2026 Recovery Conference Presenter Bios

Presentation #1: "Beyond a One-Size-Fits-All: Personalizing Metacognitive Training for Psychosis with Machine Learning"
Adrien Goncalves, CBT Neuropsychologist & PhD Student

Adrien Goncalves is a neuropsychologist and cognitive-behavioral therapist with several years of experience working in a psychosocial rehabilitation center focused on recovery-oriented care. He is currently pursuing a doctoral thesis in collaboration with INSERM as part of an international project called PERMEPSY, which aims to personalize metacognitive psychotherapy for individuals with psychosis. His work bridges clinical practice and research, with a particular interest in metacognition.

Presentation #2: "Panel Discussion on Lessons Learned, Current Strategies, and Future Directions"
Jay Hamm, PsyD, HSPP; Marina Kukla, PhD, HSPP & Louis Violeau, PhD; Other panelists TBD

Jay Hamm, PsyD is a clinical psychologist at Sandra Eskenazi Mental Health Center in Indianapolis, IN, where he provides psychotherapy, staff training, and clinical supervision for community mental health treatment teams. He has been active in the development and dissemination of Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERIT) since 2010 and is currently the vice-president of the MERIT Institute. He has authored over 60 articles and several book chapters on the topics of psychosis, metacognition, recovery, psychotherapy, and clinical supervision.

Marina Kukla is a Clinical Psychologist and researcher at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center and an Associate Research Professor at Indiana University Indianapolis. Dr. Kukla works in the Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center, a specialty outpatient clinic for adults with serious mental illness, as a frontline therapist and trains psychology students, interns, and postdoctoral fellows in MERIT. She has had multiple federal research grants as principal investigator and has published over 85 papers focusing on promoting and understanding recovery, rehabilitation, community integration, and healthcare outcomes of people with serious mental illness and other complex populations.

Louis Violeau, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and methodologist specialized in clinical neuropsychology and psychopathology. He practices at the Cognitive Remediation and Assessment Unit (URCE) of Edouard Toulouse Psychiatric Hospital in Marseille (France) and serves as a scientific methodologist at Psynovia, a mental health research center in the PACA region. He earned his PhD from the University of Bordeaux in 2020, with a dissertation on self-stigma in schizophrenia. Louis is the founding President of the French Association of Metacognitive Therapy (AFTM) and a member of the MERIT Institute. He received the 2025 Paul Lysaker Award for his work on metacognition and

emotional memory in schizophrenia. He has authored more than fifteen peer-reviewed publications, co-edits with Bethany Leonhardt and Jay Hamm an international volume on MERIT and coordinates a Research Topic on MERIT for Frontiers in Psychology. His current work integrates cognitive-neuroscience and clinical-psychology perspectives on metacognition to refine recovery-oriented interventions for individuals with serious mental illness.

Presentation #3: "Making Sense of Change: Metacognition and the Evolution of Self-Narrative in Serious Mental Illness"
Courtney Wiesepape, PsyD, HSPP & Ruth Firmin, PhD

Courtney Wiesepape, PsyD, HSPP is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Indiana State University and a licensed clinical psychologist. Her work focuses on recovery-oriented psychotherapy for individuals with serious mental illness, with an emphasis on metacognition, meaning-making, and the development and implementation of Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERIT). Her research examines metacognition in psychosis and personality pathology, as well as stigma related to serious mental illness. Dr. Wiesepape is actively engaged in national efforts to expand training in serious mental illness within doctoral programs. She holds leadership roles within the MERIT Institute, the APA Division 18 SMI/SED Section, and the SMI Future of Academia, Training, and Education (SMI FATE) initiative.

Ruth Firmin, PhD is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Gordon College and clinical psychologist. Her clinical work and training focused on evidence-based treatments for individuals living with serious mental health conditions, particularly schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. She has also worked with those experiencing trauma and homelessness. Inspired by the resiliency of the individuals with whom she worked clinically, Dr. Firmin's research focuses on illuminating how individuals with significant mental health challenges stay immune to stigma and its negative consequences. Her work has been funded by the American Psychological Foundation and utilized mixed-methods to better understand mental health stigma, stigma resistance, factors that promote resilience, cultural and individual differences related to stigma, and how faith communities can better support those experiencing mental health challenges.

Presentation #4: "Meaning Making for Family Members: A Recovery-Oriented Approach"
Jackie Abate, PsyD, HSPP & Kelsey Huling, PsyD, HSPP

Jackie Abate, PsyD, HSPP is also a clinical psychologist at Sandra Eskenazi Mental Heath Center. She works in their Adult Outpatient program, serving individuals diagnosed with serious mental illnesses. Jackie specializes in recovery-oriented assessment, psychotherapy, and clinical research of individuals with psychosis and other serious mental illness. She also provides MERIT in her individual and group work with patients and actively trains graduate students and community mental health clinicians in this approach. Dr. Abate has given several presentations and been involved in writing a number of manuscripts and book chapters related to her work. She completed her doctoral degree at University of Indianapolis, with a focus on adult psychopathology and specialization in psychosis. Dr. Abate completed her internship at Baltimore VA Medical Center in Baltimore, MD. Dr. Abate has been a member of the MERIT Institute since 2016 and is currently a member of both the Training and Programming Committees.

Kelsey Huling, PsyD, HSPP is a clinical psychologist at Sandra Eskenazi Mental Health Center's STARS and Older Adults Services clinics, serving individuals dually diagnosed with intellectual disability and serious mental illness as well as older adults with serious mental illness. Kelsey specializes in recovery-oriented assessment, psychotherapy, and clinical research of individuals with psychosis and other serious mental illness. She provides Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERIT) in her individual and group work with patients and actively trains graduate students and community mental health clinicians in this approach. Dr. Huling has given several presentations and been involved in writing several manuscripts and book chapters related to her work. She completed her doctoral degree at University of Indianapolis, with a focus on adult psychopathology and specialization in psychosis. Dr. Huling completed her internship at Richard L. Roudebush VAMC in Indianapolis, IN in the SMI track where she received advanced training in providing psychotherapy for individuals experiencing psychosis, specifically through MERIT. Dr. Huling has been member of the MERIT Institute since 2017 and is currently a member of the Training Committee and serves as co-chair of the Programming Committee. She further is a member of IPA since 2021 and currently serves on the Continuing Education and ID/DD Committees.

Presentation #5: "Trainee and Trainer Perspectives on Implementation of Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERIT): Preliminary Results of a Qualitative Study"
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 at RLR VAMC. She is an active member of the MERIT institute and a member of the MERIT research and training committees. In addition to clinical practice as a MERIT therapist, she supervises students and is actively involved with research.

Presentation #6: "Promotion of Affect Regulation and Attachment to the Therapist Among Individuals Experiencing Psychosis in Metacognitive Reflection and Insight Therapy (MERIT)"
Jaclyn Hillis-Mascia, PsyD, HSPP

Jaclyn Hillis-Mascia, Psy.D. is a clinical psychologist and owner of a private practice in Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Hillis-Mascia earned her degree in Clinical Psychology at the University of Indianapolis and completed her postdoctoral residency at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. Dr. Hillis-Mascia has extensive background in providing MERIT to adults navigating complex mental health concerns for over 10 years across a variety of settings. Prior to private practice, Dr. Hillis-Mascia worked at the Chillicothe VA Medical Center in Chillicothe, OH, serving Veterans across a variety of settings to include inpatient, residential, and intensive outpatient clinics as well as supervised psychology students in the practice of MERIT. Her research and clinical interests involve emotional regulation, attachment, and therapeutic alliance among individuals with experiences of psychosis, personality-related concerns, and/or cooccurring substance use.

Presentation #7: "Toward a Dialogue Between Cognitive Neuroscience and Clinical Psychology Views of Metacognition"
Louis Violeau, PhD

Louis Violeau, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and methodologist specialized in clinical neuropsychology and psychopathology. He practices at the Cognitive Remediation and Assessment Unit (URCE) of Edouard Toulouse Psychiatric Hospital in Marseille (France) and serves as a scientific methodologist at Psynovia, a mental health research center in the PACA region. He earned his PhD from the University of Bordeaux in 2020, with a dissertation on self-stigma in schizophrenia. Louis is the founding President of the French Association of Metacognitive Therapy (AFTM) and a member of the MERIT Institute. He received the 2025 Paul Lysaker Award for his work on metacognition and emotional memory in schizophrenia. He has authored more than fifteen peer-reviewed publications, co-edits with Bethany Leonhardt and Jay Hamm an international volume on MERIT and coordinates a Research Topic on MERIT for Frontiers in Psychology. His current work integrates cognitive-neuroscience and clinical-psychology perspectives on metacognition to refine recovery-oriented interventions for individuals with serious mental illness.

Presentation #8: "MindShift: From Adherence to Deliberation"
Helene Speyer, MD

Helene Speyer is a psychiatrist, researcher, and Associate Professor at the Copenhagen Research Center for Mental Health (CORE), Mental Health Centre Copenhagen, Copenhagen University Hospital, and the Department of Clinical Medicine, University of Copenhagen. Her research sits at the intersection of psychiatric epistemology, recovery-oriented care, and the ethics of clinical practice, with a particular focus on epistemic injustice in psychiatry, antipsychotic discontinuation, and lived experience as a source of scientific knowledge.

Presentation #9: "Dungeons & Dragons as a Therapeutic Tool to Improve Metacognition for Persons with Psychosis Through Fantasy Roleplaying: Theory and Clinical Implications"
Marcus Thomas, PsyD, LLP

Dr. Marcus Thomas is a Staff Psychologist in the Substance Use Disorders Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (SUDRRTP) at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center in Detroit, MI, and completed his internship and received postdoctoral training at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System with concentrations in recovery-oriented psychotherapy for persons with severe mental illness (SMI) and differential diagnostic assessment. Dr. Thomas has practiced MERIT since 2022 and facilitated TA-RPG groups since 2024 at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center, VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System, and John D. Dingell VA Medical Center. In his free time, Marcus enjoys spending time with his wife and 5 cats, going to concerts, and playing Dungeons & Dragons.

Presentation #10: “Play in 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. He has written and presented on schizophrenia, paranoia, personality disorders, and psychological testing.