

Advisor



From the Desk of the President

Greetings ASCH Colleagues,

Welcome — or in Hawaiian *E Komo Mai*. We are so happy to have you as part of our ASCH community! So much has changed in the last year in our way of delivering healing through hypnosis services to

our clients/patients due to Covid. Only in times of uncertainty is there opportunity for re-evaluation and determining what is truly important. The old patterns we utilized are changed, yet the positive piece of all of this is that we are in the unique position to create new ways of serving, being, and doing; to discover and bring through new ideas, and to better reach and support of our members.

As our footprint has grown, the old shoes have become too small. We have reinvented ourselves through nearly monthly virtual educational training programs (affectionately abbreviated as “CHET,” Old English for a fortress or strong institution) that have had a fabulous outreach and garnered great feedback on the personalized training feel that developed — despite being virtual. Dr. Dana Lebo and her colleagues began a monthly hypnotic idea exchange for all who want to share cases and get fresh ideas. We were so impressed with this work that we included it in the 2021 National Scientific Meeting and Workshops held March 4 through 7. We’ve placed scientific posters that were presented at this ASMW into the *Journal* so you could see what was going on with cutting-edge thinking around the country. Thanks to Editor-in-Chief Steve Langton for being open to ideas for making this happen.

We continue to present monthly webinars prepared by the Long-Distance Learning Team (many thanks to Dr. George Glaser and colleagues). These are really “pearls of wisdom” shared by experienced practitioners in the ASCH community; I invite you to sign up on the webpage and attend. These are always rich in ideas, lively and interesting. We also are looking into adding advanced training tracks at the CHET learning educational sessions. Stay tuned — this is a work in progress and will take time to reinvent, but we do want you to continue to have year-round advanced course offerings to keep yourself fresh and growing professionally.

We want to let you know that John and Catherine Kasper, our management partners of over 20 years, have elected to begin a well-deserved retirement after helping us with the last annual meeting in March. We are very appreciative of all their stewardship through these times and wish them the absolute best. The Executive Committee and our new management company, SEVEN12 Management, has begun the process of restructuring and streamlining the old processes. This will include a new and more efficient website! We are so happy to be working with

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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 9–12, 2021
Level 1 & Level 2 Workshops
Virtual

September 22, 2021
Demystifying the Practice of Hypnosis: Applications in Medicine
Public Webinar
More Details to Come

October 6, 2021 Demystifying the Practice of Hypnosis: Applications in Non-Medical Fields
Public Webinar
More Details to Come

October 28–31, 2021
Level 1 & Level 2 Workshops
Virtual

December 2–5, 2021
Level 1, Level 2, and Advanced Workshops
Wyndham Orlando Resort and Conference Center

President's Message CONTINUED

Molly Alton Mullins and her talented crew as we come about, start on a new tack, and sail ASCH on a new course of success. I am also delighted to report that we will be redoing the E-learning, credentialing, and membership processes to be more intuitive and easier for our members to use.

We also are reaching out to our Component Sections and redesigning ways to collaborate and strengthen these societies. This is an important mission, and as such Deb Benschung has been invited to the monthly Executive Committee meetings to see how we can better combine our efforts and resources to the benefit of all. The Component Sections are truly the local heartbeat and support for our members. We hope to soon have a list and map of them on the ASCH website, so that you can join and feel that local support as well.

I also would like to thank Drs. Louis Damis and Wendy Lemke for their infusion of ideas with our new Trauma Track, and thanks also to Dr. Eric Wilmarth for reviving the interest in expanding our research with the offerings of the Scientific Poster sessions. This is yet another way we can bring fresh ideas and learning to the ASCH community.

We also are starting the work to re-ignite the Fellowship Award Program for those who have been outstanding in their service to ASCH. Be looking for these honorees in the near future.

It is a pleasure to serve you, and I look forward to hearing your ideas of what would be beneficial to you as part of our ASCH community. Please reach out with your ideas. I truly welcome them — only in this way can we create a dynamic organization where all are best served.

Much Aloha,

Bridget S. Bongaard, MD, FACP
bbongaard@gmail.com

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Greetings!

I think we can all agree that this past year we have experienced rapid change in many domains of our personal and professional lives. This issue of the ASCH newsletter highlights many of the changes ASCH — as an organization — has encountered since the beginning of the

pandemic. We begin with a letter of welcome from new ASCH president Dr. Bridget Bongaard. Like her predecessor, she was able to lead ASCH through our second successful virtual annual conference. She also shares several administrative changes and provides some direction for the future.

Our Component Societies have experienced change and challenges too. Component Society Chair Debbie Benschung shares some of her insights as she reflects upon the “destabilizing” events that have created the right environment for flexible thinking and responses which affect our societies. Debbie is also featured in our Clinician’s Corner.

You will want to read Dave Wark’s article that focuses on a stress reduction technique. It is simple to do and may be something you add to your toolbox!

Spring is a good time to take a few minutes to check out what is new on the ASCH website. There are many online resources to support your professional learning. Enjoy.

Sincerely,

Deb Nesbitt, APRN, PMHNP, ABMH
ASCH Advisor Editor

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The ASCH Advisor is published quarterly and distributed via e-mail to ASCH members.

Submissions and articles are welcome. All submissions will be edited for content, style, and length. Newsletter material should be submitted to ASCH Communications Manager Jason Vaughan via email to marketing@asch.net.

CLINICAL CORNER

A CONVERSATION
WITH
DEBBIE BENSCHING
LCSW, ACSW, MSWAC



Clinical Corner features interviews with experienced clinicians who have used hypnosis for a variety of topics in many different health care settings. Many thanks to those professionals for being willing to share their best tips, techniques, and advice. We hope you enjoy and benefit from these interviews.

Professional Discipline

Mental health, clinical social work, and private practice

How long have you been using hypnosis in your professional practice?

13 years

On what specific topic would you like to share your best tips, techniques and advice?

Anxiety or performance, or kids: “inner snow leopard;” using an animal a kid likes and use the attributes of that animal to support creating change in the identified area. With adults with anxiety or hyper-vigilance, I also regularly use what I call physiological contrasting. People forget they always have a spot of calm in their body some place. People who are absorbed in their problem or doing their problem are somewhat in a trance already, so I guide people to find the greatest place or spot of activation and observe it guiding with suggestions and then shift and find a spot of calm (on their foot, back of their hand, ear lobe, etc.) and guide it and then contrast the spots with suggestion around what is most inviting — how to expand or spread the spot of calm while interspersing this guidance with diaphragmatic breathing and anchoring to solid things like the chair, their feet on the ground, etc.

When you first started using hypnosis to address this topic, what were your favorite scripts, hypnotic techniques, strategies or processes?

I didn't have a favorite script. I tried not to use scripts. I would write my own scripts so I could pre-think how I'd use hypnosis and what language to use. My learning strategies are recording myself and listening to

it, pleasure reading of phrasing and scripts so I could hear as many different ways of forming hypnotic language. I'd brain storm and write down ideas on how to address the area I was wanting to target. I also used self-hypnosis to build confidence.

How does this differ with your treatment process today?

It's very different. For one, it takes far less time to come up with an idea, and most of the time it comes to me while interacting with a person — I generally have several ideas on how to approach the issue, where hypnosis might fit with a particular client and can pick one rather than pondering what might work. I tend to write a few notes as I talk with a client and then reflect a few minutes and direct hypnosis. Some clients I just engage hypnosis with something they say (naturalistically) and others are like a more formal process.

What advice would you give a new professional as they begin to use hypnosis in their practice for this topic?

Be willing to be uncomfortable; remember you use words all day long, Hypnosis is simply using words in an intentional way inline with the understandings gained in hypnosis training. I'd also say hypnosis is pretty forgiving and flexible. If you are stuck or do not feel you know how to keep going with your new skills reach out for support through the ASCH listserv, through a component society, or other resource.

What book or article influenced your hypnotic work in this area that you would you recommend?

Yapko, Zeig. Any of their writings.

ASCH FEATURED ARTICLE

Forty-Nine Words in Six Steps for Stress Reduction

BY
DAVID WARK
PhD, ABPH



Recent reports have cited the emotional impact of Covid-19 and racial stress.

This short, imaginative exercise may help you or someone else reduce those anxieties and worries and achieve some individually meaningful goals.

OVERVIEW

As a first step, imagine a personal goal for yourself — something satisfying that you would like to do right now. It is just for you, private and personal.

- Perhaps it is to be relaxed so that you can move easily and comfortably in whatever you do.
- Maybe it is to tune your ears so you hear everything that's important around you and easily ignore any distractions that might make you anxious or upset.
- Maybe you want to sharpen your vision, so as you look carefully, you see everything that is important where you are.
- Maybe you want to feel calm and peaceful, more optimistic about what you are doing.

Go ahead and imagine doing something personally important, that will help you increase your calmness and skill. Imagine something you can actually do, not just a wish.

In this box write an individualized, achievable goal.
For ideas, see the Catalog of Goals on the following page.

Take time to store your goal in some special place in your memory where you can find it later.

Here are the forty-nine words in bold (the text in italics is a suggested explanation).

STEP 1

Prepare a personal suggestion.

Something that will solve a problem, make you happier, more satisfied.

STEP 2

Look around and find a spot for focus.

Pick a spot that is a little blurry, without hard boundaries. A spot on fabric, a pattern in wood, a shiny doorknob, or a single flower would work.

STEP 3

Focus on the spot... inhale... hold it... exhale slowly.

Fill your lungs but don't strain; let your shoulders move naturally.

STEP 4

Increase focus... inhale... and as you exhale whisper "Deeper."

End the whisper the same time you end the exhalation.

STEP 5

Continue breathing... and whispering "Deeper"... until you see the spot change.

Some people see it right away. For some, change takes a little longer.

STEP 6

When the spot has a halo of light... recall your suggestion.

The faint light is a sign your brain has changed, that you are seeing and planning with more concentration and less emotion. Live your goal.

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CATALOG OF GOALS

Before you go back and start the exercise, take time to imagine and store your goal in some special place in your memory where you can find it later. Go to Step 2: Look around and find a spot for focus.

Social Justice Stress

Feelings About Racial Prejudice

Maybe you need to remember something about how you felt when you were a child.

You know how you felt when, a long time back, someone said “Treat others as you would like others to treat you,” or “Consider the stranger for you were once a stranger yourself,” or “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Remember the positive feeling when you heard those ideas? Maybe those goals became important for your whole life. Maybe you can live up to them right now. Would that calm, sharing, trusting feeling be a good goal?

Clinician Stress No. 1:

Not Feeling Good Enough for the Job

Maybe you need to remember something about your job.

You know why you decided to do this humanitarian work. Think about all the people you cared for and find the memory of a time when you intervened in a way that was special, when you did extraordinary work. A situation when your ability was just what someone needed. Think about your successful interventions, how it felt knowing your skills and decision probably made somebody’s life better, longer, and more comfortable. Would that feeling of proud confidence be a good goal?

Clinician Stress No. 2:

Feeling Lack of Energy for Work (Tired, Burned Out)

You know why you decided to do this important work. Remember when you were still in school, your first year, all the late hours? Was there ever a time when you were exhausted, and then something changed? You felt refreshed and kept on working. What was it that changed, that helped you feel great again? Let yourself bring back that good feeling. Spread it all through your body. Would that be a good goal?

Caregiver Stress

Maybe you need to remember something about your job.

You know why you decided to do this work. Can you remember how excited you felt the day when you first started? Think about the good things you have done since then. Maybe you remember the proud feelings when you did the best you could, and promised yourself that tomorrow you would do even better? What helped you do your very best? Would that be a good goal?

Partner Stress for Committed Couples

Maybe you need to remember something about your relationship.

You know why you decided to connect. Recall the good things you did together since then, how you listened to each other, what you saw and discussed. As you recall all those times past, you can also pay attention to how it feels to remember the sharing and helping. How easy and natural it was, to say what came to mind, listening to what your partner had to say. Would that be a good goal?

Daily Living Stress

Maybe you need to think about something you do just for fun.

Can you remember a time, walking in a garden or someplace outdoors, when you felt particularly content? When you were inspired by an idea, or by some music, or by a person you wanted to emulate? Or a time when you created a piece of art? When you thought about developing a new hobby? Recall those feelings of contentment and wonder and creativity. Would that be a good goal?

Kidney Dialysis Stress

Maybe you need to remember when you first heard about your kidney disease.

What did you think? Were you worried about how you’d do your job, or tell the people who cared, or even continue living? And then someone told you about dialysis, how you could make a change and keep on living. When did you get the idea that you wanted to do that? A picture of how you would live your life going forward. Would that feeling be a good goal?

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CATALOG OF GOALS CONTINUED

Post-Traumatic Stress *Feelings About Loss*

Maybe it would help to remember finding something that had disappeared.

Did you ever go looking for a lost toy or souvenir or book or memory? You searched in every location you could think of, retracing the same path, looking at the same shelves over and over again, opening the same boxes, retracing your path, recalling images of the time passed, all in an effort to locate what was lost. And suddenly you found it. Remember the relief, the letting go, the joy, the sunshine feeling. Finally you could get back to doing important things with other people. You knew what you wanted to do. Would that calm, assertive, supported feeling be a good goal?

REFERENCES

- Wark, D. (2015). Traditional and Alert Hypnotic Phenomena: Development Through Anteriorization. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 57(3), 254-266. doi:10.1080/00029157.2014.976784
- Wark, D. (In Press). Hypnosis and End Stage Renal Disease: Review and Suggestions. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 63(1).

Template for Step 1: Building More Goals

I remember when I... (Recall of an effective past event)

- ...decided to...
- ...spoke up and...
- ...finally completed...

I know how I'd like to... (Thoughts about achievement)

- ...my job at...
- ...be a better partner to...
- ...have more energy for...

How felt when I... (Feelings about achievement)

- ...learned how to...
- ...discovered that I...
- ...listened to...

Right now I want to... (Write an achievable goal)



GREETINGS FROM ASCH'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As Bridget mentioned in her President's Message, I am so pleased to be working with the ASCH community as your new Executive Director. During the past few months, my staff and I have been intimately involved with ASCH's leadership, learning about the organization's initiatives and processes, as well as where new opportunities lie. We see a lot of opportunities for growth and advancement and are in the process of upgrading virtually all ASCH's infrastructure: its website, social channels, publications, database, you name it. Our goal is to modernize ASCH's technological capabilities in order to better deliver membership, credentialing, and educational

services, while also providing a structure for improved communication and collaboration. The ASCH community is deeply committed to this organization, and we want to be able to deliver quality programs and services ASCH members deserve. One such example of improvement is this newsletter, which you will notice is redesigned to enhance visual impact and quality.

In the coming weeks, look for many changes to ASCH, including strategic review of the organization's committee and governance structure. The ASCH leadership is deeply committed to improving this organization and has a vision of the new ASCH that will emerge. I look forward to working with them to get the society to its next chapter of success. In addition to me, please know ASCH has an entire team working on every aspect of the organization's programs and who will support you, the membership. Do not hesitate to reach out at any time and we look forward to serving you.

All my best,

Molly Alton Mullins

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COMPONENT SECTION **INFOCUS**

Component Section InFocus takes a closer look at the clinical hypnosis community across the country.

A student from a Level 1 hypnosis course asked me about hypnosis being applied to organizations. It was a question I've never been asked before and I was a little surprised by it. My initial response was "I have no idea." Then I found myself having random thoughts about it. Although I do not know what thoughts Erickson may or may not have had with applying hypnotic concepts to organizations, or more specifically, the concept of destabilization to organizations. I do know the simple unexpected question served to disrupt my patterned thinking about hypnosis and then about our professional organizations. Any institution with a history as long and as storied as ours has been able to evolve and align with changing norms, societal shifts, and destabilizing events.

Much has changed since ASCH was founded by Milton H. Erickson, MD in 1957. The world health pandemic destabilized healthcare operations and our membership organizations including ASCH and Component Societies. All of us individually and organizationally have made adjustments in some form due to these events. Some of those adjustments were in areas where resistance was high. The "destabilization" or pattern disruption created a hidden gift for us that opened up deep potential and prompted shifts to expand how we deliver hypnosis, our educational offerings, and how we connect with each other. These shifts have been crucial to the on-going success of the ASCH and component sections throughout the pandemic. It is my belief this evolution will help ensure that we continue to meet the changing needs of our current members while also better positioning us as a

desirable and welcoming professional community for prospective new members. This is one of the items on my positives of Covid-19 list.

ASCH has another "destabilizing" event with the change in our association management firm to SEVEN12 Management and smaller changes with the annual transition to the new Executive Board. While transitions are positive changes, they create opportunity for more evolution and tailoring our membership organizations, trainings, and delivery of hypnosis to the needs of members and those in our care. At the time of writing this article, discussions have started about re-imagining possibilities for our organizational structure and our ASCH and component sections relationships. I have had conversations with current ASCH President Dr. Bridget Bongaard, MD and Molly Alton Mullins, CEO of SEVEN12 Management, about the possibilities and needs of the component sections. Dr. Bongaard has invited me to attend the Executive Board meetings so I have firsthand information and can participate in leadership conversations to be better positioned to liaison between the ASCH and the component sections.

As we discuss these possibilities and identify strategies, I encourage all of us — regardless of our affiliation — to consider the possibilities of what this growth can look like. How can we cultivate more collaborative relationships and be responsive to each other's needs, individually and organizationally? After all, regardless of being an ASCH member, a component member, or a member of both, we all believe in the healing power of hypnosis and want as many health care professionals as possible

to have this resource in providing care to our clients/patients. Increased collaboration among all of us helps us learn from each other and nourishes our community.

The question that lies before us is how much longer will our flexibility in thinking and the evolution as an organization from these "destabilizing" events last? At its core, the disruption of patterns encourages flexibility, learning, and progression. My hope is we will continue to embrace the evolution and re-imagine what else is possible, so that we will continue to take advantage of the unlocked potential and continue to cultivate our evolution. I have been asked to continue to serve as the ASCH Components Sections Chair for another year. My invitation to all of you is to share your needs and ideas, contribute to possibilities, and for component leaders to participate in the meetings being planned to gather your thoughts and ideas.

Please feel free to reach out to me or send me your thoughts as we continue to define this evolution as ASCH and the ASCH components continue their journey in time. This evolution will help ensure all members positively experience the benefits of being part of our hypnosis community. As with any journey, there are appropriate times to make changes in our direction and focus. The opportunity for making these adjustments is something we cannot pass up if we want to thrive in the future.

Warm Regards,

Debbie Bensching, LCSW

Chair,
ASCH Component Section Committee
debbsweb@gmail.com

2021 ASCH Executive Committee

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ASCH-ERF Clinical Workshops

The American Society of Clinical Hypnosis-Education and Research Foundation (ASCH-ERF) sponsors three levels of instruction through its professional training in clinical hypnosis. These workshops are held four to six times a year. ASCH-ERF makes every effort to hold workshops in all regions of the United States.

The Level 1 workshop, the first part of a series in the certification program for clinical hypnosis, is intended for licensed health professionals, including physicians, nurses, psychologists, dentists, counselors, social workers, and those in related fields. This training is a requirement of full ASCH membership.

Level 2 workshops focus on strengthening skills, strategies, and applications of clinical hypnosis. Level 1 taught “how to” do clinical hypnosis, and Level 2 builds on this skill set and refines and furthers development to add the when, why, and where to the “how to.”

Advanced level workshops build upon the curricula from Levels 1 and 2; recent workshops have focused on behavioral medicine, health psychology, hypnosis and pediatrics, and mind-body medicine.

Session capacities are purposefully set low to ensure participants are given the opportunity for active participation and provided the required attention and oversight by faculty (especially in small group activities). Advanced level workshop capacity varies depending on topic.

Training is 21.5 hours in length and is eligible for continuing education credit. Virtual workshops typically start each day at 12:30 pm ET and end between 5:30 and 7 pm. In-person workshops typically begin on Thursday at 6:30 pm (local time) and end on Sunday at noon.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

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Workshops take place simultaneously

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www.asch.net/education/regionalworkshops