

# The Hidden Side of Psychiatry

## Part 2 of a Two-Part Series

by Gary Null, PhD

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### Psychiatry in Education

#### *The Management of Child Behavior Through Medication*

A growing number of children are being referred by their schools to doctors for the treatment of behavioral and learning disorders attributed to brain dysfunction. Millions of students are now sent to special education classes or given prescriptions for Ritalin and other powerful, addictive medications for conditions termed learning disabilities, dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and attention deficit disorder (ADD). Fred Bauman, MD, a specialist in child neurology for 35 years, contends that these children are said to have conditions that do not really exist:

"I diagnose these children the same way that I diagnose real diseases, such as epilepsy, brain tumors, and so on, and I find that they are normal. I do not find that I can validate the presence of any disease in this population of children.

"Nonetheless, the diagnosing and labeling continues, and schools, not liking my verdict, have access to plenty of physicians that will validate their diagnoses and give them the prescription they want, which is a medication or a referral to special education. That's what is going on. After all these years, neither dyslexia nor ADHD are diseases that can be validated in the true sense of the word, and that's the bottom line."<sup>30</sup>

Dr. Bauman's statement is confirmed by current educational research. In a study in the *Harvard Educational Review*, the accuracy of labels ascribed to young children was questioned, and it was determined that "more than 80% of the student population could be classified as learning disabled by one or more of the definitions presently in use." Furthermore, "based upon the records of those already certified as learning disabled and those not, experienced evaluators could not tell the difference."<sup>31</sup>

Why are schools misdiagnosing and mislabeling children? The problem is rooted in the failure of the school system

to acknowledge that it is not particularly good at teaching children who stand out from average learners. Rather, the system blames students for not fitting in. Such children may rate poorly on culturally biased standardized tests, enter school less experienced at reading and writing than their classmates, be resistant to socialization practices, or even be more intelligent than their peers.

In *Learning Denied*, Denny Taylor, a distinguished educator and award-winning Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Urban and Minority Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, tells how the educational system repeatedly misdiagnosed a bright, articulate, literate first-grader named Patrick, and recommended that he be placed in special education and under medical management.

Taylor writes that problems are bureaucratic, not child-centered: "...Recent research presented in the social science literature indicates that there are many children like Patrick who have been (and continue to be) handicapped by our educational system. Patrick's case is not atypical. Relying on testing to find out what is 'wrong' with the child, blaming the child when he or she does not learn in the ways expected in our public institutions, and searching for the glitch in the child's neurological makeup so that the school (system) can be exonerated if and when the child 'fails' are all typical of the ways in which we 'educate' children."<sup>32</sup>

She then quotes educational researcher Sapon-Shevin, who explains that "Viewing children as deficient leads special education to direct its efforts toward forcing the child to change in order to fit in or be accepted. This approach legitimizes behavioral and medical management techniques which attempt to 'fix' the child."<sup>33</sup>

An increasingly used tool for "fixing" children is drug therapy, promoted by child psychiatrists and neurologists who infiltrate schools *in order to make a profit*. Bauman points out that "there is a great

deal of money involved here and there are powerful industries connected with this. Since the early 70s, we've had a tremendous overproduction of physicians of all sorts in this country, specifically specialists. Unfortunately, most specialties have to invent things to do, to pay the bills, as it were. Child psychiatry, in particular, has had a game plan to connect with the public schools of the country. They give their consultative services free. For-profit and not-for-profit child psychiatric hospitals offer free evaluations to the schools and give in-service conferences where they convey these disease theories to educators.... So, there is a real quid pro quo arrangement going on between public education and academic medicine...."<sup>30</sup>

He goes on to assert that unnecessary medication will end only when doctors are held accountable for their actions: "Before a physician can administer a certain therapy to your child, there has to be an informed consent in writing. According to Maitonson vs. Klein (1960), a physician administering treatment without informed consent of the patient is guilty of malpractice, no matter how skillfully the treatment may be administered. If a physician wants to put your child on an addictive medication to treat ADHD, and says that it is a proven disease or a biochemical imbalance in the brain, that is a misrepresentation because there is no validation of ADHD as a disease."<sup>30</sup>

### *Student Psychological Records*

In 1989, Carolyn Steinke founded the group Parents Involved in Education after she learned of another serious problem in our schools - the intrusion into the personal lives of children and their families. She formed the California-based organization after discovering that the emphasis of educational curriculums had radically shifted from what children should know when they graduate to what they should be and demonstrate. An internal part of this new emphasis, Steinke says, is the administration, by teachers, of psychological tests to children. This, she learned, was an invasion of Federal Code 98.4, the Hatch Amendment, which says that no student shall be required, as part of any test or curriculum, to reveal information concerning mental or psychological problems that can be potentially embarrassing to the student or his family, as well as other personal and





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family information, such as political affiliations. Steinke's group is attempting to make parents aware of what may or may not legally transpire in a classroom.

She tells the story of one emotionally fragile sixth grade boy, who was asked to write about personal trauma in his life:

"This child came from an emotional background that was very sad. His mother was very unstable emotionally and had even gone so far as to put a gun to the father's head in front of the children, and threatened to kill him. In a court of law, she lost custody. This little boy now is living with his daddy, a new mama, and a new baby.

"Here he is in the sixth grade and he's taking a stress test called the Kid's Stress Test. The mom and dad were never told that their child was taking this test. The only reason we got our hands on it was because he took it home.

"The test starts out by saying, life can be hard when you're a child growing up. Grown-ups think that kids have it easy. They say that all we have to do is go to school and play and that they can take care of us so we really have nothing to worry about. Well, grown-ups aren't so smart after all. They don't know everything. Kids have plenty of things to worry about and here are some stories.... Some kids get beat. Some are screamed and yelled at. Some come from divorced homes.

"He was supposed to write down which stories he identified with and then answer a list of questions which directly related to the home: Do you have too much responsibility? Not enough responsibility? Do you live in a crowded home? Are conditions at home physically not good? Are they dirty or messy or are you poor? Do you not have enough to eat? Is someone at home on drugs or alcohol? Are your parents separated or divorced? Does a person physically pick on you at home? I never have enough time to study for tests; I have too many chores and responsibilities; I don't have enough money; and on and on....

"At the end of the test, the child was to total up his score based on how much stress he had. Then he was asked: Are you surprised at your stress level? Is it good or bad? Is there anything you can do to help yourself? Do you think your relative is suffering from stress? If yes, what can you do to help them?"<sup>34</sup>

Steinke is concerned about the possible effects of these tests on troubled children. For instance, the sixth-grade boy who had endured so much trauma at home did not need that all brought back as a result of a

written test. As Steinke puts it, "If children really have emotional problems and you open them up to hemorrhaging, who is going to be there to close them?"

She also asks, "What are they doing with the answers to these questions?" Parents Involved in Education has learned that *the information obtained by the federal government is being stored*, and that it can potentially be used against children at some later date:

"Electronic portfolios store the information for each child. We find states all over the nation that are adopting legislation to put into there what they call the 'speedy express,' that is, an electronic transcript. It is the exchange of permanent records electronically for students in schools from the National Center on Education Statistics.... We see what kind of information they are keeping on our children, and it is absolutely privacy-invading."<sup>34</sup>

Steinke reports that on the federal level, the Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills has made an alliance with the Department of Education. Together, they've developed a "learning for living blueprint on performance." This hook-up between the Departments of Labor and Education is called *Worklink*, and it functions as a school-to-work records system. *Worklink* is promoted to employers as having information they need to know in order to make sound hiring decisions.

Steinke tells how *Worklink* is promoted as a tool for businesses: "Employers are told, the more information you have about an applicant's real skills, the better your hiring decisions and the less your employee turnover work will be. Teachers' confidential ratings are supplied of students' work-related behaviors, attitudinal evaluations, and psychological evaluations. *Worklink* has all this information on an electronic database. An employer can search for a list of names that match their needs."<sup>34</sup>

Parents Involved in Education expresses grave concern about this entire process of obtaining, storing, and using information about children. Steinke explains how a teacher's ratings might "blacklist" a child much later in life. "Their honesty, their integrity, and what they get out of the classroom, can be used against the child all of their life. If they get a 6 out of a 10 on honesty, do you think they'll ever get hired?"<sup>34</sup>

### Who is Mentally Ill?

Is our culture too bent on finding a mental "condition" to explain away whatever is wrong in people's lives, or whatever doesn't meet the norm? As we've

seen, underlying some of the questionable practices in psychiatry today is the issue of who is really mentally ill. At this juncture it's important to ask ourselves whether we are over-medicalizing our lives.

For instance, is a child who is uncontrollable in school really suffering from a disorder (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), or is he simply in need of a different type of learning environment? The answer may determine whether he is put on a powerful drug for many years. Should a depressed senior citizen be considered a patient with a disease, or simply someone responding to the changing circumstances of her life? The answer may determine whether she will become subject to repeated electric shocks to the brain. Clearly, the question of whether we're too disease- or condition-oriented is more than an academic one for many people.

Dr. Thomas Szasz, distinguished author and professor of psychiatry emeritus, is one psychiatrist who has never believed in the mental-condition-oriented mindset:<sup>35</sup> "Ever since I first reflected on matters such as madness and madhouses and especially the incarceration of insane persons in insane asylums – long before I went to college, much less medical school – it has seemed to me that the entire edifice of psychiatry rests on two false premises, namely: that persons called 'mental patients' have something others do not have – mental illness; and that they lack something others do have – free will and responsibility. In short, psychiatry is a house of cards, held up by nothing more, or less, than mass belief in the truth of its principles and the goodness of its practices. If this is so, then psychiatry is a religion, not a science, a system of social controls, not a system of treating illness."

One of Szasz's themes has always been that people's behavior should be viewed first and foremost as a *reaction to circumstances*, rather than as manifestations of disorders. If we're too mechanistic in our view of behavior, then "joy and sadness, fear and elation, anger, greed – all human aspirations and passions – are thus interpreted as the manifestations of unintentional, amoral, biochemical processes. In such a world, nothing is willed; everything happens."<sup>36</sup>

Yet, this mechanistic, disease-oriented mindset is predominant, and increasing. As the Citizens' Commission on Human Rights puts it,<sup>37</sup> "Psychiatry has consistently invented more and more mental illnesses during the last decades, and the pharmaceutical companies have then invented the chemical 'cures.' Worse, the effects of these drugs create yet more categories of mental illness. It is a circle that profits everyone but the patients."



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An article in the *Journal of Mind and Behavior*<sup>38</sup> elaborates:

"The first *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)* published in 1952, listed 60 types and subtypes of mental illness. Sixteen years later, *DSM II* more than doubled the number of disorders. The number of disorders grew to more than 200 with *DSM III* in 1980. The current guide, *DSM III-R* (1987) includes tobacco dependence, developmental disorders and sexual dysfunctions, school learning problems, and adolescent rebellion disorders. *DSM IV* (in preparation) will add more disorders. Clearly the more ordinary human problems in living that are labeled 'mental illnesses,' the more people will be found who suffer from at least one of them – and, a cynic might add, the more conditions that therapists can treat and for which they can collect health-insurance payments."

### Patients Speak Out

The best way to learn about psychiatry's darker side is from the firsthand accounts of patients. The individuals who tell their stories here are not exceptional cases. In fact, their tales of what happened to them behind the locked doors of mental health facilities are representative of many, many others. Nor are these people necessarily mentally ill. These are in many senses average Americans who have the same questions, concerns, and problems as anyone else, but who mistakenly placed their faith in psychiatry. These people tell us that what happened to them could happen to anybody. What they share is a knowledge that our mental health industry is very sick and needs immediate reform. Let's hear their side of the story.

*Angele Painter: "They treated me like a criminal."*

At 63, Angele Painter was forcibly taken from her home without any provocation, handcuffed, and dragged to a psychiatric facility where she was strip searched, forcibly drugged, and made to stay against her will. This all as a result of her having called a city agency about environmental pollutants in her home that were making her sick. It should be noted that Angele is of Armenian origin and has a noticeable accent (but does speak English fairly well and understands it, since her husband is American). Her accent, combined with her frustration at having been given the runaround by various governmental offices, may have led to a misunderstanding over the phone. Be that as it may, there is no excuse for the way she was treated. This is an abbreviated account of her almost surrealistic nightmare:

"The house we bought over four years ago had mechanical problems. It had chemical contamination and I became sick. I had a bitter sensation and a headache, and I suffered. I called our lawyer and he suggested I call the health department.

"I did, and two or three people came. One of them suggested [a particular home remodeling plan] since the furnace was in the laundry room and that's why the odor was travelling. It would cost a lot of money and we couldn't afford to do that. It was a very bad situation.

"Since we couldn't afford it, I called social services because I thought they might have a senior citizen's program. I called and explained. They might have misunderstood me because the next thing that happened was that the police and the Kimball Hospital aides and nurses came. They were holding flashlights and hollering. They wanted to come in and they scared me. They forced themselves in. Then they started blaming me for calling them and complaining. They accused me and said there was nothing wrong with the furnace, that I was just making up the story. They treated me like a criminal. They didn't let me call my husband. I was scared and shocked. I said, 'I can't believe this, treating me like a criminal. I haven't done anything...'

"They said, 'We have to take you to the hospital' and I said 'What for? We can sit and talk.' 'No,' they said, 'if you don't come, we'll cuff your hands.' I was more scared. Then they called another policeman. They cuffed my hands and dragged me out. The nurses were so angry at me. They were scary-looking people. They humiliated me in front of the neighbors. I mentioned to the nurses that I had back problems and was taking medication. They didn't care. One of the nurses said to the police that I might have a gun and shoot. They started checking me and I got upset. They shoved me in the back of the police car.

"They took me to Kimball Hospital. It was awful, scary. A nurse's aide came and asked me questions and wrote things down. Then they wanted to give me medication. I refused. Four big men came and held my hands as they gave me a shot of medication against my will.

"Later, a psychiatrist came and I said to him, 'This is wrong what they are doing. Thank God, I'm of sound mind, I'm intelligent. This is unfair and unjust.' He just smiled and said, 'Mrs. Painter, you must have problems. We'll take you away.'

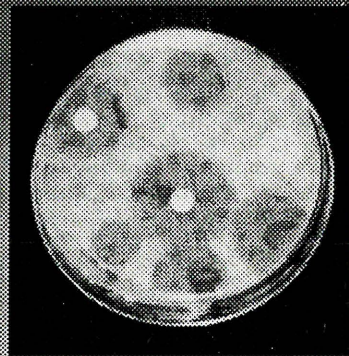
"They put me on a gurney and then into an ambulance and took me to Hampton Hospital. I was cold and I couldn't believe what was happening. Then a gentleman came towards morning. He said, 'Mrs. Painter, I have your statement here. It says that you have told them that you want

to commit suicide.' I said, 'This is absolutely wrong. I have never thought about it. I have never said anything. Whatever I have said, they have written the wrong thing.'

"When I explained the situation, he told me I could get a lawyer. I begged the doctor to let me go but he said to me, 'Once you are here, you are under our observation.' I suffered a lot.

"Finally [through my husband's intercession] I got out. But it was a terrible experience. During my stay there, I met other people that had come wrongfully. One of them calls it police brutality."<sup>39</sup>

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*Amy Rankin: "Shock treatments have destroyed my life."*

Amy Rankin has been in the hands of psychiatric authorities for most of her childhood and adolescent years. An abused child, she was placed in a hospital at 13 for depression and suicidal tendencies after years of counseling and prescribed medication. There she remained for the next five years of her life. This is her account of how five years of "therapy" in an institution, which included a weekly series of electric shock treatments, left her emotionally crippled for life:

"At first, I was in a private institution. But when my insurance ran out I was moved to a state facility. After being in therapy for awhile the doctors decided to give me electric shock. I was 14 at the time. In one year, I had anywhere from 40 to 60 treatments.

"The whole experience was frustrating and horrifying. I never participated in my own life decisions; decisions were always being made by adults. I was always being told what to do and where to go. I had no sense of control and felt totally discounted by the people who were supposed to be there to help me. As an abused child, I felt discounted by my own family. Then I felt discounted by the very people who were supposed to be helping me. Instead of realizing that it was a living problem, they thought I had some kind of biological disorder in my brain.

"If we showed any kind of anger or if we were feeling discounted and we tried to express that, it was seen as psychotic behavior. We were tied in restraints and given shocks to make us calm down. We were given medication that has the same effect as a straitjacket. You can't move and you can't think because you're on Thorazine or Mellaril. You can't write letters or communicate with anyone because you're so drugged up.

"As a result of the shock treatments, I have been left with a closed head injury. That's the best way I can describe it. It was not an effective way of dealing with depression because everything that was disturbing me was still there. I just didn't know why I was disturbed. It's like knowing that a square peg won't fit into a round hole but not knowing why.

"Shock treatments have destroyed my life. I still have to deal with emotional stress, and I have not learned how to deal with it.

"My whole life has been complicated by shock treatments. I was an eighth grader when I got shocked. After shock, I have third- and fourth-grade academic

skills. As an adult, that has prevented me from knowing where the letter O is in the alphabet. It's difficult to know what has more value, a dime or a nickel. I have to ask someone how to spell coffee 16 times. If I walk down the street, it means not being able to read a street sign. It means not being able to fill out an application that asks me to explain how some of my skills can help in the job. It means not knowing how to write words that I want to use. It means going into a grocery store, giving the clerk a \$5 bill, and not knowing whether or not I get back the correct change because I can't remember how to count money. That's what it's like. It doesn't go away. It's permanent and it's totally frustrating. It's not a matter of relearning these things. It's having to live with a closed head injury on top of everything else.

"I run a national newsletter for shock survivors who feel they've been harmed by this treatment. Almost everyone who reads the newspaper and contacts me tells me that they feel they've been harmed. Not one survivor has told me that this treatment has benefited them. I would encourage shock survivors and mental health consumers to really take a look at how they're being oppressed."<sup>15</sup>

*Sandra: "When the psychiatrist suggested hospitalization, I trusted his advice..."*

In 1968, a woman named Sandra sought psychiatric help for depression over the death of her baby. When her psychiatrist suggested hospitalization, she trusted that he knew what was best for her. Once in the hospital, though, she quickly changed her opinion:

"We're taught in this society to see a psychiatrist for depression. And that's what I did. I started seeing a psychiatrist for a normal real-life sadness in my life. Anybody would be sad after the death of a baby. And when the psychiatrist suggested hospitalization, I trusted his advice and walked into the hospital of my own free will. I was no danger to myself or to anyone else. I was there because I had a broken heart over the death of my baby. and they started shock treatments on me.

"When I had had the first one, I woke up terrified and with an excruciating headache. I couldn't think straight. When I tried to leave the hospital, the nurse called the guards. The elevators were stopped. I was dragged to my room and tied to my bed in four-point restraints. Four-point restraints is having each ankle and wrist bound securely so that you can't move or fight or get away. I was force-drugged and force-shocked. I was literally left laying in my own sweat and tears until I smelled like a filthy animal. I received this treatment over and over again until by the time I got out of the hospital I

couldn't connect my thoughts well enough to even carry on a normal conversation. I was born and raised in the Birmingham, Alabama area. I didn't know my way around town anymore. I couldn't even find my way to the store. One of my sisters said that I reminded her of a zombie. Another sister said that I seemed to have the mentality of a three-year-old child. It literally took me years to be able to connect my thoughts well enough to carry on a normal conversation.

"When I learned that the same thing is happening to other people today I had to start getting involved. I got heavily involved with children's issues because this is so sad, and started a group called CRY, Citizens Rescuing Youth, to stop psychiatry from making mental patients out of our children. Psychiatry is zeroing in on the fact that Medicaid pays hundreds of dollar a day for the in-house psychiatric evaluation of children.

"One of the cases I handled personally was that of a mother who literally lost all vital signs because she had an ovary rupture. They were able to bring her back but she was unable to care for herself much less her two young sons. She signed what she thought was temporary custody of these two children to the State Department of Human Resources. Since psychiatry had been lecturing at the State Department of Human Resources on how they can help these foster children in state custody, these children, who were normally upset about being away from their mother, were put in a psychiatric hospital.

"When their mother was able to get them back, they weren't given to her. She was denied visiting rights for months. The youngest child, age 7, was overmedicated on psychiatric drugs and put in what they call a quiet room, which is actually a padded cell. He was so broken-hearted that while he was having hallucinations from the drugs they had given him, he tried to hang himself on his own shoe laces."<sup>40</sup>

*Diana Loper: "It only takes a minute to destroy a brain."*

At 24, Diana Loper was given electroshock for post-partum depression and an inability to sleep after the birth of her child. After 24 treatments, she was released in a far worse condition, and could no longer care for herself or her family. As a result, her husband divorced her and her child was taken away by the courts. This is her story:

"My story is many stories. There are thousands. Over a hundred thousand persons per year receive ECT. I don't even like to use the term therapy - this is only a procedure.

"I had a premature child, post-partum depression, and sleep deprivation. The



post-partum depression is, of course, what we call the "baby blues," and the sleep deprivation was from having a very sick child. I was married to a preacher and we decided to go to a psychiatrist to talk about what was going on with me. This psychiatrist decided that I needed shock treatments.

"I didn't go for everything they said but my husband did. The psychiatrist told my husband, 'Well, you know, she's very depressed, and all we have to do is put her to sleep. There will be a little bit of a jolt through her body, and she'll have a little convulsion. It will be like going to sleep. And then she'll wake up the next day and everything will be fine. She'll be happy again. She won't be depressed.' I remember looking at that psychiatrist and saying, 'Let's get real here. What are you going to do to me? Are you going to wipe out all the bad that ever happened to me...?' My husband then said, 'Now, honey, listen to me. You cry all the time. Let's try this procedure. It won't hurt. It will only take a minute.'

"So, they gave me 24 shock treatments for my post-partum depression and sleep deprivation. If I had been allowed to go ahead and play this out and let it go through its natural course, I probably would have been all right. But young, new husband, new baby, away from home, you go to these people you supposedly trust. My husband signed for the treatments believing that this was going to do some good. God only knows how he thought that but that's what he thought. And so, I was shocked against my will. I was straightjacketed and forcibly shocked.

"What happens with ECT is they give you a certain drug that puts you to sleep. Then, when you wake up, your grief is supposedly over. After this procedure had been given to me, I woke up in a room by myself and didn't know where I was or who I was because what this procedure does is it puts you on a euphoric high, a brain-damage high. They might as well just take a sledge hammer and knock you in the head with it because after a head injury you walk around like, what's going on? The world is wonderful. The world is fine. It will put you on this high.... But six months after shock, after your brain-damage high is over, you're suicidal. I did not go into the hospital because I was suicidal. After they got through shocking me, I was.

"After the insurance money runs out, they will put you on the street. Well, they put me on the street. I had no way of starting life because they did no follow-up.... So, what it did was wipe out my life, and I had to start over, but I did not know where to start over or who to start over with.

"After the shock treatments, I didn't know my child, I didn't know my husband.

My husband didn't want to be married to me anymore because I wasn't the same person that I was. So my husband divorced me. The courts took my child away from me. I read on what was probably a second-grade level and did math on a sixth-grade level. I kept a diary during this whole process of being shocked and remember the last thing I wrote. It states that if it's the last thing I do before I die, 'you'll never be able to do this to anyone again.'

"I got back on my feet with the help of my parents. I learned what a toothbrush was again, and I learned how to put my shoes on the right feet. I kind of started

my life all over again because I knew that I had a child that I had to find and I didn't want him to find this basket case of a mother running around.

"It only takes a minute to destroy a brain. And those doctors destroyed my brain and my life. Now I have epilepsy. I have two grand mal seizures a day because of this procedure. The only reason I did not lock myself up in my house and never

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come out again was to stand up for what I know is right. I know that this is a treatment that needs to be banned. There's nothing good about this treatment. It's a brain-injury high. It's a closed head injury. The recipients of this horrible treatment who join our organization, The World Association of Electroshock survivors, say that their memory never returns to normal after ECT."<sup>13,41</sup>

*Karen Robbins: "I've been falsely imprisoned."*

Karen Robbins was imprisoned at the University Behavioral Center in Orlando, Florida, after responding to a phony health spa advertisement promoted by a patient broker via television. Her case is currently in litigation:

"I was watching a TV program and I made a 1-800 call about going to a health spa in Florida. I thought, 'Gee, that would be a wonderful thing to do.' It was during a time in my life when I wanted some changes made and I thought a health spa would be wonderful for weight loss.

"When I got to Florida I was picked up by limousine. When I entered the lobby of the center, it was very nice and friendly. But when they closed the doors behind me and locked them, I could not leave. I noticed that the people who were there were mental patients. It was very obvious. There were people who were shaking and people who had no control of themselves. There were one-on-one caregivers. I was terrified. *They kept me there for seven days against my will and they billed my insurance company over a thousand dollars a day.*

"The first thing I did was ask to talk to someone and they said that because it was going on 6:00 there was no one there who could help me out, that I would have to wait until the next day. The next day, they gave me another runaround. They told me that I was a very, very sick person, that I was totally depressed, co-dependent, and extremely violent. I just looked at them and I said, 'I'm sorry, but there must be someone else in this room because that's not me.'

"I tried to leave on several occasions but there were very, very large guards and they denied me access to the door. I told them that I wanted to go home, that first of all they had kidnapped me, they had brought me there under false pretenses, and they were keeping me there against my will. They were interested in only two things: money from my insurance company and keeping me there as long as they could to obtain that money.

"It was six days of telling them I wanted to be released. I did not sleep all the while I was there. From morning until night there was violence going on. There was screaming. There were outbursts. I was afraid to sleep. They told me I could go in 72 hours. The doctor said, 'I have the right to keep you.' I said, 'You have no right to keep me here. I've been falsely imprisoned.'

"Finally on Monday, I told them, 'if you do not release me I am going to have a class action lawsuit against you.' I said, 'you are keeping me here against my will and you are harming me instead of doing me any good.' With that, they called the patient broker that got me in there and the broker said, 'Let her go; she's a trouble-maker.'<sup>42</sup>

*Nickie Saison: "He came out worse than when he went in."*

Nickie's insurance company was milked after she admitted her son to a psychiatric facility, in good faith, to help him overcome a drug problem. Five and a half weeks and thousands of dollars later, her son, never having gotten the help he needed, came out worse than when he entered:

"In October 1987, my son told me that he had a drug problem and that he wanted help. I had no idea where to turn so I looked in the *Yellow Pages* and found a place in Ft. Worth called Care Unit. First, I had to go up there and meet with a counselor. They said that they had to see if he was eligible to come in. I found out later that they were checking to see if we had insurance, which unfortunately we did. He was eligible so I put him in there.

"It was supposed to cost about \$300-\$400 per day but they have a lot of hidden costs. They had a community room with a TV but they would charge \$35 to watch. They had Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings where they would charge anywhere from \$30-\$60 per meeting. Then they had what they call family week. They required that you go all week. After I got there, they told me it was \$150 extra. They also charged \$15 for a meal ticket. And they had a different psychologist there. It was not the psychiatrist that I got the bill from. I talked to him maybe 15 minutes out of the whole week. I never met the psychiatrist I got the bill from.

"They did nothing. I finally pulled him one evening after going to visit him. I was sitting across from the nurse's station waiting for the NA meeting to end so that I could visit with my son. When the meeting ended and all the kids came out, I did not see him. I waited a few minutes and finally asked one of the kids where he was. They said they didn't know and walked off. Then one of the kids came back and said he was in his room. I went in his room where I found him so doped up on

tranquilizers that he did not know what day it was, what time it was, nothing. He came out and the nurse said, 'We have been so concerned. I've been taking your blood pressure and checking on you to see if you were still breathing.' I said, 'it's over, and we went home. My total bill for Care Unit for 5 weeks was \$15,663.07.'<sup>43</sup>

Later, on the recommendation of one of the nurses from Care Unit who stayed in touch with her son, Nickie admitted her son to a state facility, which resulted in more expense and devastation:

"One of the nurses kept in contact with him by phone and we ended up readmitting him on Christmas Eve. But then they called me and said they couldn't handle him and wanted to transfer him to the psychiatric institute in Ft. Worth. I later found out that this is like a big corporation. They all work together.

"When they go to the Psychiatric Institute (PI), they are locked in. We couldn't bring in anything, not toothpaste, shampoo, or anything. They had to get it through the hospital. They would give him small sample tubes of shampoo and the shampoo would cost \$8 a bottle and the condition was \$10 a bottle. When he went in, he had some burns on his arms and they used the tiny sample tube that the pharmaceutical companies give them, and charged \$25 for that little tube. Then they charged you \$20 for the nurse to put it on. I mean, they had it all broken down. Everything was under lock and key, elevators, everything. I had to go there once a week and meet with a psychologist. They charged \$125 a week for that. My bill for PI was \$38,231.95.

"I dropped my son off at Psychiatric Institute on December 27th. I picked him up February 27th. I picked up a stranger on February 27th. When he was up there, some kids were there who were in with the skinheads and he got involved with them. He came out worse than when he went in."<sup>44</sup>

*Evelyn Woodson: "They put my child on Ritalin without my permission."*

Evelyn Woodson's son was placed in a psychiatric facility while a neurological problem went undiagnosed:

"It's very painful for me to retell this story. The reason I do it is because I don't want other people to experience what my son and I experienced.

"The first time that I noticed that my child had some sort of visual problem was when he was an infant.... At about 18 months, he would go upstairs without our noticing, and fall downstairs. This happened several times.... X-rays never indicated any damage.... Then, when he was five, he fell while running and broke his arm. Again, this let me know that there was a persisting visual impairment of some sort. I sought all types of diagnoses



from various medical doctors and it was always a question mark. Nobody could give me a clear diagnosis of what the problem was.

"In intelligence, he did not manifest any type of deficit whatsoever. To the contrary, he was much more intelligent than children his own age. He could hold conversations with me about things that I was very surprised at. For instance, he knew what bionics were. He could draw robots before age five, he could design rocket ships....

"As he entered elementary school, there were always complaints that he didn't complete his assignments. He was subjected to corporal punishment because he could not complete the work, and each time that I approached the schoolteacher and the principal regarding these matters, I was degraded and blamed for upholding my child's wrongdoing and not forcing him to conform. I found that to be very frightening. It's like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. They did not have a program or an individual assessment where they could figure out where this child was and where he needed to go. They were not willing to make any type of an educational plan for this child. I let him go through the third grade in public school. Then I took him out and put him in private school. It was very difficult for me because I wasn't working and I was separated from my husband at the time.

"At one point, the school psychologist got involved. They shifted the focus from a possible medical problem to a behavioral disorder. At that time, I was not aware that people were being exploited just for the sake of money. That was a hard lesson that I learned.

"When he was 12, I was told by the school psychologist that he needed to be in a residential program. This occurred because I asked them to assess my son's IQ and to give him an aptitude test in order to properly place him in the school system. Rather than dealing with this, it was easier for them to blame my son. Again, I went to a neurologist. They told me that my son needed to have a brain scan. The brain scan did not manifest any type of tumor or any type of problem....

"In 1985, he was admitted to a residential program. That was a very bad experience. When I first took him to be admitted, I had to give them \$800 cash up front. They told me that I could see my child any time of the day or night. They told me I could call and speak to someone at the facility at any time. But once they got my child in and the doors were locked, everything changed. They put my child on Ritalin without my permission. They did not allow me to see my child.... When I did get the opportunity to speak to my son, I questioned him and he told me that the

drugs that they had given him made him hyper. They put him in a room with a child who was totally psychotic and the child attacked my son.

"...I called the administrator and explained to them that I had been told one thing and something else was happening. I basically got the brush-off. They set up an appointment for me to come in and speak with them. I thought I was going to talk about the conditions that my son was being subjected to. Later, I found out that they disguised that as an evaluation for me. There were things being written up about me without my knowledge. I later

got the transcripts from the facility and found out they labeled me as a 'black woman that is striving to be white.' My child is interracial and his father is white.

"In that evaluation, I was asked about my background, my history, and what kind of childhood I had. I said that my stepmother was white, and she was. My mother died when I was 13 months so I never knew her. My stepmother was the



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person who raised me, and that was the only female role model that I related to. I figured that was something that swayed me to not have prejudice, and thereby eventually marry into a white family. That was twisted and misused to make it look as if I was some kind of a sick person for being in a mixed marriage. That was eventually used in court to try to prosecute my son when he ran into some legal problems later on.

"As he got older, the problems persisted. In 1989, when he was 15, I took him to a neurologist, and the neurologist said that he didn't think my son had any type of medical problem. I knew better because I'm a mother with two other older children. I knew this child was manifesting a medical problem because he was very, very forgetful. He would do his homework many times and he would lose it before he got to school. Or he would leave it at home. He just couldn't remember things.

"All the way through this, there was a lot of insurance fraud. And my son was put on Prozac in another institution without my permission, and it has destroyed him. He is not able to hold a job. He'll be 21 years old. He's not eligible for SSI or any type of assistance. He is married and has a child and cannot support the child. I'm basically having to do that.

"My son was diagnosed in 1991 with a right temporal lobe lesion. That's almost like a brain tumor, and *that was there all along.*

"The lesson is that the people who are working in the psychiatric field are not always healthy people, because they have an addiction to money and power. That's what I ran into, compulsive obsession over money and exercising power over people because they use the law to lock people up and hold them against their will. They can get judges to sign orders to hold people, but when the insurance money runs out, they throw the person out, destroyed with drugs and by having been exposed to people that really do have a lot of psychological problems. My son wasn't born with psychological problems. They have manufactured them through paperwork and through drugs."<sup>43</sup>

*Luninging Pasion: "Then they found out that we did not have a job with insurance. My son was released."*

Luninging Pasion's 16 year-old son had been feeling sad, but never suicidal, due to normal adolescent romance problems. Yet he was abducted from his school and placed in a psychiatric facility for no apparent reason – other than the fact that

somebody thought his family had insurance coverage. When Luninging tried to get him back, the psychiatrist threatened to report her to child services and to take her son away for good. Only upon learning that the family had no insurance coverage did they let him go:

"My son was taken out of school when he was 16 years old. They told me the reason they took my son was because he was suicidal. But before they took my son, I was called to the school and my insurance was checked by the sex and drug counselor. Then the sex and drug counselor gave my telephone number to an institute that called me and asked me to bring my son to them. I told them that there was no need for my son to be brought to that hospital.

"When they found that I was not going to bring my son to them, they insisted on doing a free evaluation at the school, even though I told them that there was no need for my son to be brought there. I was forced to say yes to the free evaluation because they wouldn't put down the phone until I said yes.

"The following day, the lady from the institute went to the school and took my son without even telling me that they were going to take out him from school. I don't know why they took him out of the school. The school even told me that my son wasn't doing anything wrong. They just told me that this lady took my son from school....

"Then when I went there they didn't want to give my son to me. They told me that they had the legal right to hold my son. They told me that my son was disoriented and confused. But I remember on that same morning having brought my son to school and he was all right. Every day I went there, for about four days. I didn't have any chance of talking to my son for longer than five minutes. My son told me that he would be there until April. He was taken February 22nd. I told my son, they cannot do that. I am going to try to take you out of this place.

"After 72 hours, I went to the institute and this lady told me that, whether I liked it or not, my son would remain here. I prayed at the time because it was really painful. They didn't want to listen to me. They didn't want to understand me. All they wanted to do was to lock my son up. Then, after praying, I told them that in 1983, my husband was laid off because I wanted to tell them that I did not have any money to pay their business. I knew that if you bring somebody into the hospital you have to pay for it. So, I told the woman there that I could not pay her. After hearing that my husband was laid off, she started asking me where my husband was working. Then they found out that we did not have a job with insurance. My son was released."<sup>44</sup>

*Lillian: "It was a virtual hellhole."*

Lillian's family and work problems, combined with her hypothyroidism, were causing her to experience depression. But when she sought psychiatric help, the potent medications she was given caused side effects that worsened her condition. As a result, she was institutionalized at the Carrier Center near Princeton, New Jersey, for 60 days, during which time she was strip-searched, tied to chairs, forced to take drugs, and given electroshock therapy without her consent:

"Up until five years ago, I had a full-time job teaching. I was taking care of an invalid mother who had Alzheimer's disease. Then my mother died after being in the hospital for a month. I discovered I had a very severe hypothyroid condition, and I was being evicted from my apartment after living there for 40 years. It was being turned into a condominium and it was being renovated over my head. Walls were being knocked down and pipes were getting broken, causing leaks and so on.

"I developed a major depression and went to visit a psychiatrist, the first one I ever encountered in my life. He gave me strong doses of Xanax. And when I went to see him again, he added another strong medication called Desyrel. As a result, I developed side effects. The most severe ones were breathing difficulties and hair loss. This difficulty in breathing made my life very uncomfortable. And since no one at that time realized that it was from the side effect of the medication, I was diagnosed as being psychotic.

"I was taken to a psychiatric facility where, after a two-minute evaluation by the admitting physician, I was put into the intensive care unit. I was given constant supervision, so much so that I wasn't allowed to go to the bathroom myself. I would have to wait maybe 15, 20 minutes before someone would get ready to take me. I was not allowed to eat with a fork and knife, only a spoon and at the end of our meal, when spoons were counted, if one was missing, we were strip-searched. I found myself being tied to a chair to keep me from walking when I wanted to.

"Somehow, while I was there, I developed an injury to my arm, a torn tendon. When I didn't want to take the medication that was given to me, because I was afraid of side effects, I was given it involuntarily. I was held down by two male, so-called medical assistants, and it was injected into my buttocks. For two hours, we were locked out of our room so that they could search our drawers and closets for whatever they wanted to find. I couldn't use a telephone when I wanted to. When my husband would come to visit, someone was sitting there listening to our



conversation. It was a virtual hellhole. It was the Carrier Institute near Princeton, New Jersey, and they charged my insurance company \$550 a day just for room and board. That didn't include the payments to the attending physicians and whatever other expenses were encountered.

"During the time I was there, I was forcibly given ECT without my consent, although I found out later that my husband had given them permission. The lesson I learned is that before people do anything like that to another person, and listen to other people's misguided advice, they should think more carefully and think about alternative treatments for someone. I was just fortunate that I came out all right."<sup>45</sup>

*Marsha Stocker: "When my insurance was up, I was dumped."*

Marsha Stocker thought she was entering a clinic for a checkup – not a psychiatric hospital that would lock her up for 48 days and force surgery on her:

"I was told that I had an eating disorder and that I needed to go to the hospital for some tests. What I didn't know was that they had no patients scheduled to come in and that they were apparently preying on people with private insurance. I went down and explained to them my problem. They told me that I had an eating disorder, and I told them I didn't think so. I was told that I was denying or lying, and I told them I wanted to leave. I got up to leave and the next thing I knew, I was being carted off to the psychiatric ward and told that I could not take care of myself, and that I was suicidal. I was in shock and I didn't know what to do. They did say that I could talk to an attorney. He told me that by law they could keep me for 96 hours and that I had to stay.

"I was given Prozac and told that if I did not take it I could be put in the state hospital and kept there involuntarily and indefinitely. I was told that I could be given shock treatments. I was told that no one in my family would know where I was. They didn't have to give out any information about me. All my identification, everything, was taken away. So, I did what I had to: I took the medication and waited for a hearing. But I did not go to a hearing. I was kept for 48 days. During that time, I was given surgery that I did not want. I repeatedly asked to leave and was repeatedly told that I could not care for myself.

"When the doctor came in after 96 hours, he asked me about my past medical history and I told him I had a lump on my breast, which I had had for 16 years. Two other doctors had told me that it was a calcification. I was 42 years old and this was normal. All of a sudden, it was cancer

and I needed an \$11,000 surgery. During the surgery, nerves were severed in my arm, which has left me with permanent damage. I had a lumpectomy and radiation. I've since asked doctors to look at the slides. They tell me that it shows calcifications but they have no way of knowing whether or not it was cancerous without the biopsy slides, which I have never received.

"When my insurance was up, I was dumped, and here I am today, still struggling to find out what really went on."<sup>46</sup>

*Joanne Toglia:*

*"If I slept with him, I'd get out."*

Joanne Toglia was supposed to get help for her problems in the hospital. Instead, she was made to endure sexual abuse by her counselor there:

"I was an abused wife who went to a preacher for help. In return I got locked up in a mental hospital behind three sets of locked doors. The first day I was there, they took away everything I had. They took all of my clothes away from me, my purse and everything else, and they put me in a room with nothing in it. Any time I wanted to use the telephone, they had an excuse. I couldn't call my family. I was put on drugs, antidepressants, and different things like that. Every time I attempted to get out, they'd have an excuse for me not to. Finally, the bottom line came down to, if I slept with him [the counselor], I'd get out. If I didn't, I'd go to the state mental hospital. And at the time, I had four children, 2,3,4, and 6. I was desperate to see them so after three weeks of being locked up, I finally slept with him.

"There are two parts to the hospital – there's a locked unit and an open unit. In the locked unit I slept with him once, and in the open unit I slept with him twice. I went home and just when I thought I was free of everything, he started coming over to my apartment. I thought he might send me to the state hospital if I didn't sleep with him so I did for awhile. Then, as I got more strength, and I realized that I was out in the community, I turned him into the police.

"I was talking to my friends when I got out of the hospital – we had made friends – it came up in a conversation that he had made them do it too. At that point, we knew we totally had him.

"The day we turned him in, he got picked up by the police. They looked through the records. In the records it had things like, he had hugged and kissed at private counseling.... There was never any doubt about what happened to us. He got put in jail – but just until he could get bond. And then once he went to trial, there were no charges because there was no gun or knife used. Had he used a gun or knife, it

would have been a different situation. According to people in the community, *he is still practicing today.*"<sup>21</sup>

*Gloria Denanya Jones:*

*"You need to know your rights."*

Gloria sought professional help after discovering that her husband was unfaithful. As a result, she was labeled suicidal, locked up, and stigmatized:

"I was taken to a psychiatric facility by a member of my family because of some personal problems that I was experiencing, normal problems, like infidelity, which happen every day; I was a little upset about some of the things that I was finding out about my husband's relationships. I went there for an interview to see if I possibly needed an evaluation but they decided that they would keep me. The doctor said that my mind was racing because I was talking very fast. I said that I did not want to stay. I tried to leave and the men in white came after me. This is when the doctor told me that I better sign myself in or she would put me in lockup and I would not like that at all. I had to sign myself in.

"They took all my personal possessions and gave me a pamphlet which told me my rights but, since they had taken my reading glasses from me, I really couldn't read anything. They put me on a drug called lithium, which made me very, very calm, almost comatose. And I had to sit there for 72 hours. They kept saying that I was there on a hold and I kept saying that I was not. But when we would go into what they called a cognitive therapy program, which is 1 to 2 hours a day – they had a group of anywhere from 4 to 12 people, whoever they had in the hospital who were not in lockup – they kept asking me if I was suicidal. I said, I was never suicidal. I was never a threat to myself or anyone else. I said, I came in here for a personal problem. And they kept telling me, well, you're here on a hold, and you're only here on a hold if you are a threat. And I said, this is something that I don't understand.

"I refused to sign any papers as far as releasing them from any obligation or responsibility for any medication that I took. I did take their medication because I did not want to go to lockup. I was next to the lockup and I saw exactly what it was that happened to people when they were locked up. They were strapped down and put in a room. After they unstrapped them, they locked them in a room, and they were only allowed to come out whenever they needed to, I guess to smoke a cigarette or



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eat. Sometimes they never even got to get out of their room. Anyway, I was there and I just kept protesting and saying that I shouldn't be there and that they had no right to do this. Some of the people there kept telling me, 'if you don't stop saying that, they are going to put you in lockup.' So, I just did basically what I was told and I just had to stay there the 72 hours. I believe that had my insurance covered that part of the stay that they probably would have kept me longer.

"I have learned from this experience that people need to know what their rights are. I was denied my rights for due process. I was taken away from my child, my home, my business – and it was against my will – for something that was a domestic problem, for something that had nothing to do with any type of real depression.

"You need to know your rights. The public is not aware. I have talked to several people about this because I came out and said I was committed and held for 72 hours. They had similar stories. And I can't believe that this happens today. It's not right. It's just not right."<sup>47</sup>

*Danielle Deschamps: "What the psychiatric establishment has done is usurp the judiciary power."*

Danielle Deschamps was kidnapped and taken to a psychiatric institute for reasons unbeknownst to her at the time. A native of France, she noticed a large percentage of foreign people in her ward. She reported that of the 12 to 15 people in the ward, there was a Polish woman, a woman from Colombia, a man from Belgium, and a Polish man:

"I was kidnapped on Columbus Day, October 8, 1990, at 9:00 in the morning. I had a wonderful night. I was very happy to have the day off. I fed my pets. I drank my coffee outside and was just starting the laundry. All of a sudden a policeman and a psychiatrist came, a very fancy woman. They told me to follow them or I would be put in restraints. It was what I heard happened in Europe. As a little girl, some of the members of my Catholic family were picked up and sent to concentration camps. I could not believe that this was happening to me here in America! I could not believe it!

"When they arrived at my house, they took me by total surprise. All they said was, 'You follow us immediately.' so I called a friend of mine and she came right away. She said, 'There is no need to take her away. Don't take her away.' And she cried. She came with me in the police car and once we got there, she still took my side....

"I didn't know why I was committed. I wasn't told anything. I didn't know why, when I got to the snake pit, my clothing was taken away from me. I was in a cage in the emergency room with two glass windows. This is in Bergen Pines, Paramus, New Jersey.

"When I arrived in the glass cage, there were male policemen there and two nurses. They told me to immediately undress. I said no because I had a good night's sleep and I am not sick. I have no reason to be here. They told me to be quiet and give my clothing to them immediately. I understood that I was all by myself. I don't have a single relative in the US. So, out of panic, I undressed. One hour later, they ordered me to take some pills. I said no because I never take any pills except aspirin, very seldom.... I'm not a person for drugs. And they called the policeman, got one who was six feet tall, and took a needle and ripped down my pants and injected me.

"I asked to call the French consulate and they said no way. They barely let me go to the bathroom. I was accompanied by police. Then I was sent to unit C-1. I still thought I would come home the same night. I didn't know it would go that far. Little by little, I took Haldol and lithium. I fell into a coma, what they call comatose sleep, one that has been denounced by many American organizations and by myself....

"Three years later, thanks to the Citizen's Commission on Human Rights, I have been able to obtain my records.... Now I know why I was arrested. I was arrested for *allegedly* scratching, biting, and throwing hot water on my husband. I never did that but he must have signed a statement saying I did. He must have signed this as an excuse. What the psychiatric establishment has done is usurp the judiciary power. If my husband accused me of biting him, I should have gone before a judge. There should have been proof of bite marks. There were no bite marks. I never bit anybody in my life, not even my husband on bad days!

"I demand reparation for this. My reputation has been completely wrecked. My daughter, who was 12 years old at the time, does not understand why her mother was put into a mental institution...."<sup>48</sup>

*Pat Garrig: "When I went to turn him in...I realized I wasn't the only one."*

Pat's story is one of sexual abuse in an outpatient setting:

"My story takes place over a 20-year period. Actually, the sexual abuse started in 1987-1989. I was married at the time and my husband was his patient. Then, I became his patient and was given many drugs. His idea of sex was to make you feel like you were inadequate. He had a lot of

power and a lot of control. He was doing this to other women at the same time, and he had been doing this to these other women for 20 years.

"I finally got enough courage to turn him in. When I went to turn him in to the investigators, I realized that I wasn't the only one. After I told one investigator who he was, he said, 'I was afraid that you were going to say his name. I need to call in a special investigator.' And that's what he did. They told me there were 17 cases ahead of mine but mine was the strongest. That was back in August 1991 and he came to trial in March 1994. I testified for 4 hours against this man. Only four of us were in any condition to testify, but my testimony was the strongest.

"He ended up surrendering his license at the end of March but essentially he went into retirement because, in Utah, it is not a felony, it is not a crime, to sexually abuse a patient. It is only grossly immoral. That has to change.

"I went on television, September 9, 1993, in shadow so no one could see my face, to tell people about this man, hoping other people would come forward. Not many did. Then, in March 1994, I went on television full-faced, with full name, because he had surrendered his license. Another lady was on the TV but they shadowed her out because she just couldn't take everything that happened to her. For 20 years, her whole session was drugs and to sit on the couch and have sex."<sup>49</sup>

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