

## **REPORT on MENTAL HEALTH in the ERA OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

(full report available to [www.mentalhealthinternational.ca](http://www.mentalhealthinternational.ca))

### **SERIES OF RECAPS (12)**

#### **Conclusions**

##### **Report on Mental Health in the Era of Artificial Intelligence**

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*Bill is MHI Executive Chairman and McMaster University Industry Professor of International Mental Health and in the mental health field, Wilkerson:*

- *Co-Founded and led the Canadian-based Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health (1998-2011).*
- *Chaired a business-led Pan-European campaign targeting depression in the workplace (2013-17).*
- *Founded and chaired a five-city (Washington, Ottawa, Boston, Toronto, Denver) US/Canada Forum on Mental Health and Productivity (2007-13).*

**PORT HOPE, ONTARIO, CANADA** (June, 2019)- AI represents a clear and present danger to the livelihood and health of hundreds of millions of working people and their families worldwide.

The revolution in AI threatens to displace and replace human beings in whole jobs and specific tasks on an unprecedented scale. Even the most informed proponents of AI worry about this.

The World Economic Forum forecasts that individuals in some 375 million jobs will be rotated out of those jobs. According to consulting giant McKinsey, 60-90% of all jobs now in place will be affected by AI.

Unless employers and governments prepare for this revolution by retraining workers, creating replacement jobs that demand distinctly human traits, and forging new education

and career models, social unrest and alienation will intensify in a world already fractured by income inequality and a gaping 'have-have not' divide.

If AI blows like a blizzard or drops like a bomb on the workplace as the world makes the transition to a brain-based, digital economy, the most significant unintended consequence of this revolution will be to increase the burden of human distress, disquiet and clinical disorder across the world.

As the AI revolution takes hold, working populations must be prepared for the jolting adjustments triggered by AI. The Deep Learning of machines will generate Deep Stress for people who face the invasive uncertainty and disruption caused by AI technologies.

A comprehensive and coordinated international effort to establish the supremacy of human beings in the workplaces of artificial intelligence is called for in the face of the 'vast and fast' infusion of AI into all aspects of societies and the global economy.

Elements of this:

- Mental health considerations must be incorporated into all aspects of planning, design and implementation of AI technologies in the workplace.
- Standards for the workplace-based prevention of deep human stress flowing from deep machine learning should be a 'norm' in the AI era.
- Meanwhile, AI apps are in development that will help individuals, families and clinicians to better manage the symptoms of mental illness and its physical effects.
- For prevention purposes, integrating artificial intelligence and epigenetics could create new and valuable insight into how and why deep stress has such a powerful influence on the development and course of mental illness.
- Brain health problems are complex. Using AI to map the human brain and model mental illness could generate new insights into the chain of complexity linking our genes-to-environment-to the brain-to-mental illness-to cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other major disorders.

Environmental toxins that disturb brain circuits and lead to mental disquiet and disorder:

- Fundamentally, the way human beings treat each other directly and through systems and structures created to govern and manage society.
- Misogyny, racism, malignant uncertainty at work, fear as a steady diet at home or work.
- Political rhetoric, bullying, child abuse and trauma, smoking and drinking when pregnant, social media now emerging more like a curse than a complement to human life.

Both artificial intelligence and mental illness are wrapped-up in harmful nomenclature:

- The phrase artificial intelligence adjacent to the phrase human intelligence creates a false equivalency and dangerous ambiguity between the purposes of people and machines in the workplace and economy.
- Terms such as ‘sentient beings’ and ‘biological brainpower’ reveal themselves as to the inference this phrasing poses. The word ‘person’ is missing. New metaphors have emerged.
- The term – ‘mental illness’ – is fatally stigmatized and inaccurate. Stigma is entrenched even in on-line dictionaries containing synonyms such as crazy, lunatic, nuts.

Epilogue:

The author of this report interviewed objective scientific experts and expert proponents of artificial intelligence. None of the findings/observations were drawn from a negative pre-disposition toward AI but, rather, from the insights and knowledge of those very close to the subject in all its facets.

This statement by CIFAR CEO Alan Bernstein framed the report: “The revolutions in artificial intelligence and genomics are forcing us to re-visit some of most cherished views as to what it means to be human.”



An observation of this nature by one of the greatest scientists on the planet provided a tipping point in the thinking of the author to look into the issues of AI from a mental health perspective.

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