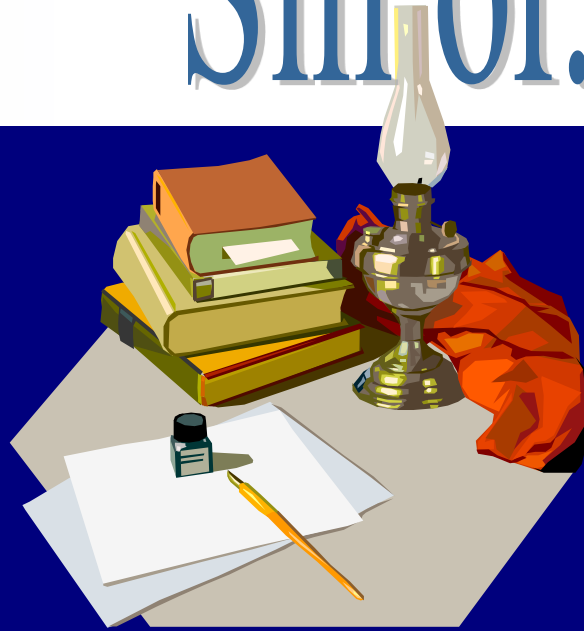


Sin or...Sickness?



Biblical Help for Mental Disorders

Dr. John D. Street

What is a “mental disorder”?

“A syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual’s cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning. Mental disorders are usually associated with significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other important activities.”

American Psychiatric Association (APA), Diagnostic and Statistical Manual – 5 (DSM-5), 20.

What is a “mental disorder”?

“A expectable or culturally approved response to a common stressor or loss, such as the death of a loved one, is not a mental disorder. Socially deviant behavior (e.g., political, religious, or sexual) and conflicts that are primarily between the individual and society are not mental disorders unless the deviance or conflict results from a dysfunction in the individual as described above.”

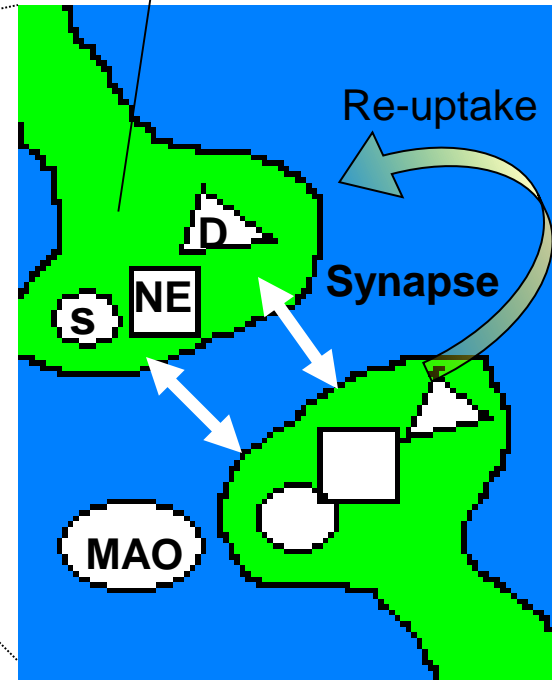
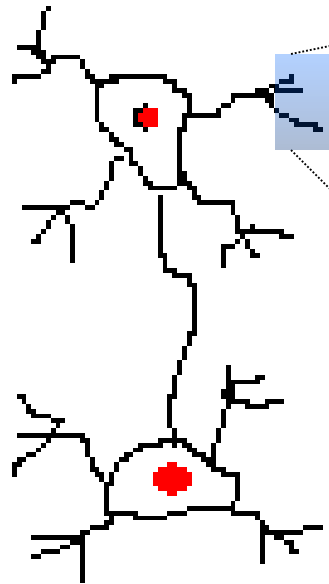
American Psychiatric Association (APA), Diagnostic and Statistical Manual – 5 (DSM-5), 20.

Physical and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling

D. Specific Medical Issues

1. Chemical Imbalances

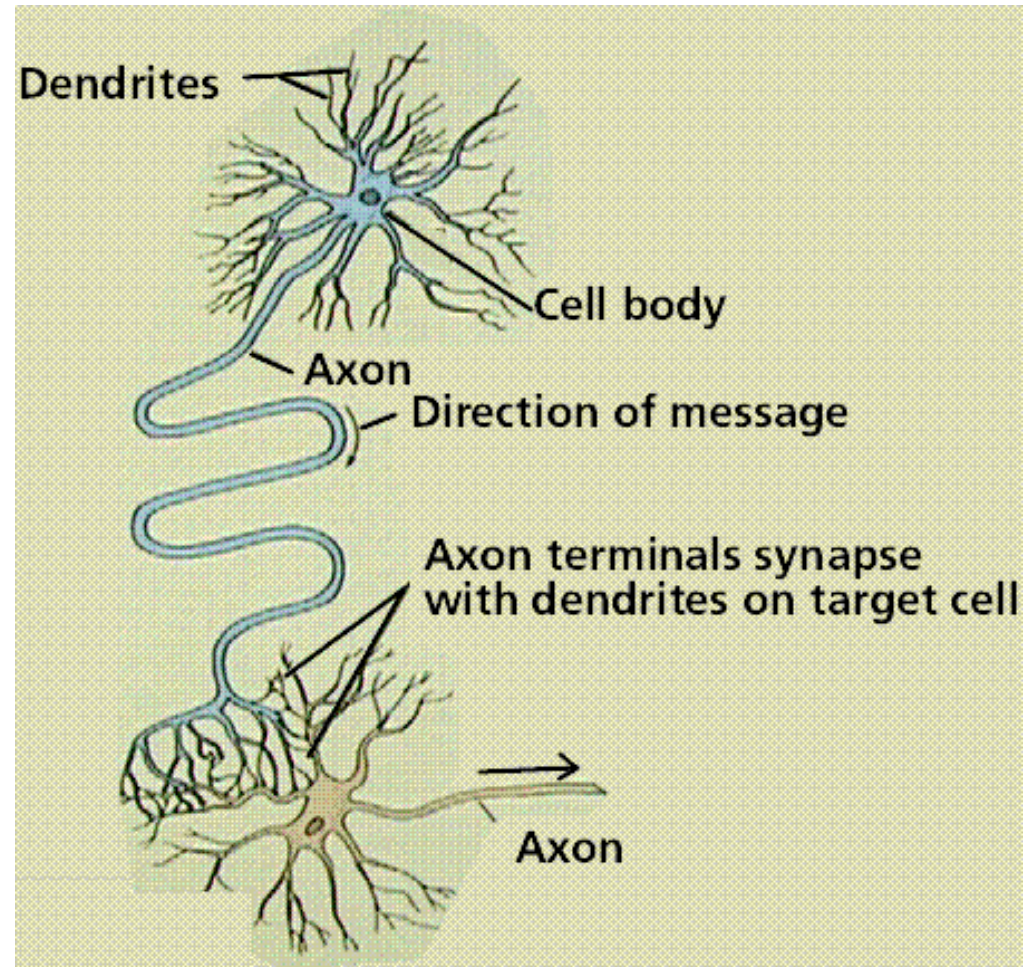
S = Serotonin
NE = Norepinephrine
D = Dopamine
MAO = Mono Amine
Oxidase



Physical and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling

“Neurons have specialized projections called dendrites and axons. Dendrites bring information to the neuron cell body and axons take information away from the neuron cell body. Incoming information is received by the dendrites (see below) and passes through the neuron cell body and through the axon of the neuron. For communication between neurons to occur, an electrical impulse must travel down an axon to the synaptic terminal.”

www.pfizer.com/brain/dlgame.html



Secular Sources repudiating the “chemical imbalance” theory...

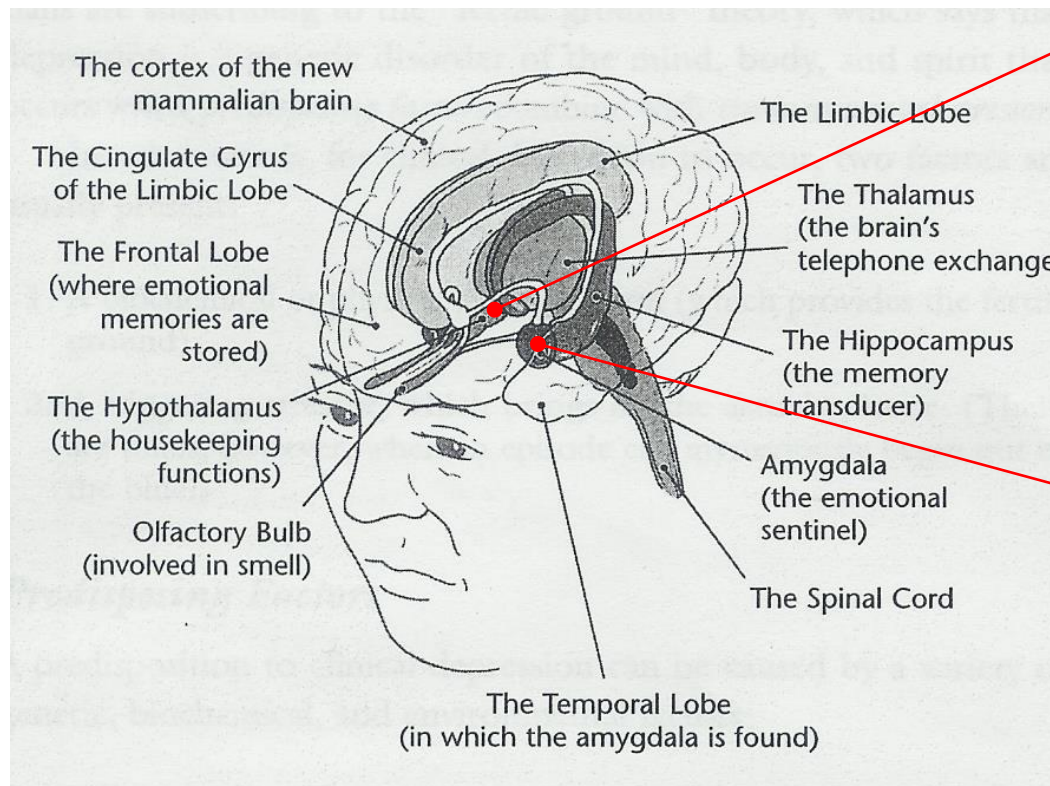
1. “Despite stunning advances in neuroscience and bold claims of revelations from new brain-scan technologies, our knowledge about the brain’s role in human behavior is still primitive.” “The Brain: A Mindless Obsession” by Charles Barber, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Winter 2008.
2. *The Emperor’s New Drugs: Exploding the Antidepressant Myth*, Irving Kirsch (New York: Basic Books, 2011).

Secular Sources repudiating the “chemical imbalance” theory...

3. ***Toxic Psychiatry***, Peter Breggin M.D. (London: St. Martin's Griffen, 2015).
4. ***Anatomy of an Epidemic: Magic Bullets, Psychiatric Drugs, and the Astonishing Rise of Mental Illness in America***, Robert Whitaker (Danver, MA: Broadway Books, 2010).
5. ***Saving Normal: An Insider's Revolt against Out-of-Control Psychiatric Diagnosis, DSM-5, Big Pharma, and the Medicalization of Ordinary Life***, Allen Frances (Harpers Collins Publishers, 2013).

The Limbic Brain

The hypothalamus and amygdala are two parts of the brain that many believe are implicated in depressive and anxiety disorders.



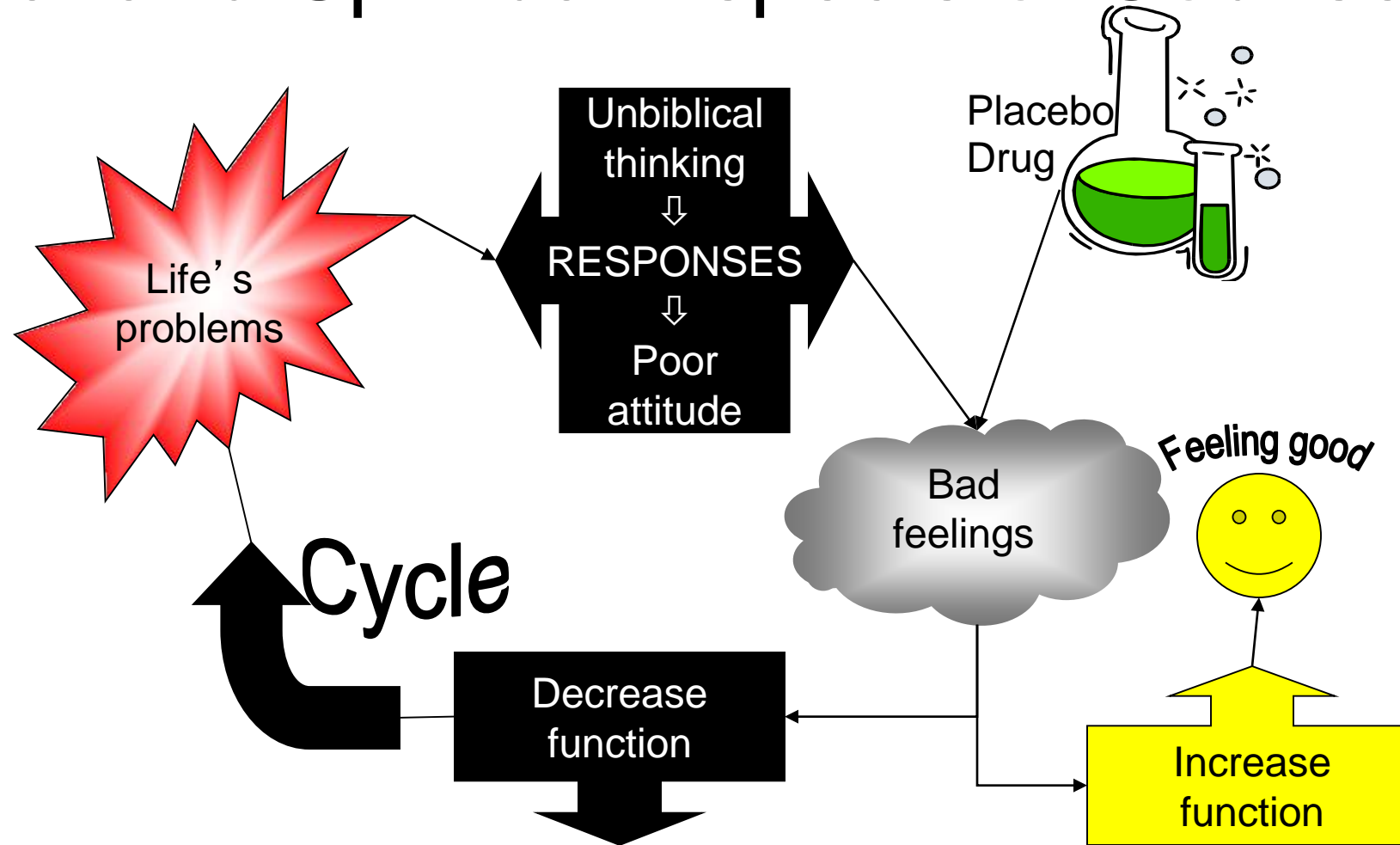
Hypothalamus governs thirst, appetite, sleep, pleasure, sexual desire and aggression. These are the body's functions that are most affected in depression.

Amygdala it is believed controls the brain's ability to react in fear which is implicated in anxiety disorders.

Physical and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling

- a. Which comes first: depression, imbalance, or malfunction of the limbic regions of the brain? (Proverbs 14:30; 15:30; 17:22)
- b. Do drugs work? (Define “work”?)
- c. Placebo effect—there are no active ingredients in a placebo. The things they consider:
 - 1) The patient
 - 2) The MD (psychiatrist) caring for the patient (the patient feels the MD cares)
 - 3) The environment makes a difference in the affects of the placebo

Physical and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling



Physical and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling

- d. Questions to ask physicians who claim a physical problem (like chemical imbalance) is producing emotional or behavioral problems:
 - 1) Concerning the diagnosis:
 - a) What tests were run to prove a physical problem is present?
 - b) How do those tests prove the presence?
 - c) Is the condition a proven, demonstrable fact, or simply a theory?
 - 2) Concerning the behavior:
 - a) How do you know the diagnosed physical problem is the cause of the emotional or behavioral actions of the person?
 - b) Is the link a proven, demonstrable fact, or simply a theory?
 - c) Concerning medication: What proof do you have that the medicine you are recommending corrects the physical problem?

Physical and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling

- e. Don't practice medicine. You didn't put them on the medication and it's not your place to take them off it. Work with a medical physician, not in place of one.
 - ✓ When a person is under the care (i.e. authority) of a medical doctor, it is unethical to overrule that authority, especially in an area where you are not trained.
 - ✓ However, if a medical doctor is dedicated to constantly frustrating or refuting the theological counseling you are giving to the counselee (an area where he/she has had little or no training) then make sure your counselee finds a different doctor. Hopefully a doctor that will work with you, not against you!