

## KEYNOTE

### WHY POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY IS NOT EFFECTIVE IN TREATING PSYCHOPATHOLOGIES; WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE?



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Positive psychology has greatly influenced on many Western and U.S. psychologists and psychotherapists. It has currently gives its switching towards health and wellness along with the growing of brain and neuroscience research. However, the focus on preventive strategies of positive psychology may be fundamentally flawed. These are based on avoidance rather than healing from psychopathologies. Recent advances on psychotherapy such as CBT (Barlow, 2008) has shown that healing from psychopathologies come from confrontation rather than avoidance strategies. Avoidance strategies has been with psychotherapy traditions from Behaviourist's therapy of progressive muscles relaxation (Wolpe, 1969) to Emotion Focussed Therapy (Greenberg, 2010) with its emphasis of the de-escalation of emotional pain.

Recent advances in neuroscience help us to understand in neurological term why avoidance strategies of positive psychology do not work for psychopathologies. Most psychopathologies involved activations of the amygdala, but positive psychology involved recruitment of the prefrontal lobe area of the brain which will not be able to mediate in real time any activation at the amygdala (Ivey, 2011).

The proposed alternative: an "Amygdala Based Psychotherapy" (AP) (Chan, 2014) involving activations of the Amygdala rather than the recruitment of prefrontal cortex focused by positive psychology work (e.g. Seligman, 2014; Siegal, 2014). AP's main focus is on the patient's emotional and existential pain. By focussing on this pain and the associated amygdala activations with several therapeutically safe techniques such as voice dialogue facilitations (Stone, 2007) patients suffering from different psychopathologies from general anxiety disorders to relationship anxieties were able to address the pain of these anxieties directly and resolve them therapeutically in ways which were not possible with positive psychology therapy.

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