

Code of Ethics of the Australian Society of Hypnosis

The Australian Society of Hypnosis Ltd, hereinafter referred to as ASH, is dedicated to the scientific investigation and clinical utilisation of hypnosis at the highest professional level. Ethical guidelines to which a member must subscribe are stated to allow for the multidisciplinary nature of the membership. There is implied a personal commitment to behave according to the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

Guideline 1

A member of ASH shall always place first the welfare of the patient of the experimental subject when using hypnosis or hypnotic techniques in clinical practice or in experimentation.

- 1a. The standards of professional relationships which guide the medical practitioner, dentist or psychologist, within the appropriate professional or scientific field, shall prevail in his or her use of all hypnotic techniques.
- 1b. Proper safeguards shall be maintained whenever a patient or subject is exposed to unusual stress or other form of risk. If stress or risk is involved, the person or subject should be informed and give consent. Estimation of risk is a difficult matter, and when in doubt the practitioner should consult with professional colleagues.

Guideline 2

Hypnosis is considered an adjuvant to other forms of scientific or clinical endeavours, so that competence in hypnotic techniques alone is not acceptable as a basis for professional service or research.

- 2a. ASH requires its members to abide by the ethical standards laid down by the recognised national professional associations to which they are eligible to belong.
- 2b. Item 2a requires acceptance of the ethical professional and scientific standards of the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Dental Association and the Australian Psychological Society. It does not imply endorsement by ASH of the policies or practices of these organisations.

Guideline 3

Each member of ASH shall limit the clinical and scientific use of hypnosis to the area of competence as defined by the professional standards of his or her field.

Guideline 4

Hypnosis should not be used as a form of entertainment.

- 4a. No member of ASH shall offer services for the purpose of public entertainment or collaborate with any person or agency engaged in public entertainment.

Guideline 5

A member of ASH shall not support or act in a manner that could reasonably be interpreted as actively supporting the practice of hypnosis by lay individuals.

- 5a. A lay individual is defined here as one who does not meet the criteria for membership of the ASH, that is, he or she is not a medical practitioner, dentist, or psychologist legally entitled to practise in these professions.
- 5b. A member of ASH shall not give courses involving the teaching of hypnotic techniques to lay individuals. Lectures informing lay individuals about hypnosis are, of course, admissible providing they

do not include demonstrations or didactic material involving induction of hypnosis. This clause does not apply to students in tertiary training in an appropriate health care profession, permitted by law, to practise hypnosis.

5c. Consultations with lay representatives of the press or other media of communication are permitted to minimise distortions or misrepresentations of hypnosis. Talks with lay representatives of the press and radio, or TV appearances, are acceptable so long as these are beneficial to the Society and the ethical use of hypnosis.

Guideline 6

The ASH views it as unethical to train lay individuals in the use of hypnosis, to collaborate with lay individuals in the use of hypnosis or to serve as consultant for lay individuals who are utilising hypnosis.

Guideline 7

The ASH views it as unethical to attend a meeting at which lay hypnotists are being trained or to give any credence to such meetings.

Guideline 8

It is recognised that an ethical code cannot, by its very nature, specify all of the practices that are considered ethical and mention all of those considered unethical. Hence, behaviour considered ethically unacceptable to their peers or behaviour that is illegal or bring disrepute upon others who practise hypnosis, may be the occasion for adverse action by the ASH even though not specified in this code.

Procedure

The procedure to be followed if any member is accused of having breached this Code of Ethics is laid down in Article 9 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Society.