

## AI's Role in Psychotherapy Publishing

*On the thoughtful integration of artificial intelligence in scientific writing for psychotherapy and mental health studies.*

- *by the Editors*

Writing scientific articles in psychotherapy and mental health research requires deep engagement with complex topics such as therapeutic processes, emotional dynamics, and ethical considerations. It serves not only as a means of communicating findings but also as a process that sharpens critical thinking, fosters original insights, and ensures the integrity of evidence that influences clinical practice and patient outcomes.

As editors of our journal, dedicated to advancing psychotherapy and mental health research, we recognize the rapid progress of technology. Artificial intelligence (AI), including large language models (LLMs), can provide valuable support. It may assist in outlining structures, refining grammar, improving readability, or translating content, thereby allowing authors to focus on substantive ideas. When used judiciously as a supportive tool, AI can reduce routine cognitive load and facilitate exploration of nuanced psychological concepts.



*Figure 1 is generated by AI*

However, in fields like ours, where interpretations of human experiences demand empathy, contextual understanding, and ethical nuance, overreliance on AI carries significant risks. Recent years have seen a surge in submissions involving AI, complicating verification of authenticity, detection of inconsistencies, and maintenance of scholarly standards. Manuscripts increasingly feature AI-generated literature reviews, analyses, or sections without adequate human oversight, which can introduce inaccuracies. **LLMs frequently produce "hallucinated" facts or fabricated citations, particularly in specialized domains requiring verified psychological evidence** (Ji et al., 2023; Walters & Wilder, 2023).

### | Independent human authorship remains essential

It promotes thorough engagement with primary sources, critical reflection, and authentic synthesis – core to advancing psychotherapy knowledge. Research demonstrates clear cognitive benefits from manual processes: handwriting, compared to typing, leads to more elaborate brain connectivity patterns, particularly in theta/alpha frequencies across parietal and central regions, which support memory formation and encoding new information (van der Weel & van der Meer, 2024). This widespread neural engagement is beneficial for learning and deeper processing, implications that extend to scientific writing where independent authoring fosters intellectual rigor irreplaceable by AI.

Risks of excessive dependence:

- **Loss of critical thinking:** delegating mental tasks externally reduces reflective and analytical engagement
- **AI "hallucinations":** fabricated facts and references, especially in specialized fields of psychological evidence

Overreliance on AI can erode these benefits. Studies show that using LLMs for essay writing accumulates "cognitive debt," with reduced neural connectivity in memory and creativity networks, poorer recall, and lower ownership of produced work over time (Kosmyrna et al., 2025). Frequent AI tool use correlates with weaker critical thinking abilities, mediated by cognitive offloading—delegating mental tasks externally, which diminishes reflective and analytical engagement (Gerlich, 2025; Zhai & Wibowo, 2024). In educational contexts, excessive dependence impairs decision-making, analytical reasoning, and independent skills, potentially leading to superficial analyses and reduced creativity (Zhai & Wibowo, 2024). AI in research also risks enabling "doing more, but learning less," where efficiency gains narrow inquiry and limit deeper understanding (Messeri & Crockett, 2024).

**| "Writing is thinking. Human understanding and responsibility remain indispensable in psychotherapeutic research."**

Even advanced AI remains imperfect, prone to biases, fabrications, and misinterpretations in mental health contexts. Our journal prioritizes verified, trustworthy knowledge amid post-truth vulnerabilities. We commit to human-checked information: authors who conscientiously read sources, reflect, critique, and synthesize responsibly. Routine checks using AI detection tools and manual reference verification often reveal fabricated sources or hallucinations, imposing substantial burdens on our technical team, editors, and reviewers.

To protect quality, from our next issue onward, we will require transparent disclosure of any AI use. **At initial screening, manuscripts containing AI-fabricated elements, such as claims, interpretations, analyses, or references, will be rejected prior to content evaluation or peer review.** Issues identified later, even during final preparation after apparent acceptance, will result in withdrawal. This approach aligns with broader calls for accountability in scientific publishing, including the recognition that "writing is thinking" and the need to value human-generated work amid LLMs (Editorial, 2025).

Authors are encouraged to use AI responsibly: as a tool for support, with independent verification of all outputs, full accountability for accuracy and originality, and priority given to human insight. This balanced integration helps safeguard the integrity of psychotherapy and mental health scholarship.

## References

1. Editorial. (2025). Writing is thinking. *Nat Rev Bioeng* 3, 431. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44222-025-00323-4>
2. Gerlich, M. (2025). AI tools in society: Impacts on cognitive offloading and the future of critical thinking. *Societies*, 15(1), 6. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc15010006>
3. Ji, Z., Lee, N., Frieske, R., Yu, T., Su, D., Xu, Y., Ishii, E., Bang, Y. J., Madotto, A., & Fung, P. (2023). Survey of hallucination in natural language generation. *ACM Computing Surveys*, 55(12), Article 248. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3571730>
4. Kosmyrna, N., Hauptmann, E., Yuan, Y. T., Situ, J., Liao, X.-H., Beresnitzky, A. V., Braunstein, I., & Maes, P. (2025). Your brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of cognitive debt when using an AI assistant for essay writing task. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2506.08872*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2506.08872>
5. Messeri, L., & Crockett, M. J. (2024). Artificial intelligence and illusions of understanding in scientific research. *Nature*, 627, 49–52. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07146-0>
6. Van der Weel, F. R., & van der Meer, A. L. H. (2024). Handwriting but not typewriting leads to widespread brain connectivity: A high-density EEG study with implications for the classroom. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, Article 1219945. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1219945>
7. Walters, W. H., & Wilder, E. I. (2023). Fabrication and errors in the bibliographic citations generated by ChatGPT. *Scientific Reports*, 13, Article 14045. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-41032-5>
8. Zhai, C., & Wibowo, S. (2024). The effects of over-reliance on AI dialogue systems on students' cognitive abilities: A systematic review. *Smart Learning Environments*, 11, Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-024-00316-7>