steps to ensure that the complete audio portion of the induction and deepening phases are muted.
 - C. ASCH members ensure when they present hypnosis, in any format, to the public the member does so within the spirit of this Code and within the guidelines of their primary discipline.
 - D. Members honestly and fairly represent their professional competency, qualifications and capabilities to the public and media, and refrain from making false, misleading, deceptive or unsubstantiated statements in resumes, advertising and other means of soliciting clients or patients.
- VI. Nothing in this Code shall prohibit members from:
- A teaching hypnosis to individuals or groups who, upon completion of such training, would be eligible for ASCH membership,
 - B teaching students of health care disciplines, including but not limited to those recognized by ASCH for membership and/or certification,
 - C teaching patients or clients the use of self-hypnosis for that individual's own therapeutic use, or
 - D teaching about hypnosis in any forum that serves to properly educate and inform the consumer or professional public about hypnosis.
- VII. When ASCH members engage in human subjects research, they do so within the accepted standards of their primary discipline, taking precautions not to cause emotional or physical harm to their subjects.
- VIII. When this Code is unclear on an issue, question, or complaint and when deemed appropriate by the ASCH Executive Committee, guidance is sought from the ethical standards of the member's primary discipline professional association and/or the member's licensing board.

Enforcement

- I. Any person, whether or not a member of ASCH, may initiate a charge of ethical violation against a member of ASCH.
- II. Any charge must be submitted in writing to the Ethics Committee, must specify the time and place of the violation, and must be signed by the complainant.
- III. The Ethics Committee shall inform the member in writing of the charges against the member and solicit the member's response to the charges.

- IV. If, upon receiving the response of the member, the Ethics Committee determines that cause for further inquiry exists, the Ethics Committee shall set a time and place for a hearing and shall notify the member and the complainant, by certified mail, of the time and place.
- V. The purpose of the Ethics Committee hearing is to gather all the facts related to the alleged violation. The charged member shall have the privilege of appearing in person, or may submit a written defense to the Ethics Committee at least twenty-four hours prior to the time of the hearing. At the hearing, the charged member shall have the right to cross examine the complainant and any witnesses who may appear against the member. The charged member shall also have the right to present witnesses. The complainant shall be able to direct questions to the charged member only through a committee member. The hearing may be recorded and a transcript of the proceedings, if any, shall be available at cost.
- VI. No later than thirty days following the hearing, the Ethics Committee shall submit a report of its findings to the Executive Committee and recommend either:
- A. dismissal of the charges,
 - B. censure or warning,
 - C. suspension, or
 - D. expulsion.
- The Ethics Committee shall send by certified mail a copy of its report and recommendation to the charged member.
- VII. If the Ethics Committee finds for a recommendation of guilt of any of the charges or recommends censure, warning, suspension or expulsion, the member shall have thirty days from the receipt of the Ethics Committee report to submit to the Executive Committee written objections to the findings or recommendations of the Ethics Committee.
- VIII. The Executive Committee shall review the findings and recommendation of the Ethics Committee and any written objections submitted by the member and shall reach a final decision. In accordance with the By-Laws, the Executive Committee shall not expel a member without holding a hearing at which the accused may appear and be represented by counsel. The Executive Committee shall also have the right to be represented by counsel at such a hearing. The Executive Committee shall notify the member in writing, by certified mail, of its decision.
- IX. In accordance with the By-Laws, a decision of censure or warning will be a matter of Executive Committee record only. A decision of suspension or expulsion will be reported to the Board of Governors and to the membership of ASCH through the "Corrections to the Directory" section of the Newsletter.