

ASCH/SCEH Guidelines for Electronic Recordings of Hypnosis for Public Consumption

Rationale and Purpose for These Guidelines

- 1) Rationale.** These guidelines were created to benefit ASCH/SCEH members and the consumer when members create and market recordings of hypnosis for sale to the general public. Such recordings may be in many forms, including (but not limited to) CDs, DVDs, website presentations (including members' own websites, websites such as YouTube, or any such vehicles). These guidelines do not establish rules for practice, but are offered to members as means of promoting sound recommendations for consumers while reducing liability exposure of members and of the societies.
- 2) Target Audience.** The recordings contemplated by these guidelines are intended for consumers' own use in learning/applying self-hypnosis and should not be developed for the purpose of offering didactic training to lay hypnotists.
- 3) Optional Compliance.** If you are not claiming ASCH/SCEH affiliation in the marketing, distribution, or sale of your recordings you are not required to follow these Guidelines.
- 4) Mandatory Compliance.** If you are claiming ASCH/SCEH membership, however, you are urged to follow all of the guidelines, but **are required to comply with Guidelines #1 and 2** (below), in appropriate form, such as a printed handout, on the label or on the video screen at the outset of the presentation.

Information to be Provided to Consumers

Mandatory: (#1-2)

- 1) Responsibility/Liability – For ASCH/SCEH Members and Consumers:** While ASCH/SCEH Codes of Conduct permit members to create and market recordings of hypnosis under certain limited conditions, the organizations neither specifically review, approve, endorse nor monitor the recordings. Such responsibility rests solely with the author/creator of the recordings. Neither the societies nor their member-creators are liable for any damages, known or unknown, foreseeable or non-foreseeable, to any person who attempts to employ hypnosis for any purpose or in any way other than as authorized by the author-creator. Member-creators who follow these Guidelines also indemnify and hold harmless both societies for any harms, known or unknown, foreseeable or non-foreseeable, which may result from the use of these recordings.
- 2) Use and Purpose of The Recording:** This electronic recording is intended only to (*insert, as appropriate, either “educate the public about the proper and scientific use of hypnosis” or “teach individuals about the use of self-hypnosis for their own self-improvement”*). The use of this recording for any other purpose is strictly prohibited.

Optional: (#3-12)

3) Your Credentials

Provide some information about the following, as appropriate:

- *Your licensure; Academic credentials; Honors*
- *Membership in relevant professional associations (members operate within the codes of ethics of their respective professional societies)*
- *Brief statement about your experience with hypnosis*
- *Any other relevant introductory information about yourself or your professional work*

4) Statement That The Electronic Recording Does Not Replace Face-to-Face Consultation

Inform consumers that the electronic recording is NOT to be considered a substitute for medical or psychological consultations with a licensed health care professional.

5) Purpose, Intent, or Goals of this recording

Address the following issues and questions for the listener, as warranted:

- *The conditions or kinds of problems that can be helped with this recording*
- *What the listener can legitimately expect from using the recording*
(e.g., Help access their potential to achieve, manage physical or psychological symptoms, increase relaxation, develop skills or coping strategies, help with childbirth, etc.)

6) Guidance about How the Recording Should be Used

Provide cautionary statements – such as always using the recording in a safe place, when one can devote full attention and concentration to the hypnotic session; and avoiding using the recording in situations where normal vigilance and alertness to one's surroundings are important (e.g., while driving a car, sitting in a parked car in an unsafe neighborhood, sitting in a train station, riding a bicycle, etc.)

- *Provide guidelines or instructions about the frequency of use, time of day, location, etc., as warranted*
- *Address how to deal with distractions, interruptions, as warranted.*
- *Provide any other guidance as warranted (e.g., Importance of being wide-awake and alert, Dealing with interruptions; other guidance as needed (Special instructions such as the use of headset, desirable posture, eyes open or closed, etc.)*

7) Research or Citations Concerning Self-hypnosis for Consumer's Needs or Symptoms

Inform consumers if research supports the use of a recording such as this for this purpose. Supply actual references—books, articles, or Internet cites if warranted.

8) Description of Self-hypnosis

Provide some description about the phenomenon of self-hypnosis that reflects your theoretical orientation, if warranted. This might include such topics as:

- *A brief definition of self-hypnosis*
- *That self-hypnosis may be conceived of as a frequently occurring state for some people (similar to watching a movie, or a football game, etc.),*
- *That it could be conceived of as a natural coping mechanism for some, such as in dealing with emergency situations*

- *That it can also happen spontaneously for some (highway hypnosis).*
- *That self-hypnosis can also be used in developing new skills, behaviors, and thought patterns to be used in place of maladaptive ones*
- *That continual practice strengthens new learning*
- *That self-hypnosis can also change the ways in which the body functions, and can help with migraine headaches, chronic pain, gastro-intestinal disorders, skin disorders, and other symptoms.*

9) Myths, Fears, and Unreasonable Expectations about Hypnosis

Advise consumers to avoid unreasonable expectations about the utility of this recording (e.g. Unrealistic expectations, such as curing cancer, absolute recall of every past experience, etc.)

Discuss briefly the common fears that people may have, such as:

- *Fears that the individual may not be able stop or leave hypnosis at any point in the recording (such as to answer a telephone, or handle some other disruption, if necessary).*
- *Fears that if for some reason the recording is interrupted due to loss of power or Internet signal, the individual may suffer ill effects.*
- *Fears of losing control or losing consciousness*
- *Other fears, reflecting prior experiences with "stage hypnosis" that may have been humiliating or frightening.*

10) Unfounded or Inappropriate Claims about Hypnosis

Avoid claims for which scientific evidence is lacking, such as past life regression, astral projection, quantum jumping, voodoo, etc.

Avoid claims that the consumer will learn how to use hypnosis as a means of influencing or controlling others, such as for personal exploitation or entertainment.

11) Informing One's Treating therapist before Using a Hypnosis Recording

Advise consumers who are also patients currently in psychological treatment to inform their treating psychotherapist that they would like to use hypnosis before beginning to do so, to determine if there is any contraindication to its use.

12) What to Do if The Recording is not Helping or is Causing Difficulties

Inform consumers that they should stop using the recording if they are not achieving the desired results or encounter problems and should contact a mental health provider if needed.