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WHAT IS “ISTDP”?

ISTDP is an acronym for *Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy*, a therapeutic technique created and systematically developed over the past four decades by Habib Davanloo, M.D., a clinical researcher at McGill University and Montreal General Hospital.

The technique is precise and aims to rapidly bring about the following results:

- Complete removal of the symptoms that the patient finds disturbing
- Changes in any aspects of the patient's character that cause him or her difficulty
- Insight into the basis for the patient's current and past problems
- Cessation of any self-defeating behavior patterns
- Elimination of any undue or excessive anxiety
- Improved ability to experience emotions in a productive manner
- Improved interpersonal relationships by increasing the capacity for emotional closeness, intimacy, and productive communication
- More favorable long-term prognosis
- Increased likelihood of independence from medication

These results are obtained, in part, by enabling the patient to experience his or her true feelings as they pertain to the past or present, as rapidly and to the maximum degree possible. This experience, with the help of the psychiatrist, brings to the forefront the core unconscious driving forces behind the patient's problems, so that the patient can recognize them, work through them, and finally win liberation from them.

Over a decade of patient follow-up suggests that significant proportions of those who successfully complete ISTDP enter remission, do not relapse, and may not require medication. This is particularly true for those patients who have a significant psychological component to their illnesses.

Substantial bodies of evidence suggest that the correction of underlying psychological problems may also help correct biological and social contributions to illness. Accordingly, the therapeutic technique of ISTDP may improve all domains contributing to a person's problems: biological, psychological, and social.