

Report from the APA Annual Meeting 2025

World Association for Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy, January 2025

From May 17 to 21, 2025, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) held its Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, California. This flagship event is one of the largest and most influential conferences in the field of psychiatry and mental health worldwide. It plays a pivotal role in shaping current clinical and scientific trends, particularly in the United States, and often sets the direction for global discussions on mental health.

This year, the conference gathered around 8,000 professionals from across the globe and featured over 450 scientific sessions, workshops, and plenary lectures. The theme of the 2025 APA Annual Meeting was *“Lifestyle: Positive Physical and Mental Health”*—a timely and meaningful focus that resonated deeply with the principles of Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy (PPT after Peseschkian, since 1977). Among the high-profile speakers were tennis legend Venus Williams, who spoke on resilience and mental wellness, and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the former president of Liberia, who shared insights on leadership, trauma, and global health.



Picture 1. Dr. Hamid Peseschkian (Germany), Prof. Erick Messias (USA), Prof. César A. Alfonso (USA), Constantine D. Della (Philippines), Dr. Hernán Alessandria (Argentina)



Picture 2. Dr. Hamid & Catherine Peseschkian (Germany), Prof. Erick Messias (USA), Dr. Ewa Dobiala (Poland), Dr. Karen Reimers (USA), Dr. Kateryna Lytvynenko (Ukraine)

We are proud to report that the World Association for Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy (WAPP) was officially represented at the event by a distinguished delegation composed of WAPP President Dr. Hamid Peseschkian, MD, DM, Board member Ewa Dobiala, MD, and our long-time member and international collaborator, Professor Erick Messias. Together with esteemed colleague Professor Dr. Dilip Jeste, former APA president and founder of positive psychiatry, the WAPP delegation delivered a powerful and well-attended presentation on *“Positive Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Across Cultures.”*

The presentation sparked great interest among participants and reflected a broader shift in the mental health field: from a deficit-based, pathology-driven model to a person-centered, resource-oriented, and culturally inclusive approach. Attendees showed strong engagement with the concepts of balance, meaning, and

cross-cultural understanding – key pillars of Positive Psychotherapy.

The overall atmosphere of the APA Meeting this year was one of rethinking and renewal. Topics such as lifestyle psychiatry, prevention, holistic well-being, artificial intelligence, and social determinants of health were at the forefront of many discussions. It became clear that the future of psychiatry lies not only in treating disorders, but also in empowering individuals and communities to thrive.

Our participation confirmed that Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy is not only aligned with the most progressive trends in global mental health but also stands at the cutting edge of this transformation. The method developed by Nossrat Peseschkian – rooted in psychodynamic psychotherapy yet uniquely structured, integrative, and culturally attuned – continues to offer practical tools and meaningful frameworks for today’s world. In many ways, the core ideas of PPT are becoming increasingly relevant, not only in psychotherapy but across the entire spectrum of mental health professions.