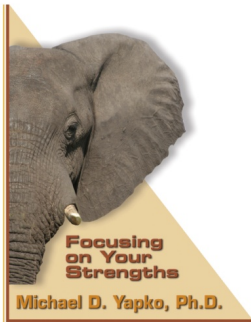


A background of light blue puzzle pieces, some of which are missing, creating a pattern of white and light blue shapes.

Topical Panel- Depression

With Erv Polster and Michele Weiner-Davis
Friday, December 15, 2017



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Key Points About Depression

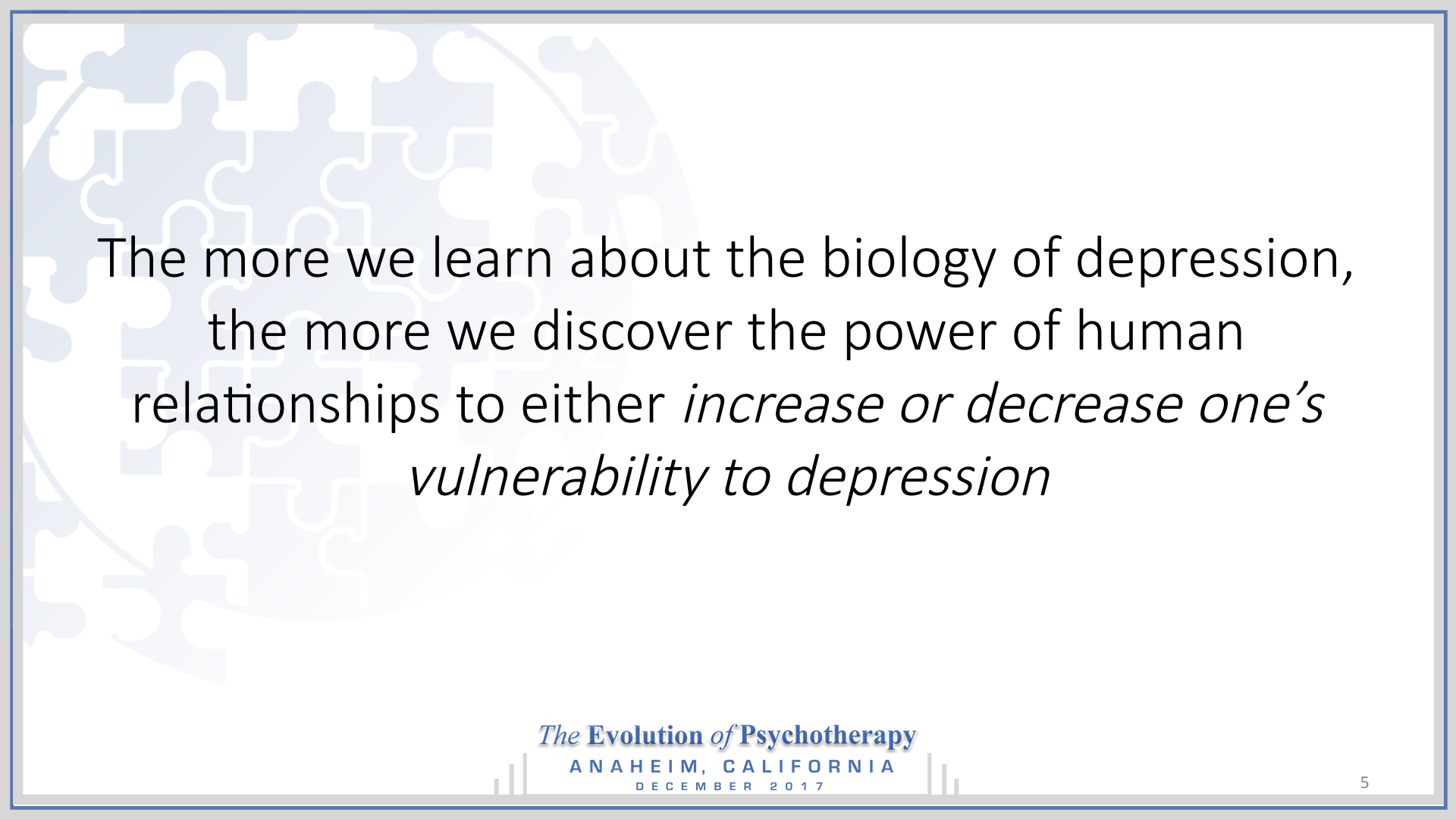
- Soft diagnosis - 227 symptom combinations yield a correct diagnosis; highly co-morbid
- High response rate to placebo-based interventions (disorder of perspective)
- Predominant form of treatment is medication; unfortunate-not nearly as safe or effective as we've been led to believe; highest relapse rate
- Growing in prevalence and severity

Key Points About Depression

- Depression is a product of many risk factors, especially in the areas of cognitive style, coping style, problem solving style, and interpersonal style
- Inability to make key discriminations (e.g., controllability, expectations)
- The therapies with the highest success rates focus on skill building; not just solving a problem solving but teaching problem solving on whatever dimensions are indicated; pattern interruption and pattern building
- No single entity called depression, no single best treatment

Key Points About Depression

- Common denominator of effective treatments is behavioral activation
- Experiential treatments, especially hypnosis and structured homework, require active participation; pure discovery vs. guided discovery
- The merits of hypnosis in treatment, especially to help people detach from depressogenic patterns and to help create automatic responses
- The potential for prevention



The more we learn about the biology of depression,
the more we discover the power of human
relationships to either *increase or decrease one's
vulnerability to depression*

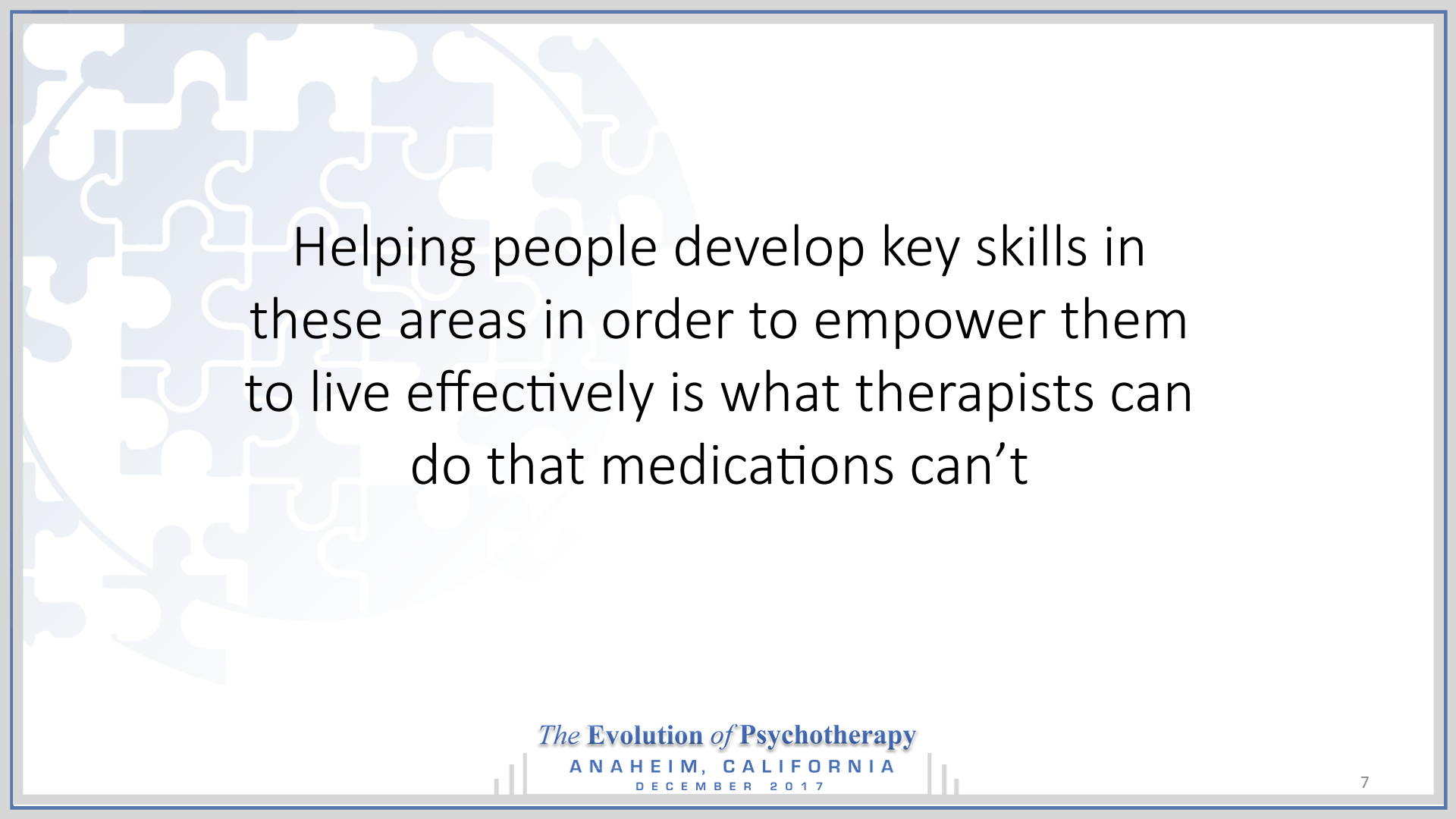
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No Amount of Medication Can Teach Your Client:

- More effective coping skills
- More realistic explanatory styles
- Healthier relationship styles
- More flexible and discriminative cognitive skills
- Sophisticated problem-solving skills
- More effective decision-making strategies
- How to build and maintain a support network
- How to transcend an adverse personal history
- How to build a realistic and motivating future



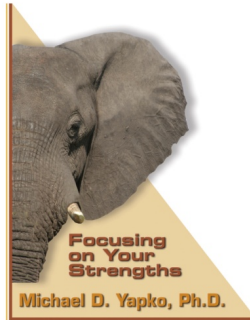
Helping people develop key skills in these areas in order to empower them to live effectively is what therapists can do that medications can't

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Let's Focus on Global (Over-general) Thinking and its Relationship to Depression



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Examples of Global Style in Client Self-Reports

- “I just want to be happy”
- “I just want to feel normal”
- “I **am** my depression” (anxiety, history, or diagnosis)
- “I’ m just so overwhelmed”
- “I get so bad I just can’ t think”
- “The symptom just happens to me”

Hypnosis and Re-directing Focus

- Focusing **globally** on what's wrong, not noticing what's right
- Focusing **globally** on past hurts, not specific future possibilities
- Focusing **globally** on helpless feelings, not specific proactive solutions
- Focusing **globally** on the subjective, missing specific chances to reality-test

Experiential Learning Drives Flexibility and Skill Acquisition

- People learn best through experience; therapists provide “guided discovery” opportunities as well as “pure discovery” opportunities
- Two key forms of experiential learning are **focusing strategies** (such as hypnosis and mindfulness) and **skill-building homework** (task) assignments

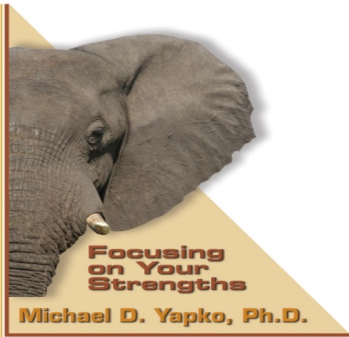
Good Psychotherapy Teaches:

- Greater self-awareness and self-acceptance
- Skills in reality testing, using information instead of subjective perceptions
- Skills in building and maintaining positive relationships with others
- Skills in coping with life's inevitable adversities
- Skills in decision-making
- Skills in thinking preventively

Characteristics of Empowering Interventions

- Outcome Oriented
- Active interventions
- Future-oriented
- Change-oriented
- Specific, defined targets of pattern interruption
- Experiential methods (e.g., hypnosis, mindfulness)
- Individualized approaches

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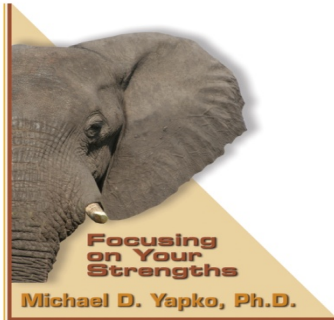
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