Mental Health

**Growing out of ADHD: Half the kids with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) don't have permanent deficits -- their brains just need more time to develop, says a new study. Given a few extra years, the brains of many children with ADHD will catch up with those of their peers', giving them more control over their minds and actions. Using detailed, three-dimensional images from brain scans of 446 children, researchers found that kids with ADHD had less developed cortexes -- the area that helps children focus, control impulses, and make connections as they learn new things. But for half the kids, the difference was only temporary. Whereas "normal" kids reached peak cortical thickness at age 7 1/2, half the children with ADHD got there at age 10 1/2. Kids with attention deficits "may be 11, but their brain is 8," Dr. F. Xavier Castellanos tells the Los Angeles Times. "They can't act their chronological age." The fact that half these children simply "Grow out" of their attention difficulties, however, should provide some reassurance to the 4.4 million school-age children in this country with ADHD. With further study, researchers said, they may find that there are different kinds of ADHD -- some temporary, and some that last into adulthood. *(The Week magazine, November 30, 2007)***

**Mental health problems do not affect three or four out of every five persons but one out of one. *(William Menninger)***

**Allen's cinematic therapy: Woody Allen keeps making films in order to keep his sanity, said Charles McGrath in The Wall Street Journal. "You know in a mental institution they sometimes give a person some clay or some basket weaving?" says the 77-year-old director, whose 48th feature, Blue Jasmine, came out this week. "It's the therapy of movie-making that has been good in my life. If you don't work, it's unhealthy. I could sit there suffering from morbid introspection, ruing my mortality. But it's very therapeutic to get up and think, 'Can I get this actor, does my third act work?' All these solvable problems that are delightful puzzles, as opposed to the great puzzles of life that are unsolvable. So I get pleasure from doing this. It's my version of basket weaving." Allen says he'll keep making a new movie every year as long as he's physically able. He just wishes he could still indulge his wish to play the romantic lead. "It's an inevitable disaster of aging, and there's nothing I can do about it. I can't play the scenes where I'm sitting opposite Diane Keaton or Jody Davis. If I think of parts for myself now, all I can be is Pop, the lovable doorman backstage at the theater who takes phone numbers for the guys, or the psychiatrist, or the amiable dad at the wedding." He sighs. "I like to be the lover." *(The Week magazine, August 2, 2013)***

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**Americans are more prone to anxiety than citizens of any other nation. A new study by the World Health Organization found that 31 percent of Americans suffer from an anxiety disorder in the course of their lifetime, because of work and financial worries and pressure to succeed. That's five times the anxiety rate among people in Third World nations such as Nigeria. *(The Atlantic, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 20, 2012)***

**Nearly one in three Americans will experience a bout with mental illness, usually some form of anxiety disorder or depression. Fewer than one in five will seek treatment. *(Rocky Mountain News, April 29, 1992)***

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**We are all born mad. Some remain so. *(Samuel Beckett)***

**Cell phones and brain waves: Pressing your cell phone to your ear can at least temporarily alter your brain. That's the disturbing finding of researchers from the National Institutes of Health, who scanned the brains of 47 volunteers while they had cell phones attached to each side of their heads. During a 50-minute call, activity in the brain's neurons closest to the antenna increased by 7 percent -- a significant amount. "We have no idea what this means yet or how it works," study author Nora Volkow tells Wired, "but this is the first reliable study showing that the brain is activated by exposure to cell phone radio frequencies." Previous studies have found contradictory evidence about whether mobile-phone radiation can lead to a higher incidence of brain cancer; many researchers have insisted there is no way the weak radiation emitted by the phones could affect biological tissue. But the NIH study shows that there is, in fact, an interaction, raising the question: Could the neurological stimulation shown by the scans be causing dangerous inflammation and brain-cell damage over time? "You don't have to wait around on us for the answers," Volkow says. She strongly recommends using a headset or speakerphone to keep cell phones away from your head. *(The Week magazine, March 11, 2011)***

**A woman met an old friend at her psychiatrist's door. "What a coincidence!" she cried. "We must have a cup of tea together! Tell me, are you coming or going?" "If I knew that," replied her friend, "I wouldn't be here, would I?" *(Mrs. H. F. Whalton, in Catholic Digest)***

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**I think that depression is not so much an issue of nobody loving you. Depression is an issue of not having found a place to give your love, not being able to love enough. *(Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen, in The Healing Process)***

**Ziggy says to himself: “Doctors say depression is bad for your heart! Great! That just gives me one more thing to be depressed about!” *(Tom Wilson, in Ziggy comic strip)***

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**In helping victims of certain forms of schizophrenia, dogs succeed where doctors fail. Psychobiologist Samuel A. Corson of Ohio State University treated 20 patients who failed to respond to conventional therapy by assigning them "feeling heart" dogs, chosen for their warmth and friendliness, and because their temperament and overall behavior seemed to match the needs of the particular patient. Eighteen accepted the pets, and all showed improvement, in some cases leading to discharge. *(Walter Sullivan, in New York Times)***

**Reserpine, a drug widely used since the 1950s to reduce high blood pressure, is actually not new. As one of the most active components of the tropical rauwolfia plant, it has been used for centuries in Africa and India as a cure for mental illness. (*Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 231)***

Farms Healthy for the Mentally Ill: Over 100 experts from 14 countries recently met in Stavanger, Norway, to learn about Green Care, a concept that combines farming, teaching, and health care. According to the broadcasting company NRK, some who have been mentally ill for years no longer need to be institutionalized when they start doing farm work. It is “healthy for mind and body.” More than 600 traditional farms in Norway cooperate with Green Care, for which they receive extra income. *(Awake magazine, April, 2007)*

**Financial planners and accountants work in one of the 10 most depression-prone job categories, according to a new study. Experts say the planners’ responsibility for clients’ financial well-being, combined with a lack of control over volatile markets, add up to low spirits. (*Health.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 18, 2011)***

**Psychiatry is the art of teaching people how to stand on their own feet while reclining on couches. *(Sigmund Freud)***

**Why Grandma should Google: Using Google or other Internet search engines may help older people stave off dementia and cognitive decline, scientists say. UCLA researchers asked volunteers, ranging in age from 55 to 78, to spend an hour a day using Google to search for information about a range of subjects. Many have never used the Internet before. After two weeks, brain scans revealed increased blood flow to regions involved in decision-making and short-term memory. The results validate the notion that seeking out new ideas and interests helps to keep the brain stimulated and healthy. “Becoming involved in new things and keeping your brain active are all hallmarks of activities that would tend to preserve your cognitive skills,” neuroscientist Susan Bookheimer tells National Geographic News. “And these are all things that searching the Internet for new information really does.” *(The Week magazine, November 13, 2009)***

**The neurotic has problems, the psychotic has solutions. *(Thomas Szasz, psychiatrist)***

**As depicted in the hit 2001 Hollywood film A Beautiful Mind, John Nash, one of the greatest mathematicians of his generation, struggled with severe paranoid schizophrenia for two decades before recovering and winning a Nobel Prize for his earlier work on game theory, the mathematical study of decision making. "Everyone else would climb a peak by looking for a path somewhere on the mountain," recalled one former colleague. "Nash would climb another mountain altogether and from a distant peak would shine a searchlight back on the first peak." *(The Week magazine, June 5, 2015)***

How can you tell the patients from the doctors on a psych ward? The patients get better. *(Nurses: Jokes, Quotes, and Anecdotes - 2005 Calendar)*

Innocence is a kind of insanity. *(Graham Greene)*

**We usually know when we’re physically ill – but often only others know when we’re mentally ill. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Lawyers are particularly likely to suffer that disorder called depression. So reports a Johns Hopkins researcher. They’re even more vulnerable than school counselors or secretaries, he says. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**"Why are you so sad?" a friend asked a man whose aunt just died. "You never cared for the poor old lady." "I didn't," admitted the sad man, "but I was the one who kept her in a lunatic asylum during the last five years of her life. She has left me all her money and now I've got to prove that she was of sound mind." *(D. R. McCleary, in Quote magazine*) 226998**

**Mental illness reduces life expectancy by 10 to 20 years -- more than smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, a new study of 1.7 million people found. *(NPR.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 6, 2014)***

**What's madness but nobility of soul at odds with circumstance? *(Theodore Roethke, poet)***

**When a man is in despair, it means that he still believes in something. *(Dmitri Shostakovich)***

**Among people who say they’re happily married, that ailment called depression is nearly four times more common in women than in men. If divorced, though, men are more likely to experience profound depression even though divorce usually hits women far harder financially. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Since 2009, there have been 43 mass shootings of four or more people – an average of one such killing spree a month. In only four of the 43 shootings had anyone raised concerns about the mental health of the killer to authorities. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 15, 2013)***

**Human madness is oftentimes a cunning and most feline thing. When you think it fled, it may have but become transfigured into some still subtler form. *(Herman Melville)***

**Mental health problems are more common among the poor. Nearly 9 percent of people with incomes below the poverty line -- $20,090 for a family of three -- reported suffering serious psychological distress between 2009 and 2013. For people with incomes at least four times above the poverty line -- $80,360 for a family of three -- the incidence of serious psychological distress was 1.2 percent. *(HuffingtonPost.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 12, 2015)***

**Some people never go crazy. What truly horrible lives they must live. *(Charles Bukowski, poet)***

**The New York City metropolitan area is home to 7 percent of the U.S. population and 23 percent of the psychiatrists. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 19, 2006)***

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**In individuals, insanity is rare; but in groups, parties, nations and epochs, it is the rule. *(Friedrich Nietzsche)***

**And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music. *(Friedrich Nietzsche)***

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**GET DIRTY, BE HEALTHY!: Not only does it "feel good" to be outdoors and dig in the dirt, it's literally a healing experience. Lowly soil bacteria called Mycobacterium vaccae have been shown in studies to ease depression and speed learning by activating a set of serotonin-releasing nerves in the brains of mice, the same neurons targeted by Prozac and similar prescription antidepressants. Dr. Chris Lowry, lead author on the original paper from England's Bristol University, says: "These studies help us understand how the body communicates with the brain and why a healthy immune system is important for maintaining mental health. They also leave us wondering if we shouldn't all be spending more time playing in the dirt." Interest in the project arose after human cancer patients being treated with M. vaccae unexpectedly reported increases in their quality of life. So plant your garden, or just spend more time outdoors. People are likely to inhale or ingest the "feel good" microorganisms just by being around Mother Nature, experts say. (*The Saturday Evening Post, January, 2016 issue, on page 69)***

**Sometimes when I’m depressed, I get a pregnancy test so I can say, “Well, at least I’m not pregnant.” *(Daniel Tosh, host of Tosh.O)***

**Helga tells the doctor: “I’m constantly depressed with feelings of hopeless despair, Doctor!” Doctor: “Here’s a prescription that will provide immediate relief.” Helga then says to Hagar: “The doctor says you should leave to invade England immediately!” *(Dik Browne, in Hagar The Horrible comic strip)***

**More than half of the prisoners in the U.S. have a mental health problem, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, according to the Justice Department. This country now houses three times the number of mentally ill people in jails as it does in mental hospitals. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 21, 2014)***

**The proportion of violent people -- about 11 percent -- is the same in mental institutions as in the general population. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Hello, welcome to the Psychiatric Hotline. If you are obsessive-compulsive, please press 1 repeatedly. If you are co-dependent, please ask someone to press 2. If you have multiple personalities, please press 3, 4, 5 and 6. If you are paranoid-delusional, we know who you are and what you want. Just stay on the line until we can trace the call. If you are schizophrenic, listen carefully and a little voice will tell you which number to press. If you are manic-depressive, it doesn’t matter which number you press. No one will answer. *(Jacquelyn Mayerhofer, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Treating sadness as a mental disorder: All sadness is not a "psychological disorder," said sociologists Allan Horwitz and Jerome Wakefield. But try telling that to the psychiatric establishment. In the official diagnostic manual used by mental-health professionals, depression is defined as two continuous weeks of such symptoms as despondency, diminished pleasure in life, and difficulties in sleeping and eating. In the manual, it doesn't matter why a person is despondent. If you've lost your job, or your romantic partner dumped you, or you've been given a diagnosis of cancer, you're still deemed "clinically depressed" if you're sad for two weeks or more. This goes a long way to explaining why the number of Americans diagnosed with depression has soared by 300 percent in recent years, while the use of antidepressants has also exploded. Real depression is a serious mental illness, but it's a disservice to conflate it with sadness that's a normal response to a serious loss. Context counts. Being sad after a major setback or disappointment is "a normal part of human nature" and, in fact, may serve an important purpose, such as giving us a "time-out" to grapple with what's happened. Some feelings should be felt, not medicated. *(The Week magazine, December 21, 2007)***

**Sanity is a madness put to good uses. *(George Santayana)***

**People who are drawn to New York are, for the most part, mentally ill. *(Amy Schumer)***

**Being slightly paranoid is like being slightly pregnant -- it tends to get worse. *(Molly Ivins, journalist)***

**With states cutting billions from mental-health budgets, nearly 40 percent of adults with a "severe" mental illness, such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, received no treatment, a national survey found. "We have replaced the hospital bed with the jail cell, the homeless shelter, and the coffin, says Rep. Tim Murphy (R.-Pa.). *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 30, 2014)***

**The statistics on sanity are that one out of every four Americans is suffering from some form of mental illness. Think of your three best friends. If they’re okay, then it’s you. *(Rita Mae Brown, author)***

**Psychiatric hospitals nationwide are reporting that admissions have more than doubled due to people suffering extreme stress about home foreclosures, job losses, and plunging stock prices. *(Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 24, 2008)***

**What time of day do you get depressed? If depressed you ever get? The deep downers that chronically come upon some people right after they get up in the morning are probably glandular in origin. That’s the claim of a Miami psychiatrist. She says the biotechs are working hard to come forth with better pills for that kind. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The FDA has approved the first ever transdermal patch for the treatment of depression. Simply remove the backing and press the patch firmly over your mother’s mouth. (Tina Fey, in Time)**

**This goes back in the 18th century: Long before electro-shock therapy as we know it, medicos once treated mental patients by wrapping electric eels around said patients’ heads. That, too, is in historical footnotes. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Nature's cure for anxiety: People tormented by an endless stream of negative thoughts can greatly benefit from an alternative to expensive psychotherapy or medications: a walk in the woods. Psychologists at Stanford University found that strolling outdoors in natural settings can stave off the human tendency to dwell on that breakup, layoff, or family problem, The Washington Post reports. The study involved 38 city dwellers with no history of mental illness. Half of the participants strolled for 90 minutes through an unspoiled landscape surrounded by greenery; the others walked along a busy downtown street. Before and after their walks, the participants underwent a brain scan and questioning about how often they engaged in rumination -- inward, self-referential thinking, which is tied to depression and anxiety. The nature walkers brooded far less, and their brain scans revealed reduced activity in the subgenual prefrontal cortex, the region that regulates negative emotions. "This provides robust results for us that nature experience, even of a short duration, can decrease this pattern of thinking that is associated with the onset, in some cases, of mental illnesses," says the study's lead author, Gregory Bratman. One downer: By 2050, about 70 percent of the world's population is expected to reside in cities. *(The Week magazine, July 17, 2015)***

**Going insane is a war between being told who you are and knowing who you are. *(Liam Neeson)***

**Your mental health will be better if you have lots of fun outside of that office. *(Dr. William Menninger)***

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