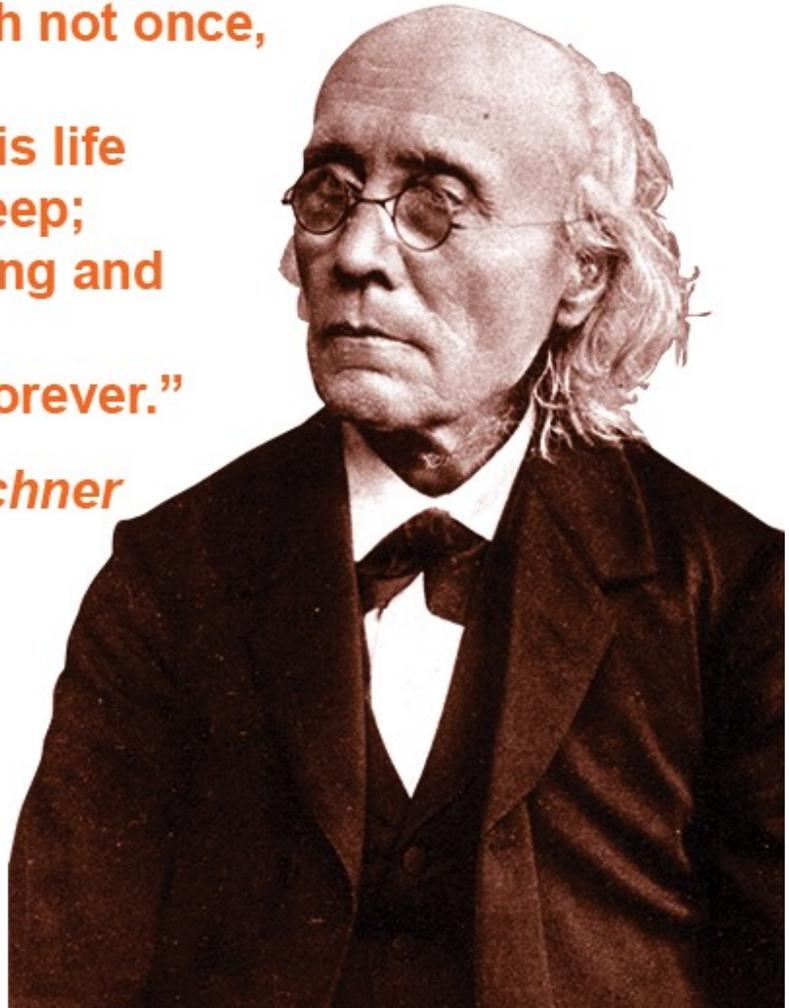


INTERVALS

THE CPCA QUARTERLY

“Man lives on earth not once,
but three times:
the first stage of his life
is his continual sleep;
the second, sleeping and
waking by turns;
the third, waking forever.”

~ *Gustav Fechner*



MDMA FOR PTSD
NEW TREATMENT FOR
TRAUMA IN CANADA 2



PREDATORS
IN JOURNALS'
CLOTHING 7



RAISING STRONG
CONFIDENT
GIRLS 9



SH*T THERAPISTS
HAVE ACTUALLY
SAID 14

MDMA FOR PTSD

→ **For the first time in** decades, Canadian researchers are probing the potential of a psychedelic drug - ecstasy - for use in psychotherapy in a clinical trial approved by Health Canada.

The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS), is investigating the use of MDMA, the pure form of the party drug ecstasy, to assist therapy sessions for people with treatment-resistant post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The early research coming from this team has shown promise in treating those who suffer from some of the most challenging forms of PTSD

FILLING A GAP

Currently available PTSD treatments have little effect on a certain subset of PTSD sufferers considered to be treatment resistant. Dr. Ingrid Pacey, a psychiatrist and the principal investigator for MAPS in Vancouver, says MDMA can help overcome one of the major hurdles for conventional PTSD treatments.

“With talk therapy the person’s fear starts to rise and they block,” Pacey said.

MDMA, she said, can help with those blocks by bringing down fear and anxiety.

continued on page 3

INTERVALS

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Dr. Ingrid Pacey says MDMA can help overcome one of the major hurdles for conventional PTSD treatments

“It means you can talk about something really difficult without being terrified. You may still feel distressed but you can go there,” Pacey said.

She has worked with trauma survivors for close to 40 years and says that in many cases traditional therapies haven’t been successful in improving quality of life for people suffering from PTSD, *“people would be in therapy for 10, 15 years. It was a long time. Or if there was no access to that, they would be medicated.”*

She says that therapeutic work that would take three or four years in some cases can be done in a couple of months with MDMA-assisted psychotherapy.

HOW IT WORKS

MAPS’ researchers emphasize that in their work MDMA is being used as a tool to aid therapy – not simply as a medication. In each six- to eight- hour session, a study subject is supervised by two trained therapists. The sessions take place in a comfortable room and combine silent reflection, often aided by music, with loose discussions of issues that arise for the subject under the influence of the drug. The therapists are there to guide the subjects through discussions of topics often too challenging to have without the aid of the drug.

The treatment currently under investigation in the clinical trial involves two to five MDMA-assisted psychotherapy sessions spaced out over the course of eight to 10 weeks and regular contact with therapists between sessions.

The Vancouver work is part of a larger study directed by the American based non-profit organization MAPS. The organization’s other trials have been conducted in The United States, Israel and Switzerland. ◀

BY ANNIE BURNS-PIEPER

101 WAYS TO F*CK UP YOUR KID



#65: Over Functioning

At the closing ceremony of Woodbadge training in Scouts Canada many years ago, one of our trainers - Troop Scouter Gordon Innes - offered the finest advice I have ever received regarding the development of children; *“Pay your Scouts the courtesy of allowing them to make their own mistakes.”*

Following this advice, our Scouts were encouraged to think and experiment by being given only the basic information on how to complete a task - such as cooking a meal - and we watched Leaders of other Troops using a hand-over-hand, step-by-step instruction approach. It became apparent which was more effective as the year progressed; the Scouts in our Troop became *‘bush gourmets’* and regularly turned out CREATIVE complex meals, while the Scouters who employed the hand-over-hand/step-by-step method grew frustrated as their lessons didn’t seem to sink in.

I applied this even when teaching Cub aged children how to build and light a

campfire. They were given three pieces of information;

1. Fire requires fuel, oxygen, and heat
2. Little things burn easier than big things
3. Heat goes up

I then pointed out piles of paper, twigs, and sticks and handed each Cub two matches and told them to go build their fires. In 12 years of instructing campfire safety I never had a Cub ask for a third match. This minimal teaching method only provided the basic information and resources, it was up to the children to transform those into action; they had to think and experiment to be successful.

Our temptation to over function for children is driven by myriad personal motives; we may be impatient for them to learn; we may want to spare the child frustration; we may want the job done a specific way; we may have a desire to feel needed by our children and we may mistake it for helpfulness. We have to differentiate between teaching a child and over functioning for them.

Experiencing failure,

continued on page 5

“Pay your Scouts the courtesy of allowing them to make their own mistakes.” ~ Troop Scouter Gordon Innes



During his career, Babe Ruth batted a record 714 home runs, but what many don't know is that he also set a record by being struck out 1,330 times

disappointment, or discomfort after making mistakes are essential life experiences that motivate children to experiment and develop new skills. To be rescued after each failure breeds learned helplessness in a child, but children who fail and are encouraged by their parent or teacher to try again fare far better in life and improve their self-esteem.

I often give Babe Ruth's baseball career as an example; During his career, Babe Ruth batted a record 714 home runs, but what many don't know is that he also set a record by being struck out 1,330 times. Babe Ruth never gave up, after each failure he returned to the dugout, regrouped, and waited for his next opportunity.

Over functioning for children not only instills that learned helplessness and contributes to low self-esteem, it also lays the foundation for future power struggles. A parent who helps a young child too much with their homework in their primary years can expect power struggles from that child when they are in their teens through procrastination and resistance.

A colleague once had nightly power struggles with her sons over their bedtime. She decided to hand all the responsibility to them and

told them they could choose when to go to bed on their own. Their first choices with this new found freedom was to stay up late, but the immediate result was feeling miserable the next day, missing school, getting lower grades, and no longer enjoying their preferred activities. My colleague offered no comment or judgment on their choices resulting in these obvious outcomes - she remained silent and let the lessons kick in. In the end, all three boys started going to bed earlier than their previously imposed bedtimes.

If a child forgets her homework, coat, or lunch when leaving for school and the parent brings the missing item to school for them they are denying the child the opportunity to learn. Getting marks deducted for late homework, being cold during recess, or missing a meal are not life altering experiences, but will provide the child motivation to learn time management, responsibility, and self discipline.

My advice to parents and teachers is this;

1. Ask yourself why you are performing a function for a child; in other words - whose needs are being met?

continued on page 6

GREEN FLOWER, BROWN STEM

A little boy was excited to attend his first day of school. The first thing his Teacher did was hand out paper and crayons to all the children and say; *“Today, we’re going to draw.”*

The boy started drawing cars, and planes, and castles, but the Teacher said; *“We’re going to draw a flower.”*

So the boy started drawing purple flowers, and blue flowers, and orange flowers, but the Teacher said; *“And I’m going to show you how.”*

On the easel at the front of the class the Teacher drew a green flower with a brown stem. The boy thought his colourful flowers looked better than the Teacher’s, but he turned his paper over and drew a green flower with a brown stem.

The next day the Teacher handed out lumps of modelling clay, announcing; *“Today we’re going to make something out of clay.”*

The boy started making cars, and planes, and castles, but the Teacher said; *“We’re going to make a dish.”*

So the boy mushed the clay together and started to make square dishes, and triangular dishes, and round dishes, but the Teacher said; *“And I’m going to show you how.”*

At the front of the class, the Teacher carefully made an oval dish. The boy thought his dishes looked more interesting than the Teacher’s, but he mushed his clay together and made an oval dish.

And so it went for his first year.

During the summer, the boy’s family moved to a new town and he transferred to a new school.

The first day in his new class, the first thing his new Teacher did was hand out paper and crayons to all the children and say; *“Today, we’re going to draw.”*

The boy sat and waited while the other children started to draw. The Teacher noticed and asked him; *“Why aren’t you drawing?”*

“I’m waiting for you to tell me what to draw.” said the boy.

“You can draw anything you want.” said the Teacher.

“What colours am I allowed to use.” the boy asked.

“You can use any colours you want.” said the Teacher.

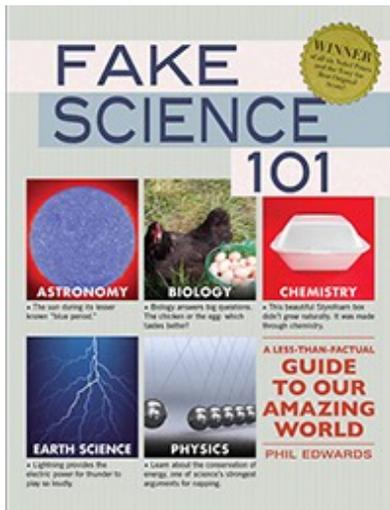
The boy sat and thought for a moment, then picking out two crayons, he drew a green flower with a brown stem. ◀

2. Assess if the child is capable of doing this for themselves; if so; teach them how
3. Ask what would happen if you didn’t do it for them; will it only result in the learning experiences of failure, disappointment, and discomfort?
4. Create a milieu where failure is a shameless part of life; a way to learn and overcome - we all fail and by failing we learn to adapt and improve

Children have insatiable appetites for exploration, knowledge, and mastering new skills, we just have to get out of their way while loving and encouraging them as they fail and learn and succeed. ◀

BY AARON D MCCLELLAND

PREDATORS IN JOURNALS' CLOTHING



... another falsified paper that was published in 2017, claimed the author ‘studied’ a species of microscopic but intelligent life forms called ‘*midichlorians*’ that happen to live only in the Star Wars universe.

Simply because an author manages to get a paper published in a Journal does not guarantee its legitimacy. Like anything, Journals should be viewed with the credo caveat emptor - “let the buyer beware”, and there are hundreds that are classified as ‘predatory Journals’.

A recent paper by ‘Lewis Zimmerman’ published in the Journal of Biosciences exposes the danger of viewing all Journals as legitimate;

Zimmerman’s research paper revealed something strange happening when humans encounter maximum celerity – or Warp 10. Within 96 hours, the test subjects developed an allergy to water and showed signs of mutation, though it didn’t affect their fertility or viability of offspring. Ultimately, Zimmerman concluded that maximum celerity provokes “*strikingly rapid developmental changes in morphology even in mammalian systems*”. (Zimmerman, 2018)

The problem with Zimmerman’s ‘observations’ and his ‘scientific paper’ is that he drew the data from the plot of a Star Trek: Voyager, episode titled “*Threshold*”,

that first aired in 1996. But not only did the Journal of Biosciences publish this obviously fake paper, three other Journals picked it up and published it as well.

‘Zimmerman’ - the pen name of an actual biologist with 30 years experience - was inspired by another falsified paper that was published in 2017, claimed the author ‘studied’ a species of microscopic but intelligent life forms called ‘*midichlorians*’ that happen to live only in the Star Wars universe.

Though the above are extreme examples, Belle’s List of Predatory Journals list hundreds of Journals that basically accept papers presented as peer reviewed but in fact are based on junk science, and at best the author has selected a sympathetic peer to add his or her name to legitimize it.

In addition to littering the landscape with false science and muddying the waters of actual research; in a world with a growing suspicion of science, they undermine the authority of legitimate Journals. This is especially

continued on page 8



During peer review, slippery uses of statistics are ferreted out, such as; 36% of pedestrian deaths are caused by impaired drivers, therefore 64% are caused by sober drivers, so drunk drivers are safer for pedestrians than sober drivers, right?

worrying in the current atmosphere where politicians delight in dismissing science whenever it's convenient.

The actual process that legitimate Journals use works something like this; A group of qualified researchers completes a study with all discernible data collected - data that may negatively impact the outcome is included. They then author a paper and submit it to a Journal. The Journal's editors then send it to several researchers who work in the same field - the 'peers' in peer review - who then review the paper and analyze the data included. If they agree with the paper's findings, it gets published; if they disagree (*or the data collection was flawed*), it is rejected.

During a peer review, slippery uses of statistics are ferreted out, such as; 36% of pedestrian deaths are caused by impaired drivers, therefore 64% are caused by sober drivers, so drunk drivers are safer for pedestrians than sober drivers, right?

Predatory Journals are a fact of life where unscrupulous 'researchers' can legitimize junk science by using them to fool the public, but as clinicians we need to be selective on which we read and follow.

One way to eliminate being bombarded by junk science online is to use the advanced search feature on search engines like Google. By typing in your search words then under the 'Site' option enter '.edu', you will only see research papers from actual universities, most of which religiously follow stringent data gathering criteria when conducting their research.

Predatory Journals "*are essentially counterfeit journals, mimicking the look and feel of legitimate online journals, but with the singular goal of making easy money,*" said Jeffrey Beall, a research librarian at the University of Colorado. ◀

RAISING STRONG CONFIDENT GIRLS



52% of girls said people think girls are only interested in love and romance. 59% of girls said girls are told not to brag about things they do well.

Girls today often face mixed messages about themselves; *Girls are strong, smart, powerful, and can be whoever and whatever they want; Girls should be thin and sexy and dress like Britney Spears; Girls have the right to speak up in class and express their opinion; Girls should be seen and not heard; Girls can be doctors, engineers, and nuclear physicists; Barbie says: "Math is hard."*

Ouch! Girls today could get whiplash with all the mixed messages about themselves, their bodies, their rights, and their abilities. In a 2000 Harris poll for the national nonprofit organization Girls Incorporated, girls in grades 3-12 were asked about gender stereotypes, their quality of life, and their plans for the future. Their answers - and their parents' comments - indicate that if anything, life for girls today is more difficult than it used to be.

- 52% of girls said people think girls are only interested in love and romance.
- 59% of girls said girls are told not to brag about things they do well.
- 62% of girls said in school, boys think they have a right

to discuss girls' bodies in public.

"I'm skeptical of the literature that finds that nearly every girl is going to plummet into the 'puberty pit,' but I do think that we're giving girls an enormously mixed set of messages," says Heather Johnston-Nicholson, PhD, director of research for Girls Inc. "Many are confused and some of them are harassed, and so there's a fair amount of reality to the notion that there's a challenge to growing up well as a girl these days."

"In many ways, media messages have become even more extreme," agrees Fern Marx, a senior research scientist at the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College. "On television, as well as in movies and in music, you have the strong girl and the girl as object, sometimes in the same breath. And what has happened over time is that these messages are extending to even younger girls -- there are clothes that make them sexual objects in grade school now."

continued on page 10

EMPOWERING YOUR DAUGHTERS

So your daughter is probably getting a lot of conflicting signals at school, from friends, in magazines, and on TV about who she is and what she can be. What's she hearing from you? And just as important, what are you hearing from her?



"The time has come to treat girls as people and listen carefully to what they're saying. They're the world's leading experts on what it's like to be them," says Johnston-Nicholson. So, if you want to help your daughter as she struggles with body image, self-esteem, intellectual growth, and peer pressure, listen before you talk. *"That's always the first lesson. Listen, and then ask questions. Ask her what she thinks. Look her in the eye and say, 'That's interesting, tell me about that.' Ask a leading question rather than assuming that you know what's going on."*

Seek out opportunities for her to be with other girls in communities and activities where they can do what they want to do -- whether they're "good at it" or not. *"Think of her interests to guide you: if she's an athlete, great; if she wants to hang out around horses, great. Girls need opportunities to explore things that might lead to*

strong interests and careers, without the pressure to 'win,'" Johnston-Nicholson says. *"Make sure she knows people can be good at any doggone thing."* Encourage her to try non-traditional as well as traditional pursuits -- take her fishing, work on the car with her, help her build a soapbox derby car. Girls Guides and Scouts Canada offer a wealth of ideas.

The point, says Marx, is to communicate an appreciation for who your daughter is, not who you think she should be. *"Don't try to remake her. This is part and parcel of the whole drive to have perfect children, super achievers in school, super competitors in athletics,"* she says. *"That doesn't mean you shouldn't encourage her to achieve, but let your daughter know that you accept her for who and what she is."*

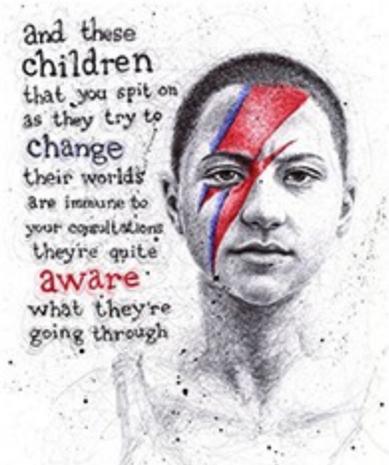
That can mean accepting yourself. On that self-esteem thing - how good a role model do you think you are? *"Parents may never have worked through their own concerns about how thin we need to be to be attractive,"* Johnson-Nicholson says. *"If we're not monitoring our messages, we're passing them on."*

A FAMILY OF MEDIA CRITICS

Girls Inc. urges parents to

continued on page 11

"I'm skeptical of the literature that finds that nearly every girl is going to plummet into the 'puberty pit,' but I do think that we're giving girls an enormously mixed set of messages"



"Make sure that the role models they see and the books they read are equitable, and encourage them to express their opinion"

become "a family of media critics" to combat negative gender stereotypes on TV, in the movies, in music, and in magazines. *"Watch TV together, look at her favourite magazines with her, and deconstruct the messages together,"* Johnston-Nicholson says. *"Ask her what she thinks this show says about girls, what they're like and how they should be. Ask her about the ethics of the show, and if that's how she and her friends treat each other. Talk about the messages about bodies, and if the girls in the magazine pictures look the way people really look."*

The Girls Inc./Harris poll found that most girls feel that they don't see "themselves" on television, and that the issues they're concerned about - like divorce, making friends, drugs, and sexuality - aren't being addressed in a way that speaks to them. *"Whether it's TV, magazines, or music, being media critics together offers a real opportunity to have good discussions about the messages girls are getting in their real world,"* Johnston-Nicholson says.

And don't forget about school - the other source of so much of your daughter's daily input. *"Make sure that the role models they see and the books they read are equitable, and encourage them to express*

their opinion," Marx says. This means meeting with teachers, taking a close look at the books your daughter reads for class, and asking a lot of questions.

"We can't underestimate the importance of adults in girls' lives. We need to explore how we can help them open doors to their futures by breaking down the stereotypes that hold girls back," says Johnston Nicholson. *"Our research tells us that the girls who succeed are the ones who have a loving, secure home environment and adults they can talk to."* ◀

BY GINA SHAW

IS FREE WILL AN ILLUSION?



The implication here is that when it comes to very short time scales, even before we think we've made a conscious choice, our mind has already subconsciously decided for us, and free will is more of an illusion than we think.

Psychology attempts to define and investigate some genuinely tricky, decidedly abstract subjects, including, for example, the nature of psychopathy. Free will is also another hot topic for researchers in this field, and there isn't an adult person alive today who hasn't even briefly considered whether we actually possess it or not.

Ambitiously, a new paper published in the journal *Psychological Science* has attempted to address this notorious issue. By asking participants to anticipate when they thought a specific colour of circle would appear before them, something determined completely by chance, the researchers found that their predictions were more accurate when they had only a fraction of a second to guess than when they had more time.

Assuming quite safely that the participants were not psychic, it appears a type of mental 'time travel' effect is happening here. The participants subconsciously perceived the colour change as it happened prior to making their mental choice, even though they always thought they made their prediction before the change

occurred. They were getting the answers right because they already knew the answer.

"Our minds may be rewriting history," Adam Bear, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Psychology at Yale University and lead author of the study, said in a statement. The implication here is that when it comes to very short time scales, even before we think we've made a conscious choice, our mind has already subconsciously decided for us, and free will is more of an illusion than we think.

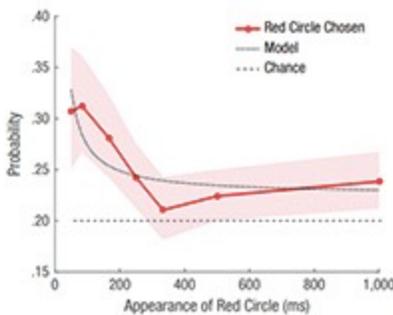
The research consisted of two separate tests. The first involved five white circles, one of which would turn red in rapid-fire sequences. The small sample of 25 young adult participants were asked to predict which one would randomly turn red, make a mental note of this, then wait. After one of the circles took on a crimson hue, the participants had to record via keystroke whether they had predicted correctly, incorrectly, or didn't have time to complete their choice.

Only 20 percent of these guesses should be correct, and this was shown to be more or

continued on page 13

less true. However, when the time window for guessing was reduced to a fraction of a second, the accuracy mysteriously rose to upwards of 30 percent.

think we've made a conscious choice all along. ◀



The reason for the accuracy rise is that on a very short time scale, the participants were seeing the circle change colour but only subconsciously, so they became aware of the actual answer without knowing it.

A second test with 25 additional young adults was fairly similar; they had to predict if the colour of an earlier circle matched up to the colour of a later one. The participants had a 50 percent chance of getting it right every single time. However, once again, when the time delay was a fraction of a second, the prediction accuracy rose, this time to around 62 percent.

The reason for the accuracy rise is that on a very short time scale, the participants were seeing the circle change colour but only subconsciously, so they became aware of the actual answer without knowing it. Across both experiments, however, they thought that they were making their mental choices before the answer appeared.

One possible interpretation of the experiment, therefore, is that when we have to make an immediate decision, we don't have time to consciously ponder on our choice. By making a snap decision, we have to surrender to our subconscious, and that decides for us - even if we

SHOT THERAPISTS HAVE ACTUALLY SAID



→ **Therapy is a** big part of healing for many who've struggled with mental health in their lives. And as people who have been in therapy know, it can be an incredibly vulnerable and scary experience. I mean, when you think about it, you're confiding the deepest, darkest parts of yourself to a complete stranger - usually while hoping they won't judge you or think you're being 'too much'.

So when that highly-trained stranger makes a seemingly 'harmless' - but actually invalidating and painful - comment, it leaves a mark that is often hard to erase.

Maybe your therapist suggested trying a diet to help with depressive thoughts without realizing you've been struggling with harmful dieting and disordered eating for years. Maybe lack of experience with your particular diagnosis led them to make a sweeping and harmful generalization about people with your condition. Or maybe lack of funding and resources caused your therapist to let you go as a client - triggering feelings of being undeserving or 'past help'.

And while we should absolutely acknowledge therapists are only human and recognize everyone's

needs in therapy are different, it's important we talk about the harmful things therapists have said to patients, because the reality is, the way professionals talk to their patients can affect the way that patient seeks help for the rest of their life.

We wanted to know what 'harmless' comments therapists said to their patients that actually hurt their mental health, so we asked our mental health community to share one with us and explain what it felt like to hear it.

If you have been mistreated or invalidated by a therapist, you're not alone. Good therapists are out there, and even when mental illness makes it hard to seek out help, we encourage you to not give up on therapy, and keep fighting for your recovery - because you deserve support and healing.

Here's what our community shared with us:

1. "YOU DON'T LOOK VERY DEPRESSED."

"You don't look very depressed. Your hair, your makeup, your outfit - I can see you take good care of yourself." Thanks. My anxiety and desire to blend in with society help me put on my

continued on page 15

"I'm always excited to see you because you have interesting stories to tell."

facade every day. I don't remember the last time I took a shower or brushed my teeth. But I'm glad you think I look happy." - Laura J.

2. "I CAN TELL YOU ARE DEPRESSED JUST BY LOOKING AT YOU."

"I can tell you are depressed just looking at you: the clothes you are wearing, no makeup.' I was wearing athletic clothing and a ball cap (because I had just worked out). I was meeting my counsellor for the very first time as my then-husband has just been arrested for domestic violence and counselling for us both was mandated by the legal system. This was the appointed counsellor who was supposed to help me process the trauma and instead she indicated that my apparent depression caused my ex-husband's violence toward me... I walked out of there and never returned." - Jenn C.

3. "ISN'T 25 A BIT TOO YOUNG TO BE RETIRING?"

"I was letting her know I was going to be getting everything set up to go on disability for my health and she cuts me off and asks me, 'Isn't 25 a bit too young for you to be retiring?' Then she proceeded to try and tell me how I felt and it wasn't that bad and I overreact when it comes to my memory issues. I had electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). She has no idea about the treatment... Two-ish years later, my memory is still

messy as hell and I'm still fighting for help." - Valerie R.

"There are plenty of bipolar people who work and are successful. So why can't you?"

I ask myself this all the time and felt even more worthless." - Lisa B.

4. "I'M ALWAYS EXCITED TO SEE YOU BECAUSE YOU HAVE INTERESTING STORIES TO TELL."

"I had a therapist who said she was excited to see me because I always had interesting stories to tell. It made me feel like my issues were a source of entertainment for her." - Lacie J.

5. "WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO TREAT YOU."

"We have limited resources so our funding would be better spent on treating someone who has a better chance of recovery.' This is what eating disorder services said to me before discharging me for being 'too severe' and not responding to treatment." - Laura B.

"We don't have the resources to help you. Good luck.' I was at an utter loss for words. I had never felt so failed by the mental health system. That my mental health issues were too much for help. Where is the line drawn between those who can and can't be helped?" - Taliah Y.

continued on page 16



"If you have borderline personality disorder, we can't help you."



“When I confided in the school psychologist that my suicidal thoughts had come back in full swing, she told me, *‘we aren’t trained to handle that’* and sent me home alone, where I contemplated suicide for the rest of the day.” - Ryann M.

6. “IF YOU HAVE BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER, WE CAN’T HELP YOU.”

“*If it turns out to be BPD, there’s really nothing we can do for it. It’s a personality defect and there’s not really much information about it.*” - Christopher B.

“I approached a therapist about a personality disorder once. She said, *‘There’s no way it’s a personality disorder because you’re responding to treatment. People with personality disorders can’t be helped.’* I told my next therapist that and she was appalled. It’s simply not true. At all.” - Tara S.

7. “HAVE YOU BEEN PRAYING ABOUT IT?”

“*You should pray about it’ and ‘Have you tried praying about it?’* While I recognize that some people find comfort in faith, I’m not one of those people. And even if I was, when I go to a therapist or psychiatrist it is for medical treatment, not spiritual guidance.” - Mary M.

8. “I’M NOT CONVINCED YOU REALLY HAVE ANXIETY.”

“*You seem to be doing fine. I’m not convinced that you*

really have anxiety.’ I have worked hard to come up with ways to cope and function with my anxiety so I can lead a normal life. That doesn’t mean my brain isn’t going a million miles a minute and my stomach isn’t tied up in knots when it kicks in, even if I’m good at keeping a straight face.” - Meagan B.

9. “YOU CAN’T HAVE BPD BECAUSE YOU AREN’T CRUEL OR MANIPULATIVE.”

“After getting my diagnosis he told me, *‘You can’t have borderline personality disorder - you don’t seem cruel or manipulative at all.’* I’ve struggled with self-loathing and poor self-worth my entire life. I left convinced my diagnosis made a terrible human being.” - Rene S.

10. “MAYBE IF YOU LOST WEIGHT, YOUR DEPRESSION WOULD GET BETTER.”

“*Maybe if you did lose the weight your depression would get better.’* I heard this]after we discussed my body dysmorphic disorder and obsession with my weight and how it might be impacting my major depressive disorder as well. And I’m thinking, ‘Great all of my problems are because I’m fat and everyone else also thinks it’s because I’m fat.’” - Melina A.

“When I went in for a med review, I told my psychologist I was gaining weight and I

continued on page 17

“Maybe if you lost weight, your depression would get better.”



“Have you been praying about it?”

thought it was the meds I was on and he said that weight gain wasn't one of the side effects and that I just needed 'self-control' and to 'eat less food.' I have struggled with my relationship with food since I was a child, so hearing this sent me into a crazy exercise kick and I stopped eating.” - Haley D.

11. “YOU NEED TO LOOK FOR THE POSITIVES.”

“I could be having the absolute worst day and all I hear from my counsellor and psychiatrist was to 'look for the positives,' and 'try some dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT).' Sometimes it does more good to just feel my feelings and have them validated (in other words, be told it's OK to have these feelings) than to try to put the blame on me for not being positive.” - Jennifer M.

12. “YOU'RE TOO PRETTY TO BE SUICIDAL.”

“After my first suicide attempt, I'm in the paper gown, they'd taken all my stuff. The therapist comes in to interview me. Asks me if they let me out, would I try to harm myself again. I answered affirmative. He says these words: *‘It doesn't make any sense. You're young and very beautiful.’*” - Nolwazi P.

13. “WHY CAN'T YOU JUST YELL ‘STOP!’ TO YOUR THOUGHTS?”

“I have OCD, and I suffer with intrusive thoughts. Thought-stopping is actually a compulsion and can send you

flying 500 steps back from recovery.” - Bethany M.

14. “THAT'S NOT SOMETHING TO WORRY ABOUT.”

“*‘Oh, that just happens sometimes. It's not worth worrying about.’* This was said about a traumatic event that happened to me as a child, which I kept secret for 20 years and had only just found the courage to admit.” - Angela M.

15. “YOU'RE SO STRONG. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH THIS WITH WILLPOWER.”

“I struggled with self-harm and thoughts of suicide and not being able to get out of bed for years before I made the jump to see a therapist. It was a big step physically, mentally and financially. After one session, the therapist told me, *‘You're a lot stronger than most of my clients. You will make it through this with your own willpower.’* Then gave me a list of self-help books. I was so confused and didn't know what to say, so I went out and tried to 'help myself' for years after and am still trying to figure out the right treatment. Sometimes, you can't do it on your own, and that is OK.” - Emily A.

16. “I AM NO CLOSER TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR MIND NOW THAN I WAS THE FIRST DAY I MET YOU.”

“At the age of 17, after almost 18 months of seeing a psychologist three times a

continued on page 18

week, he said, *'I am no closer now in understanding how your mind works than I was the first day you walked in here.'* I left and never went back. For me, it was confirmation of what I always felt - that I was born 'broken' and couldn't be helped." - Adele S.



17. "I'VE NEVER DEALT WITH THIS BEFORE. I NEED TO DO SOME RESEARCH BEFORE WE CONTINUE."

"My parents died together fairly horrifically, and the first therapist I saw literally sent me home about five minutes into our appointment. She told me that she had *'never dealt with anything quite like this, and needed to do some research.'* Thanks. Because I hadn't already felt horribly alone enough before I walked through your door." - Sarah B.

18. "YOU NEED TO STOP THROWING PITY PARTIES FOR YOURSELF."

"My old therapist told me if I wanted to get better, I would need to actually try. She also said I needed to stop throwing pity parties and do something about it (*like it's easy*). And that I am using my suicidal thoughts and self-harm for attention (*when in truth I don't tell anyone and they're not visible...*) It really hurt and made me feel invalidated and now I'm afraid to open up about my problems and feel like it's my fault." - Christina S.

"You need to stop throwing pity parties for yourself."

19. "YOU COULDN'T HAVE REALLY HAD ADHD IF YOU MADE IT THROUGH COLLEGE AND WENT TO GRAD SCHOOL."

"This was a psychiatrist who was supposedly specializing in ADHD. This was 20 years ago. People were so skeptical of an ADHD diagnosis for a woman who wasn't hyperactive back then. But I was struggling so much through all of it. And hating myself, making poor choices, etc. I finally got help years later but only after a lot of damage was done." - Eileen S.

20. "IT COULD ALWAYS BE WORSE."

"I know this. And I always focus on this and it makes me feel so horrible and guilty. I know things can be worse. Things can always be worse, but pain and suffering is relative." - Rowan K. ◀

BY JULIETTE VIRZI

PSYCH NEWS

SLEEP MAY BE ESSENTIAL FOR LEARNING AND FORGETTING



Why do people and other animals sicken and die if they are deprived of sleep? What is it about sleep that makes it so essential?

A new study, published in *Science*, shows evidence that in fact humans sleep to forget some of the things they learn each day - maintaining the brain's 'plasticity', its ability to change and adapt.

The investigation is a follow-up on the 'synaptic homeostasis hypothesis' (SHY) posited by psychiatrists Drs. Chiara Cirelli and Giulio Tononi of the Wisconsin Center for Sleep and Consciousness. The research offers direct visual proof of SHY via electron-microscope pictures from inside the brains of mice. The visuals suggest what happens in our own brain every day.

The pictures showed that our synapses - the junctions between nerve cells - grow strong and large during the stimulation of daytime, then

shrink by nearly 20 percent while we sleep, creating room for more growth and learning the next day.

In the study, a large team of researchers sectioned the brains of mice, and then using a scanning electron microscope they photographed, reconstructed, and analyzed two areas of cerebral cortex. Investigators were able to reconstruct 6,920 synapses and measure their size.

The team deliberately did not know whether they were analyzing the brain cells of a well-rested mouse or one that had been awake. When they finally 'broke the code' and correlated the measurements with the amount of sleep the mice had during the six to eight hours before the image was taken, they found that a few hours of sleep led on average to an 18 percent decrease in the size of the synapses.

These changes occurred in both areas of the cerebral cortex and were proportional to the size of the synapses. The study has been bolstered by a companion Johns Hopkins University study that analyzed brain proteins, also confirming SHY's prediction

that the purpose of sleep is to scale back synapses. ◀

SOCIAL MEDIA MAY NOT HARM TEENS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



Despite widespread concern among parents and educators, using social media may not adversely impact teens' academic performance, according to a new study in *Educational Psychology Review*.

"Concerns regarding the allegedly disastrous consequences of social networking sites on school performance are unfounded," said Professor Markus Appel, a psychologist who holds the Chair of Media Communication at Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg (JMU) in Bavaria, Germany.

Appel, doctoral student Caroline Marker, and Dr. Timo Gnambs from the University of Bamberg investigated how the social media use of adolescents correlates with their school grades.

“There are several contradictory single studies on this subject and this has made it difficult previously to properly assess all results,” Marker said. Some studies report negative impacts of Snapchat & Co., others describe a positive influence or do not find any relationship at all.

The researchers conducted meta-analyses from relevant databases of scientific publications, identifying 59 studies that tackled the correlation between social media use and academic performance. They then analyzed the combined results of the studies, which accounted for almost 30,000 young people worldwide.

The authors found:

- pupils who use social media intensively to communicate about school-related topics tend to have slightly better grades - the scientists had expected this
- pupils who use Instagram and the like a lot while studying or doing their homework tend to perform slightly worse than other students - this form of multi-tasking thus seems to be rather distracting
- students who log into social networking sites very frequently, regularly post messages and photos and spend a lot of time there have slightly lower grades -

this negative effect is, however, very small

- pupils who are particularly active on social media do not spend less time studying, so there is no scientifically verified proof of social media stealing valuable time for schoolwork from pupils.

Still, the investigation is far from over as critical questions remain. Does the intensive use of social media cause slightly poorer performance at school? Or do worse performing students tend to lose themselves in Facebook or other platforms?

“We cannot answer these questions. Both directions of cause and effect are possible, but they are not very pronounced,” Appel said.

Given the current state of research, then, using social media does not seem to have a significant adverse impact on school grades.

“Nevertheless, parents should take an interest in what their kids are doing on social media, know the social networks and be willing to understand the usage patterns,” said Appel.

“The more open-minded parents are with respect to their children’s online activities, the better they will be able to communicate with them.”

BOLSTERING SELF-CONCEPT IN YOUNG MENTAL HEALTH PATIENTS MAY AID IN TREATMENT



New research suggests an important part of treatment for young mental health patients - especially those in a hospital setting - is improving how they perceive themselves, according to a study from the University of Waterloo.

Researchers found that youth with psychiatric disorders receiving inpatient services reported lower self-concept - particularly global self-worth - compared to those receiving outpatient services.

“This was the first study that examined youth with psychiatric disorders by comparing what type of service they were receiving and whether that was associated with self-concept,” said Dr. Mark Ferro, an assistant professor in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Waterloo.

“We know that global self-worth is lower in the inpatient group and we know from other research that lower self-concept is a precursor to other more

serious mental health problems.”

The study, which appears in the Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, examined 47 youth aged eight to 17 years who were receiving inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services at McMaster’s Children Hospital in Hamilton.

The participants’ self-concept was measured using the Self-Perception Profile for Children and Adolescents.

Although the terms self-concept and self-esteem are often used interchangeably, they represent different but related constructs, according to researchers. Self-concept refers to someone’s perceptions of competence or adequacy; self-esteem refers to one’s overall evaluation of him- or herself, including feelings of general happiness and satisfaction.

As a result of the findings in this study, researchers believe self-concept might be an important aspect to consider when implementing treatment programs to improve the mental health of youth who are hospitalized.

“Because youths who are in the inpatient service have a lower self-concept, therapies within their overall treatment program aiming to

improve self-worth might be worthwhile,” Ferro said.

“Interventions to improve an individual’s self-concept or self-perception would be complementary to some of the more pressing needs within child and youth inpatient psychiatric services.”

PERCEPTIONS OF GOD IMPACT CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL ATTITUDES



New research suggests Republicans who believe that God is highly engaged with humanity are like Democrats - more liberal - when it comes to social and economic justice issues.

The Baylor University study proposes that some types of theology make conservatives more ‘compassionate’, while others make liberals ‘harsher’.

“Partisanship explains only so much. Images of God reveal deep moral perspectives that affect the ways in which Americans understand justice, so much so that they can blur the lines of partisan politics,” said researcher Robert Thomson, Ph.D. Thompson is a

postdoctoral research fellow at Rice University.

The study appears in the journal Sociological Forum.

In previous research, Thomson and co-author Paul Froese, Ph.D., Baylor professor of sociology, found Republicans and Democrats who believe God is highly judgmental tend to agree about issues of retributive justice, such as capital punishment.

“Liberals with a ‘strict father’ image of God are more inclined to support harsher criminal punishments and military solutions to foreign conflicts because they adhere to a theology of retribution and just deserts,” Froese said.

“It appears that Americans who see God as wrathful are quicker to support policies which seek an eye-for-an-eye outcome.”

In the new study, Froese and Thomson found that Republicans who view God as actively involved in the world tend to support more generous welfare policies, in opposition to their party’s platform.

“Conservatives who feel close to God tend to go to church more, volunteer more, but also more likely to want help from the government to take care of the poor,” Froese said. *“Republicans with a distant*

God tend be less compassionate.”

Froese and Thomson used data from the 2007 wave of the Baylor Religion Survey, a national cross-sectional survey developed by Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion and administered by the Gallup Organization.

The sample size was 1,588 respondents, excluding atheists because they did not have an image of God to compare with those of other respondents. The group’s makeup included 41 percent Republicans, 37 percent Democrats and 22 percent Independent.

Respondents were asked:

- Whether the federal government should distribute wealth more evenly and improve the standard of living for ethnic minorities, with responses on each ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’, as well as ‘undecided’. The research found that 50.3 percent affirmed distribution of wealth, while 49.6 affirmed standard of living for ethnic minorities.
- How important it is to actively seek social and economic justice and take care of the sick and needy if one wishes to be a good person, selecting from answers ranging from ‘not

important’ to ‘very important’. Results showed that 39.1 percent affirmed ‘seek justice’, while 62 percent affirmed care for the sick and needy.

- What traits God possesses, with the options being distant, ever present, removed from the world, concerned with the world’s well-being, concerned with personal well-being, directly involved in worldly affairs and differently involved in personal affairs.

Additionally, respondents were asked to respond to how religious they were on a four-point scale; and how frequently they attended religious services, with answers ranging from zero (‘Never’) to eight (‘Several times a week’).

Researchers noted that typically, Republicans are consistently and distinctly more conservative on both issues of social justice and retributive justice than Democrats.

Put simply, conservatism predicts negative views towards social justice, specifically (1) distributing wealth more evenly, (2) improving the standard of living for ethnic minorities, (3) seeking social and economic justice, and (4) taking care of the sick and needy.

Conservatism also predicts positive attitudes towards retributive justice, specifically:

- keeping the death penalty
- expanding authority to fight terrorism
- punishing criminals more harshly, and;
- affirming the importance of serving in the military.

While the GOP opposes efforts to distribute wealth more evenly through taxation and welfare programs, some Republicans feel a personal obligation to assist in nongovernmental ways, researchers said.

Because Republicans are more likely to be active Christians than Democrats when it comes to affiliating with a church, they are more likely to donate time and money to charity than more secular Americans.

“Republicans with a deeply engaged God are consistently liberal on issues of social justice,” Froese said, “and Democrats with a highly judgmental God are consistently conservative on issues of retributive justice.” ◀