

Health

A Mental Health Moment: To Your Good Health

The treatment of depression and manic depression is psychiatry's number one success story. Both severe depression and manic depression involve dramatic physiological changes, and evidence points to a hereditary vulnerability that is triggered by environmental stress. Using high-tech scanners, chemical probes, and genetic mapping techniques—the newest tools of a rapidly developing science—researchers are starting to fill in the unknowns.

Mood disorders take many forms, and researchers in the past have been hard pressed to draw iron-clad distinctions among types, or even to differentiate reliably between "normal" dips in mood, and the psychic transformation that constitutes depressive illness. Confusing the issue further, is the colloquial use of the word depressed, to describe a range of unpleasant but inevitable consequences of daily life. One is "depressed" after a bad day at the office, or from the breakup of a love relationship.

Clinical depression is at once more intense and longer lasting than the brooding funks that seize everyone from time to time. Of patients hospitalized for depression, 40 to 60% suffer from the disease in its classical form, once referred to as "melancholia". Submerged in recrimination and self-doubt, these patients lose

their appetite, suffer an array of body aches, show little interest in sex, and awaken in the early morning hours. They may pace the floor in agitation, or their speech and movement may be drastically slowed, almost as if they had suddenly developed a peculiar and sudden form of brain damage. Yet this facade of lethargy is deceptive. Severe depression may be a state of hypervigilance and intense arousal. These patients are so overwhelmed and overstimulated, that they just sit still.

Less common than melancholia is a pattern in which the symptoms are reversed. Patients eat more than usual and sleep for long hours, only reluctantly emerging into wakefulness.

Mania shares this departure from reality. Possessed of limitless energy, thoughts racing, manic depressive patients in the elated stage of the illness may stay up all night, insist they are in touch with creatures from outer space, become uncharacteristically promiscuous, or run up thousands in credit card bills.

Tracing the origins of mood disorders, illnesses that affect not only behavior and physiology but our very sense of ourselves, is a formidable task. For mind and body are inextricably joined, and everything we imagine, dream, experience or fear, is ultimately translated into the firing of

nerve cells and the ebb and flow of chemicals in the brain. How do we sort out the events that began internally, in a strip on DNA or a malfunctioning neuron, from those who have their roots in external event: a broken love affair, death of a parent, the inability to find a job. It is with this conundrum that scientist who would understand mental illness struggle.

The warning signs of depression:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities, including sex
- Sleep disturbance (early morning waking or oversleeping)
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- Decreased appetite, losing weight, or overeating
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Irritability, excessive crying
- Physical symptoms such as headaches, digestive disorders, nausea, or chronic pain

The warning signs of mania: Increased energy and decreased need for sleep

- Unrealistic or exaggerated beliefs in abilities
- Inappropriate elation
- Increased talking, moving, and sexual activity
- Racing thoughts

• Impulsive behavior without regard to consequences

Where to go for help:

- See your family doctor to rule out other illnesses.
- Medical School Psychiatry Department
- Community Mental Health Center
- Local Mental Health Association

Resources and Information

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)
PO Box NAMI - Depression
Arlington VA 22216

Depression/Awareness Recognition, Treatment (DART)
National Institute of Mental Health
Rockville MD 20857

National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association
53 West Jackson Blvd
Box USN
Chicago, IL 60604

National Mental Health Association
Information Center
1021 Prince Street
Alexandria VA 22314

The National Foundation for Depressive Illness

PO Box 2257
New York NY 10116
(include \$5 and a self addressed stamped envelope)

American Psychiatric Association
1400 K Street SW
Suite 501 Dept USN
Washington DC 20005

(enclosed a self addressed stamped envelope for literature)
National Association for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression
60 Cutter Mill Road, Suite 200
Great Neck NY 11021

Books

Depression and It's Treatment, Help for the Nation's #1 Problem by John H. Greist, M.D. and James W. Jefferson M.D.
(American Psychiatric Press, Washington DC 1984) \$7.85

Overcoming Depression by Dmitri F. Papolos, M.D. and Janic Papolos
(Harper and Row, New York, 1987) \$9.95

Control Your Depression by Peter N. Lewinsohn, et al
(Prentiss Hall Press, New York, 1980) \$9.95

Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy by David D. Burns, M.D.
(New American Library, New York, 1980) \$4.95

Do You Have a Depressive Illness? by Donald F. Klein, M.D. and Paul H. Wender, M.D.
(New American Library, New York, 1988) \$7.95

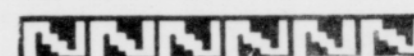
Is Your Child Depressed? by Joel Herskowitz, M.D.
(Pharos Books, New York, 1988) \$14.95

Providence ElderPlace Opens Second Site

Providence ElderPlace, an innovative program that provides comprehensive health services to the frail elderly, has opened a second site. Providence ElderPlace in Mt. Tabor is located at 6025 East Burnside.

Providence ElderPlace is part of the PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the

Elderly), a national consortium comprised of similar programs designed to provide community based health care services to the frail elderly. The goal of this program is to keep individuals in their own homes as long as possible, by using a preventative approach to care. Services available to participants include; day care, nutritional services, home care, social work services, physician services, hospitalization, prescription drugs, lab tests, xrays, personal care supplies, nursing services, long term care, assistance with housing and rehabilitation services. Individuals who need enough help with activities of daily living to qualify for institutional long term care; qualify to become a part of the ElderPlace program.



Human Rights Group Fights Drugging Of Black Youth

Spurred by the National Institute of Mental Health's plan to drug 100,000 black children it labels as genetically violence-prone, the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), a group formed by the Church of Scientology in 1969 to investigate and expose psychiatric violations of human rights, today announced a new campaign to stop the psychiatric drugging of Black and minority youth.

"Too often, school children are placed in the hands of psychiatrists who prescribe drugs like Prozac and Ritalin to make them docile and easy to work with," said Scott Sulak, local CCHR representative. "They prey on Black children because they view the Black community as an easy target."

The group announced its "Stop the Psychiatric Drugging of Minority Youth" campaign, which is designed to provide help to parents of children on psychiatric drugs, so as to bring to justice the psychiatrists and psycholo-

gists responsible for these atrocities.

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Prozac has the highest number of adverse drug reaction reports filed with them of any drug in history, over 23,000. In addition, over 1,300 deaths have been associated with Prozac, nearly 800 of which were listed as suicides. Some of the side effects of Ritalin include aggression, seizures, high blood pressure, and mood swings.

Concerned parents can call CCHR at (503) 228-3279

Living With Chronic Illness

Sacred Heart General Hospital presents a program for chronically ill people and their families. "Living With Chronic Illness" is a free eight-week discussion group for information, support and understanding about the effects of long-term illness on the chronically ill, their families and caregivers. The group begins Thursday, April 1, at 7pm in the Oregon Heart Center conference room at Sacred Heart, 1255 Hilyard St., Eugene. Preregistration is required. Call 686-7044 to register

HELPFUL HINTS

- * Chew sugarless gum while cooking so you're less likely to sample.
- * Let others fetch their own snacks and desserts; avoid the temptation.
- * Change your view from "diet" food to "healthy" food you should eat.
- * Stop comparing yourself with rangy, super-thin fashion models; instead, appreciate your body's curves and your own unique beauty.

Emanuel To Award Five Scholarships

Emanuel Hospital & Health Center will award five \$1,000 college scholarships to high school students studying for a career in a health-related field. The scholarship is available to students who reside in North/Northeast Portland and who have a high school GPA of 2.75.

The scholarship is renewable and may be used for tuition and other college fees for up to four years of college. The students should pursue a career in an accredited medical program on a full-time basis. The area of study should be healthcare career that is represented at Emanuel. Minorities are encouraged to apply.

Application deadline is April 16, 1993. Applications are available in Portland high school counseling offices.

Child Care Trainings

The Child Care Resource Connection is sponsoring three FREE trainings for child care providers: "Child Management: Encouraging Positive Behaviors", Tuesday, March 16, from 7:00 to 10:00pm at Lane Education Service District, 1200 Hwy 99N, "Welcome to the Child Care Profession", for family child care providers, Thursday, March 18, from 6:00 to 9:00pm, at 79980 Delight Valley School Rd., Cottage Grove, and "Full cost of Quality Child Care", Tuesday, March 30, from 6:30 to 8:30pm at the Eugene Public Library, 100 W 13th, Eugene.

Providers will learn information about encouraging positive behavior in children, children's activities, communicating with families, and information about the actual cost of providing quality child care. For more information or to register, call the Child Care Resource Connection at 726-3954 or 1-800-222-3290.

Tax Programs For Seniors

Oregon offers two tax programs to help low-income senior citizens: the Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral program and the Elderly Rental Assistance program. "These programs are designed to help senior citizens on a fixed income stay in their homes," says Julie Clark, spokeswoman for the Oregon Department of Revenue.

Seniors who are homeowners and meet all other requirements may defer paying property taxes on their residences. The taxes must eventually be paid, with interest, when the owner dies, moves, or sells the property. The deferred taxes are paid by the state. The amount of taxes paid becomes a lien on your property.

Applications for the property tax deferral program should be filed with county assessors by April 15.

- To qualify you must:
- Be 62 years old.
 - Have a recorded deed to the property or be purchasing the property under a recorded sales contract.
 - Live on the property (except for someone required to be absent because of health, in which case a doctor's

statement is required.)

- Have total household income less than \$19,500 for last year.

You can get more information or an application from your county assessor. There is no charge to file for this program.

To help low-income senior renters, the Oregon Legislature expanded the Elderly Rental Assistance (ERA) program. You must file with the Oregon Department of Revenue to get a refund check. There is no filing fee.

- To qualify, you must:
- Be age 58 or older.
 - Have a total household income less than \$10,000.

Use at least 20 percent of your household income to pay for rent, fuel and utilities.

Call the Oregon Department of Revenue for more information or an application for the ERA program. Phone numbers are:

- From Portland: 243-2833
- From Salem: 378-4988
- From elsewhere in Oregon: 1-800-356-4222
- TDD users: 373-1826

PORTLAND OBSERVER
"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"
Office: (503) 288-0033
Fax #: (503) 288-0015

The Color Of Health: Part II

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

The first article of this series seems to have stirred up quite a controversy among the readers (3/3/93). If we are a suspicious people—not by nature, but by long conditioning in a racist society—then we are certainly entitled. Some anticipated that beyond the "genetic evaluation of black children for criminal tendencies" being promoted, the scientific community is joining the educator in establishing a base for the wholesale drugging of African Americans. But far beyond using Ritalin in the classroom.

Witness: The "federal" conference on genes and crime that was recently canceled (temporarily) had this to say on the conference brochures, "...the apparent failure of environmental approaches to crime suggests that genetic research might lead to methods for identifying and pharmaceutical treating potential criminals at an early age". If you have any doubts as to the target group, read the following, again from the February issue of "Scientific American Magazine, p.26".

"David T. Wasserman, a legal scholar at the university of Maryland and organizer of the meeting, insisted it was intended to critique rather than promote this view, but critics were not mollified. Peter Breggin, a Bethesda-based psychiatrist, linked the Maryland conference to Goodwin's remarks and to the violence initiative. The U.S., he proclaimed, was planning a large-scale program to screen black children and treat them with drugs.

"U.S. government wants to sedate black youth," announced a black-interest magazine in Washington, D.C."

"A committee of the national institutes of Health had already approved funds for the conference. But in response to the criticism, NIH director Bernadine P. Healy withheld the funds, and the meeting was indefinitely postponed. But then in November the National Academy of Sciences issued a 464 page report, "Understanding and Preventing Violence," calling for more research of the kind that the Maryland conference would have examined, including searches for biochemical markers and drug treatments for violent and antisocial behavior."

Can you be in doubt yet about the intent and scope of this "health" initiative you are paying for? Several callers this week have expressed concern that Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, the black Secretary of Health and Human Services has not vigorously denounced this incipient Nazi-Type program which has risen in his agency. They also said I was absolutely right in comparing this situation with the infamous "Tuskegee Syphilis Experiments" that also took place in an institution controlled (?) by a black administrator(s). Evidently, the medical fraternity is a tightly managed, self-policed and self-protective way of life no matter the color of the physicians. Again we quote from the Scientific American Article.

"Given the inexorable advance and acceptance of genetics research,

the debate is likely to intensify, according to Diane B. Paul, a political scientist at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. "We are more and more focused on genetics," explains Paul, who is skeptical of research linking genes to behavioral disorders. "When (former head of the Human Genome Project) James D. Watson says, 'We used to think our fate was in the stars, and now we know it's in our genes,' he's giving expression to a social current."

"Of course, claims of links between heredity and crime have a long and sordid history. Some Victorian-era scientists contended that criminals were more likely to have small, shifty eyes, eyebrows that met in the middle and other traits. Through the 1930s, many U.S. states—with the sanction of the Supreme Court—sterilized convicts in order to reduce crime among future generations. More recently, some prominent scientists, notably Richard J. Herrnstein, a psychologist at Harvard University, have suggested that blacks may be intrinsically more prone toward criminal behavior than whites are."

That book I cited a few weeks ago is an absolute must if you are to fully understand the origin and depth of these ferocious attacks upon the intelligence and morality of the black race. Now federal funding is being used by both the educational and medical sectors. Order, "The Mismeasure of Man", by Stephen Jay Gould, W.W. Norton, N.Y., 1981; Daltons or Looking Glass book stores.



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