

All,

Cartoon: Patient on coach to psychotherapist: "I guess I want what everyone else wants – a billion dollars for being a jerk." [current New Yorker].

From the April 22 conference on "Trauma, Acute Stress and PTSD Impacts on Individuals and Communities," presentations from Drs. David George, Janice Hutchinson and Robert Ursano included the following painful to hear: pregnancy is associated with a marked increase in domestic violence directed to women.

While at the APA Annual, a San Diego newspaper on May 23 said the Mediterranean diet would counteract depression, and more specifically listed the following as antidepressive foods:

- 1] Chocolate
- 2] Salmon
- 3] Dark, leafy greens, e.g., spinach.
- 4] Oysters [Relevant if one thinks zinc counters depression. I don't know of any empirical evidence.]

At APA Annual as to online therapy programs, e.g., MoodGYM website [Dr. Charles Koransky, University of Maryland/Sheppard Pratt Resident]:

- 1] Can help some people with mild to moderate depression, but not severe form. Not suggested for managing suicidal thoughts.
- 2] The results lasted at least three months after therapy ended.
- 3] The programs don't necessarily need to have a therapist directly involved to produce benefits.
- 4] Studies used varying forms of internet cognitive behavior therapy. None of these studies were done in the U.S.

Antipsychotic medication trials over six decades show stable medication response and an increasing placebo response. Industry sponsorship is also linked to smaller drug-placebo differences. About half of patients receiving an active medication had at least a minimal response, but fewer than one-fourth had a good response.

For years, we have been hearing that cognitive therapy is as good as dynamic therapy. Times have changed. Now the headlines are that psychodynamic psychotherapy is as good as cognitive psychotherapy.

This month's JAMA Psychiatry:

- 1] Anxiety and depression in youth are widely prevalent, highly impairing, and woefully undertreated. A trial had youths randomized to pediatric-based brief behavioral therapy. Ninety-three percent accepted treatment, 57% achieved high clinical response and substantial functional improvement.
- 2] Among patients with ADHD, rates of motor vehicle crashes were lower when they received ADHD medications.

NY Times editorial championing collaborative care and casting a shadow over the American Psychiatric Association and other medical specialties last Sunday titled “The Specialists’ Stranglehold.” Some unfriendly reflections:

1] The Affordable Care Act was misnamed; it should have been called the Access to Unaffordable Care Act. In 2015 health care spending reached [\\$3.2 trillion](#) — \$10,000 for every man, woman and child in America. While our health care system is the most expensive in the world by far, on many measures of performance it ranked last out of 11 developed countries.

2] To the extent that we can call it a market at all, health care is not self-correcting. Instead, it is a colossal network of unaccountable profit centers, the pricing of which has been controlled by medical specialists since the mid-20th century.

3] Physician specialty groups have created “societies” to provide education, establish clinical guidelines and handle public relations. They are also lobbyists, charged with maximizing the incomes of member doctors by influencing pricing decisions.

4] There are so many specialty organizations because each develops authority over a niche market and vigorously guards its turf. Imagine building a house by allowing each workman to do his own thing. The plumber would put a sink in every room. The electrician would install chandeliers on every ceiling. The carpenter would panel every room in luxurious wood. That’s how health care works.

5] Though they would vigorously deny it, entrepreneurial doctors often treat each patient as an opportunity to make money. Research shows that physicians quickly adapt their treatment choices if the fees they get paid change. But the current payment incentives do more than drive up costs — they can kill people. The editorial goes on to suggest Joan Rivers’ death resulted from selecting a procedure that cost more than an alternative that was safer — but cheaper.

6] We should return primary care to primary care physicians and require specialists’ referrals to come from the primary physician.

Today's NY Times: Global warming will lead to an increase in insomnia for those who do not have air-conditioning.

Roger