

2025 Recovery Conference Presenter Bios

Presentation #1: “Meaning Making in Psychotherapy: Utilizing Narrative and Intersubjective Approaches”

Laura Faith, PhD, HSPP



Laura Faith is a clinical psychologist currently practicing at Richard L. Roudebush VAMC in Indianapolis, IN. She completed her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Missouri – Kansas City and internship with Paul Lysaker at RLR VAMC. She is an active member of the MERIT institute and a member of the research and training committees. In addition to clinical practice as a MERIT therapist, she supervises students and is involved with the internship at RLR VAMC.

Presentation #2: “Metacognition in Opioid Maintenance Patients”

John Hanson Högberg, clinical psychologist



John Hanson Högberg is a clinical psychologist, specialist in addiction treatment and PhD-student from Gothenburg, Sweden. His research focuses on the field of addiction and substance use, mainly opioid addiction, psychiatric comorbidity, and metacognition.

Presentation #3: “Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy for Early Psychosis: Adaptations and Insights”

Bethany Leonhardt, PsyD, HSPP



Bethany L. Leonhardt, PsyD, HSPP, is a clinical psychologist with Prevention and Recovery Center (PARC) at Eskenazi Health, as well as an assistant professor of clinical psychology with Indiana University School of Medicine. She is current president of the MERIT Institute and has been involved in the development and dissemination of MERIT since 2011. She has been providing direct clinical care to individuals with psychosis for over 13 years, specializing in early psychosis since 2014. Her main research interests include metacognition in early psychosis, recovery, and developing and evaluating recovery-oriented psychotherapies. She has authored over 60 peer-reviewed articles and several book chapters about recovery, psychosis, and psychotherapy.

Presentation #4: “Mourning & Psychosis: Finding Connections Between Recovery Frameworks and Psychoanalytic Theory”

Yael Holoschitz, MD & Deborah Cabaniss, MD



Dr. Yael Holoschitz is Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University Department of Psychiatry / New York State Psychiatric Institute (NYSPI). She is the Associate Director of the Washington Heights Community Service Outpatient Program, helping to oversee three state-funded clinics associated with Columbia Psychiatry/NYSPI, which serve individuals in the community with serious mental illness. At Columbia/NYSPI she has been involved in clinical teaching and supervision of residents and clinicians in multiple roles and treatment settings, currently serving as Director of

Psychotherapy Training of the Columbia Psychiatry Residency, and co-chair of Training at Columbia University Center for Psychoanalytic Training & Research. She is a trained psychoanalyst and has a particular interest in applying psychoanalytic principles



Deborah L. Cabaniss, M.D. is Professor Emerita of Clinical Psychiatry at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Until June of 2025, she was Associate Director of Residency Training in the Columbia Department of Psychiatry. She received her BA from Yale, her MD from Columbia, and completed her psychoanalytic training at Columbia. She has won numerous teaching awards and has over 60 publications related to psychotherapy education. In addition to her work in the US, Dr. Cabaniss has lectured and taught in Sweden, Norway, Japan, Korea and Canada, and her books, “Psychodynamic Psychotherapy: A Clinical Manual,” “Psychodynamic Formulation: An Expanded Approach,” and “Different Patients; Different Therapies” are

used widely across the US and abroad. She is in private practice in Manhattan, where she works with individuals with psychosis.

Presentation #5: “Creating Shared Realities in Psychosis Treatment: An Ethnographic Study of the Clinician-patient Relationship”

Melissa Uehling, PhD



Melissa Uehling is an MD/PhD student at Emory University. She recently defended her PhD in sociology, and is currently in her final year of medical school, intending to specialize in psychiatry. Her research focuses on intersubjectivity and power-dynamics within the clinician-patient relationship in the treatment of psychosis. Clinically, her primary focus is in psychotic disorders and she is interested in person-centered approaches such as the Open Dialogue approach.

Presentation #6: “Does Insight Improve During the Course of Psychosis?”

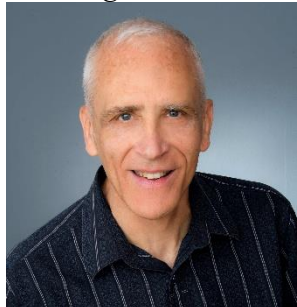
Pegah Seif, MD



Dr. Pegah Seif is a board-certified psychiatrist who completed her psychiatry residency at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences in Tehran, Iran. She relocated to the United States in 2022 and has since been working as a postdoctoral research fellow under the mentorship of Dr. Matcheri Keshavan at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School. As part of her current fellowship, Dr. Seif contributes to research on early-course psychosis, including clinical assessments, biomarker studies, and a double-blind clinical trial of clozapine. Her academic interests focus on the trajectory of insight in psychosis and the relationship between patient- and clinician-reported symptom severity. She is exploring how discrepancies in symptom perception may be influenced by the patient's level of insight, and how insight relates to broader constructs such as metacognition and theory of mind. This work aims to advance our understanding of self-awareness and meaning-making in serious mental illness—core components of recovery. She has authored several peer-reviewed publications in the areas of psychosis, addiction, and serious mental illness. Dr. Seif is committed to reflective, person-centered approaches and the development of recovery-oriented models of psychiatric care.

Presentation #7: “A Compassionate Approach to Working with Distressing Voices”

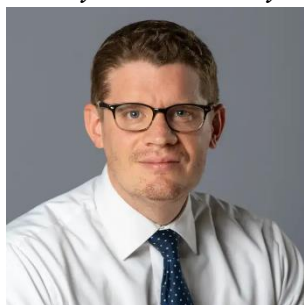
Ron Unger, LCSW



Ron Unger is a therapist specializing in psychosis, and an educator who has reached thousands of students through courses and seminars on CBT for psychosis, the intersection of trauma, dissociation and psychosis, and options for addressing spiritual and cultural issues within the treatment for psychosis. He explores ways of understanding extreme states of mind, and possible unique pathways toward transformation, recovery, and healing, on his blog at recoveryfrompsychosis.org.

Presentation #8: “Shame and Stigma in the Psychotherapy for Psychosis”

Jeremy Ridenour, PsyD, ABPP



Jeremy M. Ridenour, PsyD, ABPP, is the director of psychological testing, associate director of admissions, and a staff psychologist at the Austen Riggs Center. His research interest includes the psychological assessment of personality disorders and the psychotherapeutic treatment of psychosis through an emphasis on metacognition and mentalization.

Presentation #9: “Disorganization and Disintegration in Schizophrenia: Metacognitive Capacity and Speech Content Across Levels of Conceptual Disorganization”

Evan Myers, PhD



Evan Myers, PhD, is a post-doctoral fellow and recent graduate from Indiana University Indianapolis. He is completing his postdoctoral fellowship at the Wellness and Recovery After Psychosis (WRAP) Program at Boston Medical Center, working with adolescents and young adults recovering following their first episode of psychosis. He is interested in recovery-oriented psychotherapy, and his research interests include metacognition, disorganization, and stigma in psychosis.

Presentation #10: “Promoting Self-directed Recovery from Psychosis Through Group-based Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERITg) and Implications for Future Research”

Ashley Schnakenberg Martin, PhD



Dr. Schnakenberg Martin is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine and a Research Psychologist at the VA Connecticut Healthcare System in the American state of Connecticut. She is also the Director of the Early Psychosis Intervention Program at VA Connecticut and has a background in the diagnosis and treatment of serious mental illness and substance use disorders. Dr. Schnakenberg Martin has a vibrant research program, funded by the Veterans Health Administration and the National Institute of Health, seeking to understand psychosis and the relationship between the development of psychotic symptoms and substance use, such as cannabis. To study these questions, she uses a multimodal approach including psychophysiology (e.g., simultaneous magnetoencephalography (MEG) and electroencephalography (EEG)), assessments of metacognition and neurocognition, as well as pharmacological intervention studies.