

## FIXING MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Dear (name),

I'm excited to unveil my first Newsletter: *Fixing Mental Health Care*. And I'm delighted you're here, welcome aboard! There's lots going on and much to talk about.



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Mental Health Wellness Psychology Mind. (CC0)

As I mentioned when I invited you to join my email list late last year, I'm developing this Newsletter in conjunction with my new book, *Has Medicine Lost Its Mind?* Both concern US medicine's failure to provide adequate mental health care and, more broadly, to address the psychosocial needs of all patients. The book explores how this happened, why it's so difficult to change, and some new ways to create meaningful change.

A recent [presentation](#) outlines the problem I expand upon in the book. I was honored to be invited by the Department of Psychiatry at Case Western Reserve University to present it as the annual Sihler Endowed Lecture. I also do a regular [blog](#) in Psychology Today that addresses many related issues in greater depth.

But there's something I want to be clear about, a recent event bringing it very much to mind.

Just a few weeks ago, I had the fright of my life when my son, Jim, had a cardiac arrest. Happily, he did well following a four-vessel coronary artery bypass. Incredibly thankful for his cardiac team at Swedish Hospital, Cherry Hill Campus in Seattle, this experience reinforced three things with respect to my book—which is critical of US medicine. First, many physicians in America are good, decent people who have excellent, respectful bedside manners and listening skills. Second, the problems they do have with mental disorders and other psychosocial issues do not reflect on them personally, rather they stem from lack of training. Finally, we must recognize that we all benefit from disease-based medicine. Life survival has doubled in the last century, and we now have a wide array of medical and surgical interventions not even considered a century ago, for example, vaccines, various transplants, monoclonal antibody-based treatments—and coronary artery bypass.

In sum, medicine has been successful, and physicians are not bad people. The issue I address in the book concerns medicine's "blind spot," its conceptual inability to move beyond its success with diseases to integrate mental and other psychosocial factors. Making the problem

especially difficult to correct, it is subconscious and manifest as a refractory culture of medicine invested in the status quo.

In another direction, I'm delighted to announce that my agent has begun looking for a publisher for *Has Medicine Lost Its Mind?* Keep your fingers crossed, my largely unrecognized message must get out!

And my [website](#) is up and running. Please check it out. I learned lots developing it, especially that I needed—and received—much help.

I'm excited to be in touch with you. I'll keep the once or twice monthly Newsletter short and focused on what's on my mind that I think you'll be interested in. I have been working to improve mental health and other aspects of psychosocial medicine my entire career, and one thing has become evident – I can't do this alone. If we are to radically transform what mental health in America looks like, we need to do it together. So please, like, comment, forward, or share in some other way any of these Newsletters that really resonate.

Thanks for following, and until you hear from me again, be well—and thankful.

Take care.

Bob

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