


Foundations for Integrating Hypnosis into Your Therapies for Treating Anxiety, Depression, and Pain

with  
**Michael D. Yapko, Ph.D.**  
**Webinar Section 9 of 12**



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A World Health Organization (WHO) Statistic

- Depression is now the number ONE cause of suffering and disability worldwide affecting over 300 million people worldwide.
- It's the most common mood disorder in the U.S. --- and the *world*

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What causes depression?

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How you answer this question is the single most important determinant of how you will deliver treatment... and how you will relate to all I will discuss in this webinar presentation

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Is Depression Caused By:

- ❖ Genetics?
- ❖ A biochemical imbalance in the brain?
- ❖ Systemic inflammation?
- ❖ Psychosocial stressors (poverty, bullying, unemployment, etc.)?
- ❖ Cognitive distortions ?
- ❖ A lack of environmental and social rewards?
- ❖ Social inequities (racism, sexism, etc.)?
- ❖ Cultural and/or familial influences?
- ❖ Technology (smart phones, social media, etc.)?
- ❖ Mishandling key vulnerable situations?
- ❖ Dietary issues?
- ❖ A lack of physical exercise?

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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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We have been so concerned with the relationship between *neurons* that we have overlooked the relationship between *people*

We don't need a better *microscope*— we need a **macroscope** to better see depression in its larger social context

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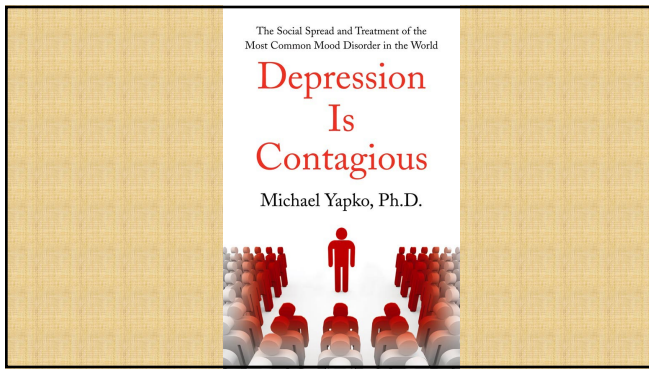
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Hypnosis can be structured and applied in lots of different ways...

*Whether and how* you use hypnosis is a reflection of your assumptions and viewpoints




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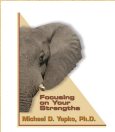
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Depression is built on a foundation of passivity  
"Why bother?"



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Addressing expectancy  
is a core aspect of  
treating depression

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Expectancy and  
Psychotherapeutic Response

**Expectancy affects every phase of treatment:**

- Whether someone seeks treatment
- Whether someone progresses quickly or slowly
- Whether someone follows the treatment plan
- Whether someone responds partially or fully
- Whether someone is more or less likely to relapse

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The first goal of treatment is to shift the client from a stable to an unstable attributional style

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Hypnosis Can Help People Develop Positive Expectations

The therapeutic immersion in experiences that orient the person to *positive possibilities* as well as to experiences that highlight the *malleability of their symptoms*

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Hypnotically Building Expectancy

- **Induction process** (“You can recall an experience, perhaps a previous hypnotic experience, that was unusually comfortable...”)
- **Build response set re: the future** (“You can take an interest in the future...after all it is where you will be living...”)
- **Universal metaphors re: future possibilities** (“You can wonder what kinds of changes will take place...for example, advances in medicine that are hard to even imagine now...”)

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### Hypnotically Building Expectancy (continued)

- **Distinguish past events from future possibilities** (“No one could have predicted landing a man on the moon and bringing him home again...”)
- **Feedback the appropriateness and feasibility of personal goals** (“You desire to experience X in the future is certainly a worthwhile and reasonable thing to want for yourself...”)
- **Highlight today’s (new) actions that lead to tomorrow’s possibilities** (“You can become increasingly aware of how the choices you make today will influence what you experience tomorrow...”)
- **Identify specific personal resources that can be used in moving toward specific goals** (“You have the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, such as when you moved here...”)

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### Hypnotically Building Expectancy (continued)

- **Introduce distinctions (dissociations) between mood and action** (“You’ve certainly learned from experience that there are things you do because you feel like it, and there are things you do just because you want the desired result...”)
- **Highlight action steps as transcending feelings of doubt or hopelessness** (a willingness to experiment) (“You can take the steps you know will produce the kind of result you’ll feel good about...and if and when you feel unsure or you doubt you can succeed, you can let those feelings pass while you stay focused on your well-thought out plans...”)

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### Hypnotically Building Expectancy (continued)

- **Reinforce the willingness to experiment** (“After all, you know that doing things in the same old way can only produce the very result you don’t want...”)
- **Generalize resources into future opportunities** (“In the future you’ll have many more chances to try these new behaviors and experiment with your ideas...”)
- **Post-hypnotic suggestions for integration of self-fulfilling prophecy** (“So when you’re in situation X, you can enjoy discovering how quickly and easily you find yourself responding differently...and enjoying your success in what used to be a difficult arena...”)
- **Closure and Disengagement**

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### Key Therapeutic Messages

- You can develop the skills to cope
- The past doesn't predict the future
- You're more than your history
- You're more than your symptoms
- You have more resources than you realize

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### Thanks for your kind attention!

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