

Steven Alan Hassan, PhD, MA, MEd, LMHC, NCC

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SUMMARY

A licensed mental health professional, cult expert and undue influence expert with professional experience in the United States and abroad including consulting, coaching, speaking, media appearances, activism, writing, researching, teaching, intervention and recovery services, and expert witness work to assist individuals and families with problems related to undue influence including brainwashing, mind control, and unethical hypnosis. Expertise includes undue influence in cases of destructive one-on-one relationships, families, parental alienation, mini-cults, religious cults, therapy and self-improvement groups, professional abuse, institutional abuse, corporations, multi-level marketing, political groups, human trafficking, hate, and violent extremism, and other undue influence situations.

CREDENTIALS

PhD

Fielding Graduate University, School of Leadership Studies, Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Development and Change (ODC) (2020). Dissertation: *The BITE Model of Authoritarian Control: Undue Influence, Thought Reform, Brainwashing, Mind Control, Trafficking and the Law*. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2476570146/>

MA

Fielding Graduate University, School of Leadership Studies, Master of Arts in Organizational Development & Change, (2020)

MEd

Cambridge College, Masters in Education in Counseling Psychology, Cambridge, MA (1985)

National Certification

National Board of Certified Counselors: Nationally Certified Counselor, Cert. No. 43226

MA Licensure

Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, #820 (1992-)

Additional Professional Training

American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law
American Society for Clinical Hypnosis conferences
Attachment Pathology
American Psychological Association
Dissociative Disorders
Ericksonian Hypnosis and Psychotherapy workshops and conferences
International Academy of Law and Mental Health Congress
International Society of Hypnosis workshops and conferences
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
Neuro-Linguistic Programming extensive training (NLP) 1980-1981
New England Society of Clinical Hypnosis
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
Phobia and Panic Disorders
Strategic and Structural Family Therapy

Honors and Awards

Recipient of the Margaret Thaler Singer Award, given by International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA) 2014
Recipient of the Jerusalem Medal given with gratitude by Nahum Itzkovitz, Director General of the Israel Ministry of Social Affairs and Services, 2010

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Independent Practice in counseling and consulting. (Newton, MA) (1985-)
Founding Director & President, Freedom of Mind Resource Center. (Newton, MA) (1999-)
Founding Director, Freedom From Undue Influence, a division of the non-profit Dare Association, Inc. (Newton, MA) (2017-)
Professional staff trainer. Presented a staff training workshop at Ellenhorn, a private Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT), in Arlington, MA.
Teacher of Elective Course for 4th Year Psychiatry Students: Helping people influenced by Undue Influence: Hypnosis, Destructive Cults, and Traffickers, for the Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Residency Training Program, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. (Boston MA) (2018-2019)
Instructor, Harvard Law School Trial Advocacy Workshop (Cambridge, MA) (2x a year 2016-2019)
Presenter in the course Spirituality, Religion, and Psychiatry in the Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Residency Training Program, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. (1999-2019)

Presenter, Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Grand Rounds: Undue Influence: An Introduction to Destructive Cults, Mind Control, Brainwashing and Deprogramming, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. (Boston, MA) (2017) <https://youtu.be/k5fASLZL14>

Presenter, Psychiatry Grand Rounds, Boston University School of Medicine. (Boston, MA) (2016)

Presenter, Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Grand Rounds, affiliated with Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA) (2003)

National Coordinator, FOCUS: Developing programs to provide information, counseling and support to former cult members (1985-1986)

Founder, Ex-Moon Inc.: Founder and first President of this nonprofit educational corporation serving as an information and support network for over four hundred former cult members. (1979-1981)

Former Consultant/Instructor, Fox Valley Technical College

Former Clinical Affiliate in Psychology, McLean Hospital (Belmont, MA).

Former Guest Faculty, Cambridge Family Institute

Presenter of other lectures, workshops, and trainings at hundreds of universities, colleges, churches, synagogues and community centers including:

- Boston Psychoanalytic Society
- British Society for Medical and Dental Hypnosis – Scotland, October 2016
- American Bar Association's Conference on Tort and Religion
- American Psychological Association - 2001
- American Society of Clinical Hypnosis
- Eastern Regional Conference on Multiple Personality and Dissociation
- The International Congress of Hypnosis
- Massachusetts General Hospital
- McLean Hospital

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Books

- Hassan, Steven (2019) *The Cult of Trump: A Leading Cult Expert Explains How the President Uses Mind Control*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Hassan, Steven (2018) *Combating Cult Mind Control: The #1 Best-Selling Guide to Protection, Rescue and Recovery from Destructive Cults* Newton, Massachusetts: Freedom of Mind Press.
- Hassan, Steven (2012, 2013) *Freedom of Mind: Helping Loved Ones Leave Controlling People, Cults and Beliefs*, Newton, Massachusetts: Freedom of Mind Press
- Hassan, Steven (2000) *Releasing the Bonds: Empowering People to Think for Themselves* Somerville, Massachusetts: Freedom of Mind Press. This book has also been published in Chinese, Persian, Polish, and Russian.
- Hassan, Steven A. (1988,1990). *Combatting Cult Mind Control*. Rochester, Vermont: Park Street Press. This book has also been published in French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Slovak, Spanish, and Russian.

Book Chapters

- Forthcoming: Hassan, S., Schefflin, A. (2023) Chapter 32: Cautions, cults entertainment and negative aspects of trance. In J. Linden, L. Sugarman, G. de Benedittis, and K. Varga (Eds.), *Routledge International Handbook of Clinical Hypnosis*. Taylor and Francis (UK).
- Forthcoming: Hassan, S., Blum, A. (2023). Chapter 15: Treatment Settings. In T. Durns, C. Scott, B. McDermott, and P. Whitehead (Eds.), *A Clinical Guide to Cults and Persuasive Leadership*. Cambridge University Press.
- Forthcoming: Hassan, S., Blum, A. (2023). Chapter 14: Psychotherapeutic and Pharmacological Treatment. In T. Durns, C. Scott, B. McDermott, and P. Whitehead (Eds.), *A Clinical Guide to Cults and Persuasive Leadership*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hassan, S.; Caven-Atack, J., Shah, M., Malhotra, S. (2022). Chapter 19: Lone-Actor Terrorism: Understanding Online Indoctrination. In J. Holzer, A. Dew, P. Recupero, P. Gill, and J. Wyman (Ed.), *LONE-ACTOR TERRORISM: An Integrated Framework*. Oxford University Press.
- Hassan, S., Caven-Atack, J. (2020) Anti-Semitism in Cults and Hate Groups. In: H. S. Moffic et al. (eds.), *Anti-Semitism and Psychiatry*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-37745-8_23
- Hankir A.Z., Hassan S. (2019) Psychological Determinants and Social Influences of Violent Extremism. In: Moffic H., Peteet J., Hankir A., Awaad R. (eds) *Islamophobia and Psychiatry*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-00512-2_32
- Hassan, Steven. (1994). Chapter 6: Strategic Intervention Therapy. In Shupe, A. & Bromley, D. (Ed.), *Anti-cult Movements in Cross-cultural Perspective*. New York: Garland

Peer-reviewed Journal Article

- Hassan, S. A., & Shah, M. J. (2019). The anatomy of undue influence used by terrorist cults and traffickers to induce helplessness and trauma, so creating false identities. *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health*, 8, 97–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2019.03.002>

Other Articles

- Hassan, Steven, Gutheil, T, Shah, M. (02/19/22). Putting the New Framework into Practice. *Psychiatric Times*.
<https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/putting-the-new-framework-into-practice>
- Hassan, Steven, Gutheil, T, Shah, M. (02/12/22). A New Framework: Exploring Efficacy. *Psychiatric Times*.
<https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/putting-the-new-framework-into-practice>
- Hassan, Steven, Gutheil, T, Shah, M. (02/05/22). Responding to Authoritarian Cults and Extreme Exploitations: A New Framework to Evaluate Undue Influence. *Psychiatric Times*.
<https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/putting-the-new-framework-into-practice>
- Hassan, Steven (12/17/20). A cult expert's advice for celebrating with politically divided family over the holidays. *The Boston Globe*.
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/12/17/opinion/cult-experts-advice-celebrating-with-politically-divided-family-over-holidays/>.
- Hassan, Steven (10/24/20). If Trump loses the election, QAnon will also lose support — and eventually disintegrate. *NBC News THINK Opinion, Analysis, Essays*.
<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/if-trump-loses-election-qanon-will-also-lose-support-eventually-ncna1244563>.

- Hassan, Steven (9/1/20). Trump's QAnon followers are a dangerous cult. How to save someone who's been brainwashed. *NBC News THINK: Opinion, Analysis, Essays*.
<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/trump-s-qanon-followers-are-dangerous-cult-how-save-someone-ncna1239828>.
- Hassan, Steven (10/13/19). Take It From a Former Moonie: Trump Is a Cult Leader: It might seem an outrageous proposition to compare Donald Trump to a murderous cult leader. And yet there are alarming parallels. *The Daily Beast*.
<https://www.thedailybeast.com/author/steven-hassan>.
- Hassan, Steven (2017) Brainwashing Young People into Violent Extremist Cults, *Freedom from Fear magazine of The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (Unicri.it)* <http://f3magazine.unicri.it/?p=1353>
- Hassan, Steven (1999) *Spiritual Responsibility: Cult Awareness* March/April issue of New Age Journal
- Hassan, Steven and Surya Das (1996) *Spiritual Responsibility: Avoiding Abuses and Pitfalls Along the Spiritual Path* (1996) *booklet*
- Hassan, Steven A. (1984). *Exit-Counseling: Working to Undo the Shackles of Cult Mind Control*. Reprinted in *Cults and Consequences* (1988). Los Angeles: Los Angeles Jewish Federation.

Curriculum

- Co-developer of *Ending the Game* with Rachel Thomas, Carissa Phelps and D'Lita Miller—an intervention curriculum for women who have been sex trafficked to understand pimp/trafficker mind control www.endingthegame.com

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- Hassan, Steven (06/01/21). How do MLMs recruit and retain participants? Panel presentation for Multilevel Marketing: The Consumer Protection Challenge 2021, virtual conference hosted by The College of New Jersey School of Business.
<https://www.mlmconference.com/>
- Hassan, Steven (5/22/22). The BITE of Cults in Our Culture in the Age of COVID. Panel presentation at American Psychiatric Association 2022 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA.
- Hassan, Steven (2/15/22). Influence, Authoritarianism, and Cults: ICSVE Panel Discussion featuring Dr. Steve Hassan, Cult Expert and Dr. Anne Speckhard, Director ICSVE. Presented online for International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (ICSVE).
<https://www.icsve.org/influence-authoritarianism-and-cults/>
- Hassan, Steven (12/08/21). FNCARES Fall Talk 2021: Mind Control and Colonization. Online panel presentation with Dr. Cindy Blackstock and Dr. Pamela Palmater for First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. <https://youtu.be/NYHuBgR-Otk>
- Hassan, Steven (10/23/21). Taking a BITE out of Disinformation and Cult Effects in the Time of COVID. Panel presentation at American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting.
- Hassan, Steven (10/01/21). Dr. Steven Hassan - Presentation to the GEC. Presented online for the Global Engagement Center (GEC), United States Department of State.

- Hassan, Steven (09/19/21). Helping People Who Are Currently In Or Have Left a Controlling Person, Cult, or Belief. Quarterly Online Training. The New England Society of Clinical Hypnosis.
- Hassan, Steven (07/29/21). Exploring the “Coercion” Element in Labor Trafficking. Presented virtually for the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the LA Regional Human Trafficking Task.
- Hassan, Steven (07/17/21). Authoritarian Cults, Media Indoctrination, and Shared Psychosis. Truth and Restoration Town Hall virtual panel presentation. World Mental Health Coalition. <https://worldmhc.org/town-hall-07172021/>
- Hassan, Steven (07/03/21). The Cult of Trump: How to Speak Respectfully and Strategically to Promote Re-Evaluation. Presented for the 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting of the International Cultic Studies Association. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6bk1s0oXwA>
- Hassan, Steven (05/13/21). Mind control and fact-checking with Dr. Steven Hassan. Keynote interview by Rebecca Catalanello for the PolitiFact 2021 United Facts of America: A Festival of Fact Checking. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oExKs8oygo>
- Hassan, Steven (05/01/21). How do MLMs recruit and retain participants? Panel presentation for Multilevel Marketing: The Consumer Protection Challenge 2021, virtual conference hosted by The College of New Jersey School of Business. <https://www.mlmconference.com/video>
- Hassan, Steven (1/28/21). A Cult Expert's Advice on Dealing with Anti-Vaxxers and General Vaccine Hesitancy. Presented for Community Action Summit New England Complex Systems Institute. <https://freedomofmind.com/necsi-covid-community-action-summit-a-cult-experts-advice-on-dealing-with-anti-vaxxers-and-general-vaccine-hesitancy/>
- Hassan, Steven (10/1/2020). What can Business Psychology learn from Donald Trump and the Dark Arts of Coercive Control? Presented for Association for Business Psychology in the UK. <https://vimeo.com/465729850/f02682cbaf>.
- Hassan, Steven (11/19/2019). *The Cult of Trump* Belmont Books Talk. Presented in Belmont, MA. <https://vimeo.com/374319091>.
- Hassan, Steven (11/10/2019). Steven Hassan: *The Cult of Trump* - 11/10/19. Presented at New York Society for Ethical Culture in New York, NY. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JG6miuWuIY>.
- Hassan, Steven; Gutheil, Thomas G.; Carpenter, J. Tyler; Drogin, Eric Y; and Farrell, Helen. (10/26/2019). Panel Discussion: The Many Faces of Causation. Presented at the 50th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, held in Baltimore, MD.
- Hassan, Steven, and Gutheil, Thomas G., M.D. (10/24/2019). The Need to Update Legal Systems regarding Undue Influence. Presented at the 50th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, held in Baltimore, MD.
- Hassan, Steven (10/22/2019). Brookline Booksmith Book Launch for Steven Hassan's 'The Cult of Trump'. Presented in Brookline, MA. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ADHdjKZRlo>.
- Hassan, Steven (9/11/2019). Proposing a New Model to Do a Forensic Evaluation for Undue Influence. Presented at The Program in Psychiatry and the Law, at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, a teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, in Boston, MA.

- Hassan, Steven (9/4/2019). The threat to cancel IALMH Congress in Rome if Hassan attends? What's the story? Presented at The Program in Psychiatry and the Law, at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, a teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, in Boston, MA.
- Hassan, Steven (8/2/2019). Spiritual Abuse and the Strategic Interactive Approach. Presented at the Spiritual Abuse Forum for Education, in Portland, OR.
- Hassan, Steven (7/4/2019). The BITE Model and the Influence Continuum and its use for Determining Undue Influence in Trafficking and Terrorism. Presented at 2019 Annual International Conference of the International Cultic Studies Association, in Manchester, UK.
- Hassan, Steven (6/26/2019). Strategies and Techniques for Recovery from Human Trafficking Programming. Presented at Light the Way to Freedom to End Human Trafficking: Human Trafficking Summit 2019 Summit in Austin, Texas, for Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, in Texas, USA.
- Hassan, Steven (6/25/2019). The BITE Model and Influence Continuum for Understanding Human Trafficking Influence. Presented at Light the Way to Freedom to End Human Trafficking: Human Trafficking Summit 2019 Summit in Austin, Texas, for Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.
- Hassan, Steven (6/19/2019). Proposing a new model for doing a forensic evaluation for undue influence. Presented at The Program in Psychiatry and the Law, at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, a teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, in Boston, MA, USA.
- Hassan, Steven (5/23/2019). Parental Alienation and Undue Influence. Presented at a meeting of the Boston/NH/RI Parental Alienation Meetup Group in Waltham, MA.
- Hassan, Steven (7/22/2018), A Complex Systems Approach to Countering Mind Control, Trafficking and Terrorism, Plenary presentation presented at International Conference on Complex Systems (ICCS), Cambridge, MA at New England Complex Systems Institute.
- Hassan, Steven (7/05/2018). The Freedom of Mind Approach to Helping People Raised in Destructive Environments. Presented at Annual ICSA International Conference, Philadelphia, PA
- Hassan, Steven (6/27/2018). Stop the Game to stop trafficking in persons. Presentation for the Trafficking in Persons office (J/TIP) at the U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.
- Hassan, Steven (6/27/2018). Round Table Discussion with Steven Hassan: Destructive Cults that Use Terrorism as a Tool. Presentation for the Countering Terrorism / Countering Violent Extremism office (CT/CVE) at the U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.
- Hassan, Steven (10/22/2017). Presentation at New York Society for Ethical Culture.
- Hassan, Steven (9/11/17). *Combating Cult Mind Control*. Presented at a meeting with officials at the Ralph J. Bunche Library at the U. S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.
- Hassan, Steven (July 2017). Presented paper on Anatomy of Undue Influence at the International Academy of Law and Mental Health in Prague, Czechoslovakia in July 2017
- Hassan, Steven (August 2015). Presented a countering ISIS program at the Aspen Institute. Was 1 of 25 invitation-only guests including State Department counterterrorism officials, Secretary Madeleine Albright, former Ambassadors, and other luminaries.
- Hassan, Steven (2014). Presented a Human Trafficking training for *My Life, My Choice* in Boston.
- Hassan, Steven (2014). Presented a Human Trafficking training for Joint Regional Intelligence Organization in California to help organizations assist sex trafficking survivors.

- Hassan, Steven. Training for Attorneys General of Utah and Arizona concerning FLDS cult of Warren Jeffs
- Hassan, Steven. Presentation for New York Society for Ethical Culture February 2013.
<https://vimeo.com/60160451>
- Hassan, Steven. (2009). A plenary speaker at the National Amber Alert Symposium sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice about Jaycee Dugard, Elizabeth Smart, and other victims like them.

SELECTED CITATIONS

- Alvarez, Larry, and Cañas-Moreira, Jocelyn. (11/9/2015). A Victim-Centered Approach to Sex Trafficking Cases. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, United States Department of Justice.
<https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/a-victim-centered-approach-to-sex-trafficking-cases>.
- Cited in many publications including peer-reviewed journal articles and other articles.

SELECTED APPEARANCES

TEDx Talks

- Hassan, Steven (4/6/2022). The Psychology of Dictatorship. Online panel presentation with Dr. Bandy X. Lee, Dr. Steven Hassan, and Nick Carmody, JD, in conversation with TEDxMidAtlantic host David Troy. TEDxMidAtlantic. <https://youtu.be/yR7NMdpNtSU>
- Hassan, Steven (3/7/2022). How to tell if you're brainwashed? TEDxBoston.
<https://youtu.be/JzSwZpHDAaU>
- Hassan, Steven; Troy, David; Stewartson, Jim; and Kane, Desiree (10/21/20). Dismantling QAnon. TEDxMidAtlantic. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QbEcG8O-L8>
- Hassan, Steven (8/02/2018). Is Technology Controlling Your Mind? Presented at the TEDxBeaconStreet. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev_zuiXTTzA&t=4s

Other Media

Interviewed countless times over many decades for articles, audio and video pieces including by media around the world such as WBUR; NPR; BBC; ABC Nightly News; NBC; MSNBC The REIDOUT and American Voices; CNN: Reliable Sources, New Day, Anderson Cooper, and Special Reports; 60 Minutes; Nightline; Dateline; Leah Remini: Scientology and its Aftermath; Oprah Winfrey; Today Show; Good Morning America; Larry King Show.

List of recent media: <https://freedomofmind.com/media/>

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

- Member: [The Program in Psychiatry and the Law](#) (PIPATL) at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, a teaching hospital of the Harvard Medical School
- Founding Member: [International Society for Therapeutic Jurisprudence](#)
- Affiliate: [New England Complex Systems Institute](#) (NECSI)
- Advisory Board Member: [Child-Friendly Faith Project](#)
- Member: Against Violent Extremism (AVE)
- Member: Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association (MMHCA)

Member: The American Counseling Association (ACA)
Member: New England Society of Clinical Hypnosis (NESCH)
Member: American Society for Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH)
Member: International Society of Hypnosis (ISH)
Member: International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA)
Member: International Society for Psychological and Social Approaches to Psychosis-US Branch
(ISPS-US;) Boston, 12/3/17