Slide 1

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Slide 2

*"As astronauts & space travelers children puzzle over the future; as dinosaurs & princesses they unearth the past. As weather reporters & restaurant workers they make sense of reality; as monsters & gremlins they make sense of the unreal."*

-Gretchen Owocki (Early Childhood Educator)

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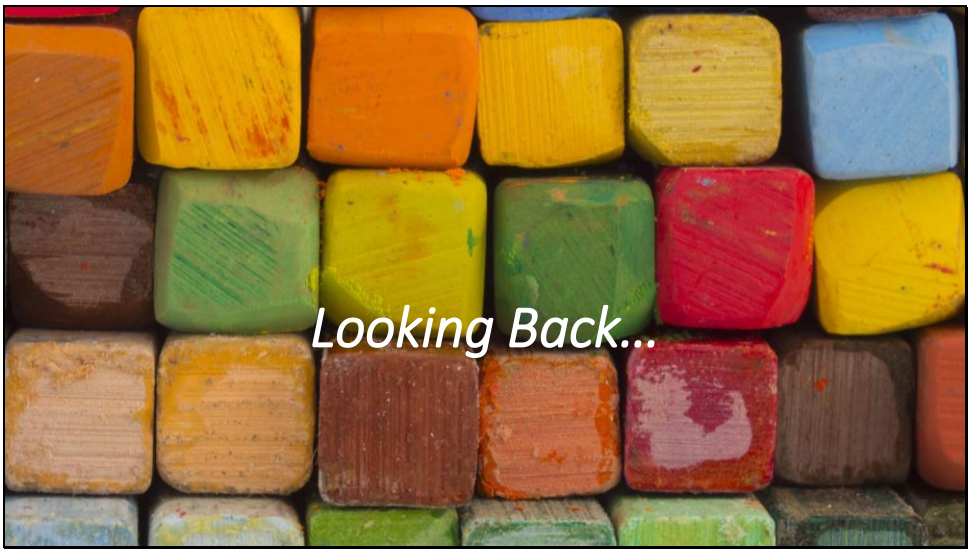


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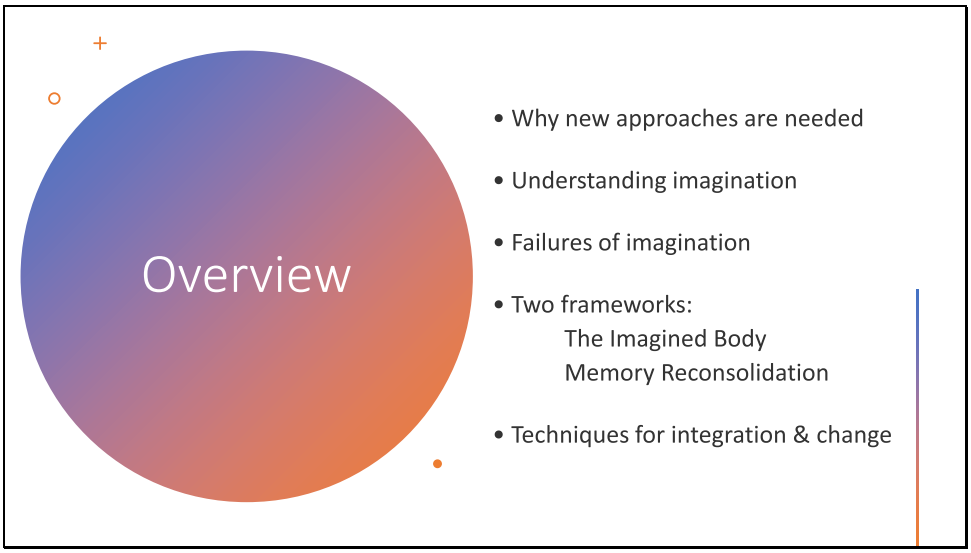


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Slide 5

## The Current State of Therapy for Youth

- Therapy for children & adolescents has moderate to medium effectiveness (.46 effect size).
  - *"The probability that a randomly selected youth in the treatment condition would be better off after treatment than a randomly selected youth in the control condition was 63%--only moderately better than chance at 50%"* (Weisz et al., 2017)

These effects tend to decrease further at 12-month follow-up (Pilling et al., 2020)

The chance a child would be better off receiving an EST over regular clinical care are only moderately better than chance: .58 (Weisz, Doss, & Hawley, 2006; Weisz et al., 2013)

Black & Latinx youth show less treatment engagement than White youth (Johansen et al., 2024) & effectiveness of treatment for marginalized young people tends to decrease in areas with high incidence of racial bias (Price et al., 2022)

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Slide 6

## Trends Over Time

(Weisz et al., 2019)

=

- Anxiety
- ADHD

↓

- Depression
- Conduct Disorder

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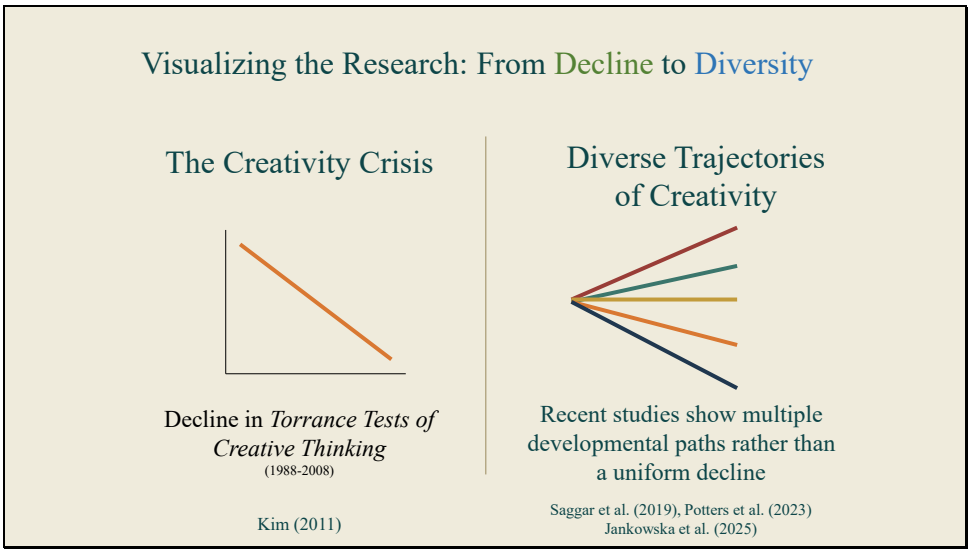
Slide 7

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Slide 8

## From “Creativity Crisis” to Creative Inequality

What recent research tells us about the state of imagination

🧠 Müller et al. (2020)
Reanalyzed Kim’s data & reported finding no evidence for a generational "creativity crisis."

🌈 Saggar et al. (2019)
Found "slumps and bumps": creativity trajectories diverge, linked to brain development & behavior.

📚 Potters et al. (2023)
Systematic review of 20 yrs: creativity often increases, though originality remains vulnerable.

🔭 Jankowska (2025)
Longitudinal data reveal multiple developmental paths → supportive contexts foster growth.

*Imagination isn’t vanishing — it’s being unequally nurtured.*

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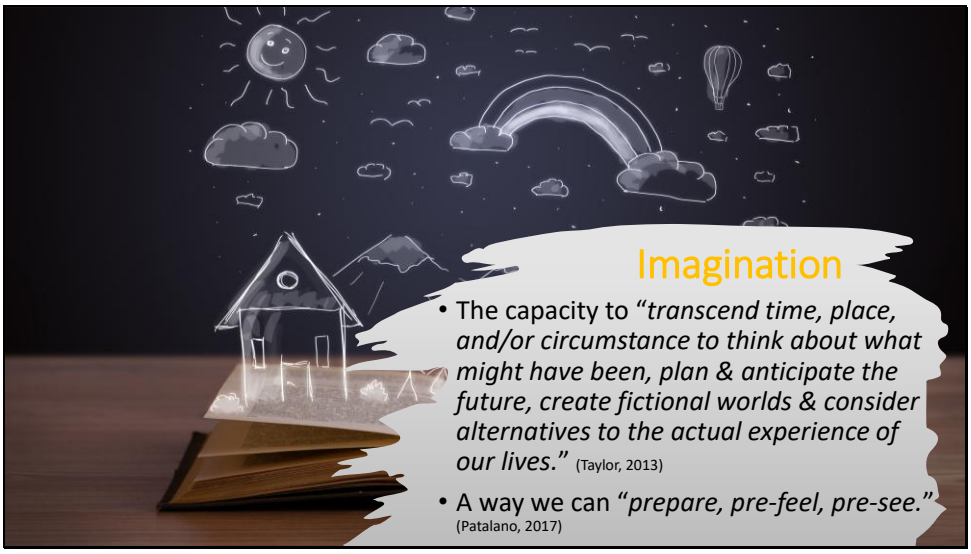


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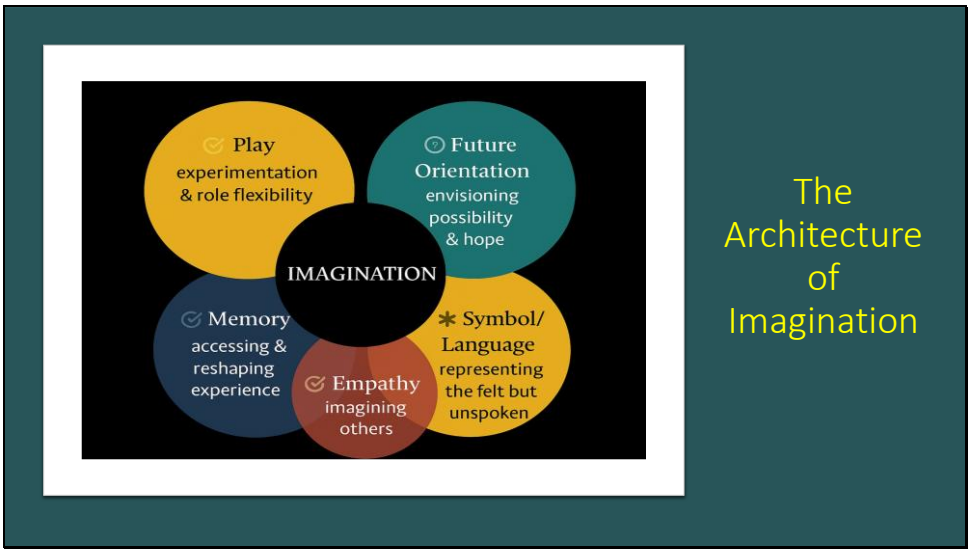


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# When Imagination Collapses

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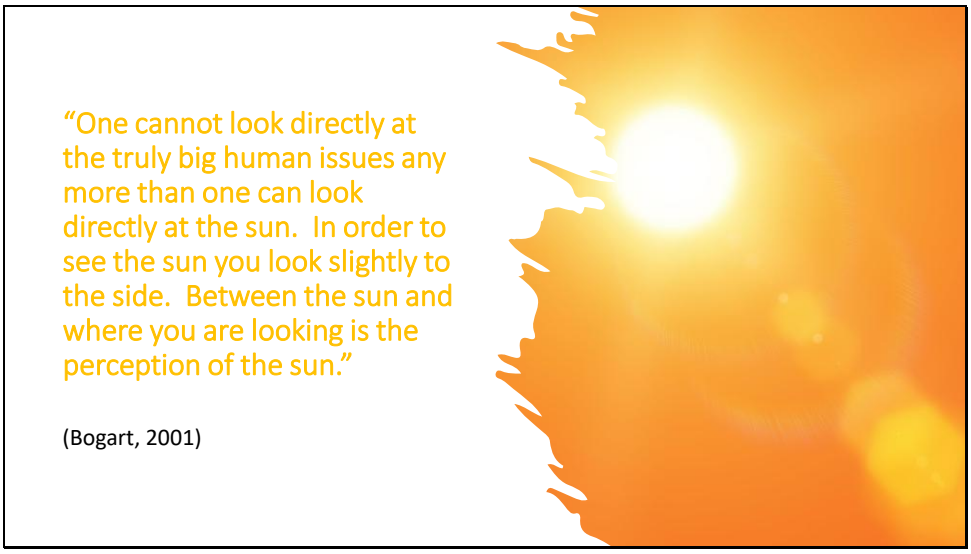


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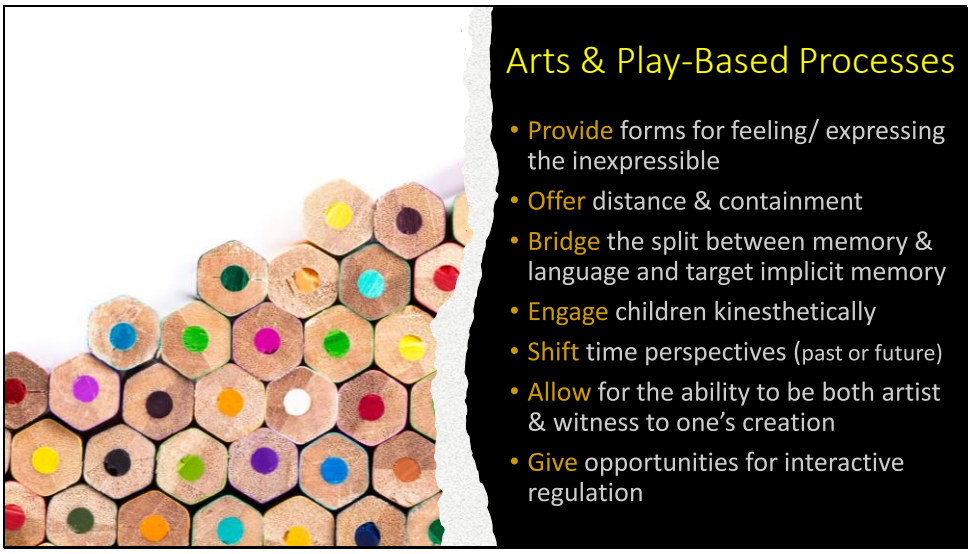


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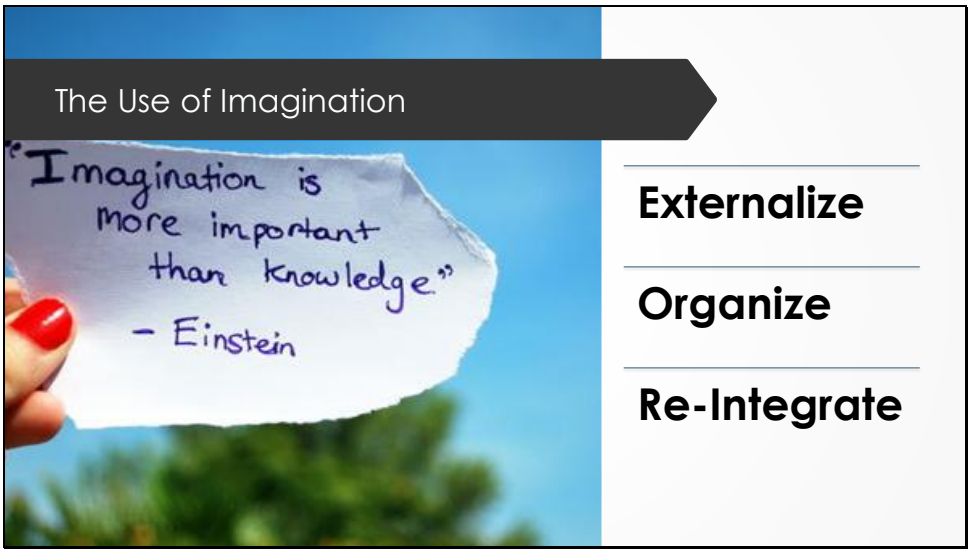


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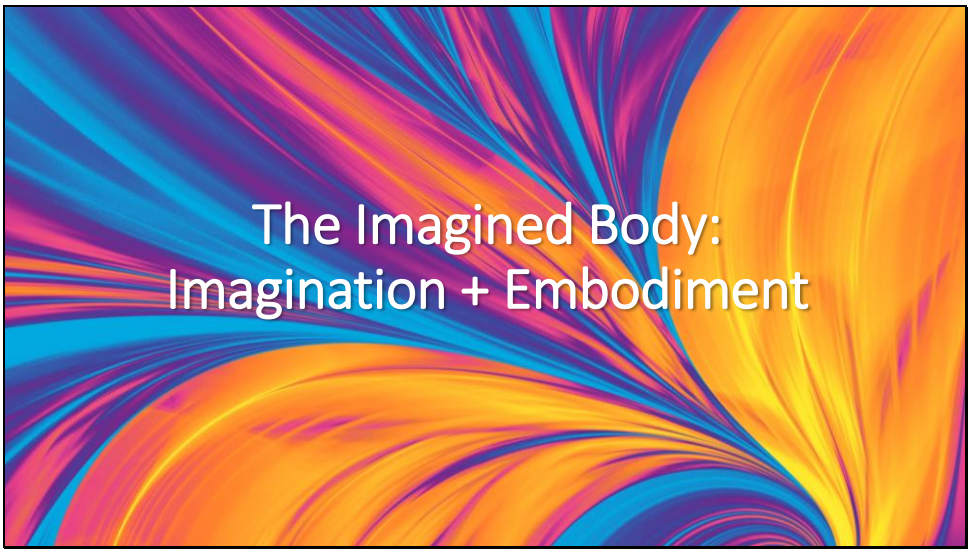


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Slide 17

# Memory Reconsolidation

- Modifying aversive memories through their reactivation in the present & pairing with novel or discrepant stimuli
- Juxtaposing aversive experiences with joy/vitality/ connection creates conditions for them to be reprocessed & filed away
- When reprocessed, can lower intensity of the memory, valence can move from negative to positive & new meaning can be associated with it.

(Ecker et al., 2024)

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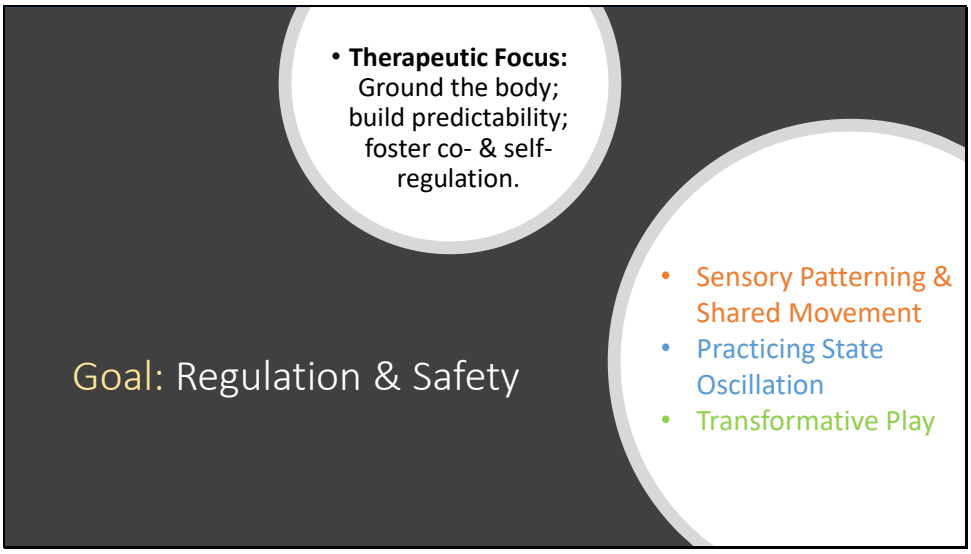


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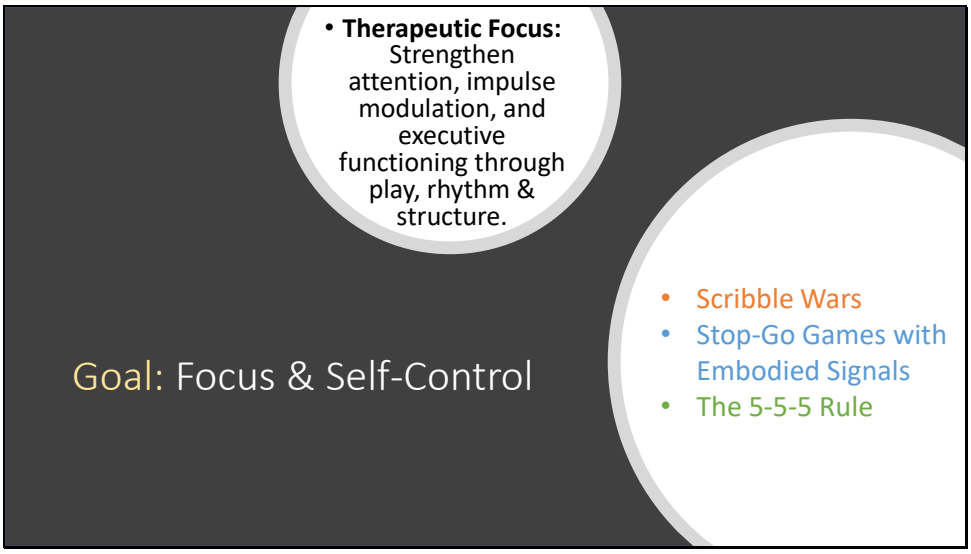


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Slide 21

- **Therapeutic Focus:** Expand self-awareness & flexibility; translate internal experience into new action.

Goal: Self-Expression & Behavioral Change

- Speaking from a Body Part
- Imaginary Phone Calls
- Letters from a Future Self

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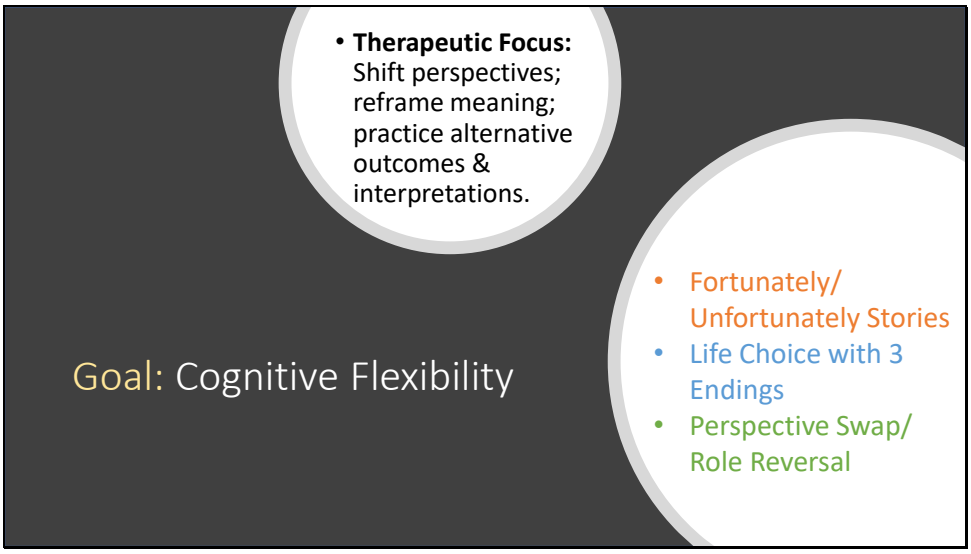


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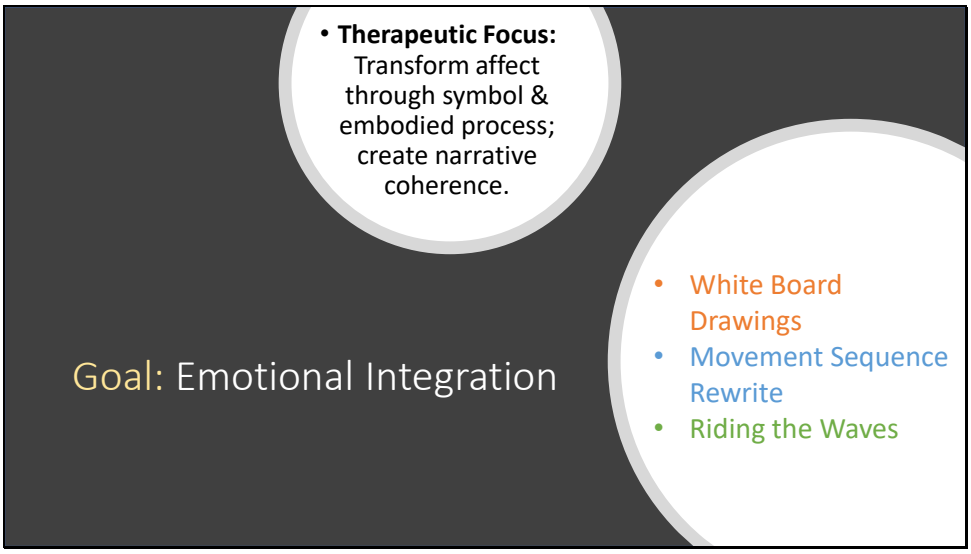


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