Editorial: The Spirit of Reconciliation and Collaboration

Stephen Lankton

I have previously stated that this is the time for collaboration at the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (AJCH). During my first year as editor, it's been my great privilege to see the editorial advisory board expand; this board is comprised of a number of people with different orientations collaborating with one another to establish a high standard for the journal. On January 19, 2007, another extremely laudable collaboration will occur. On this date the ASCH will convene a joint meeting with the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH) in Dallas Texas. What a special event this promises to be!

Many readers may fail to appreciate the enormity of this collaborative effort. In 1963 Milton Erickson and Seymour Hershman discussed a dream that these two organizations would conduct joint conferences. In fact, the International Society of Hypnosis joined ASCH and SCEH in Philadelphia for the first joint conference in the year 1976. This joint conference, 13 years after conceived by Erickson, was the first and only joint meeting that the world of professional hypnosis was able to enjoy until now. Now, 31 years later, it will happen again.

The recent history of this collaborative effort, according to Stephen Kahn and Mark Oster, begins with a dinner in Chicago arranged by Erika Fromm and Stephen Kahn and 10-12 others attending an ASCH workshop in Schaumburg, Illinois. It was Dr. Fromm’s dream that a joint meeting might once again be convened. Others at the meeting of course shared the same vision and the strategizing began. Outstanding ongoing work by Kahn and Oster among others, helped bring this enthusiastic idea to fruition. Their hard work helped overcome the philosophical, physical, and financial difficulties that rest as hurdles between the conception of wonderful ideas and satisfactory accomplishments. In this case, four years later, we will see the result of their effort.

It is certainly going to come as no surprise for researchers or clinicians to hear me say that we all have suffered from the schism that existed between these two camps. It is a frequent outcry of researchers that clinicians often operate without the benefit of research. In a similar vein, clinicians are quick to point out that a great deal of research is not relevant in daily practice. At the 2007 conference, clinicians and researchers will be closer than they have been for 30 years. Such a meeting, with the potential of ongoing collaboration, hope is to bring the expertise from each group to the other and enhance the value of the final product of both. Researchers, becoming more intimately familiar with clinical issues, are bound to turn their efforts to areas that are increasingly relevant to daily clinical practice. Likewise, clinicians recognize and utilize the increasingly relevant research, we hope to find a corresponding increase in the evidence-based practice that is crucial in modern
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psychotherapy. There will be many winners in this collaborative effort. Decreasing the distance between our two organizations will benefit not just the members of SCEH and ASCH, but our students, patients, and clients as well.

It has long been the dream of many of us to reach a wider range of health care professionals and change attitudes in the general public about hypnosis. My hope is that collaboration will help actualize the dream of making hypnosis part of mainstream healthcare and science. We can all look forward to the future of other collaborations yet undreamed.

The co-chairs of the event are Molly Delaney, Psy.D. and Stephen Kahn, Ph.D. I want to join them in the task of making this a conference of the highest professional quality by announcing the call for proposals. The date of May 15, 2006 has been set as the deadline for receipt of all proposals. Proposals for the advanced workshops should be addressed to Carolyn Daitch, Ph.D. and Eric Willmarth, Ph.D. while proposals for the scientific symposia should be addressed to Jim Council, Ph.D. and Thomas Wall, Ph.D., ABPH, ABPP. The email address for submissions is aforgette@asch.net or refer to the ad on page 329 of this issue.