

MEDS

Who Needs Them Anyway?!

■ by Diane Kapp, MA, LMFT

Most of us are willing to take medications at various times in our lives if we think, for example, that our pain will be relieved, an infection can be cured, a higher chance of conceiving is possible, or the cancer cells will stop spreading. I could go on and on citing hundreds of examples of times when many of us have chosen to use “meds” as a part of our medical treatment.

However, many of us are much more hesitant to take a “psychotropic” medication...we don’t even know what the word “psychotropic” means! A psychotropic medication is simply defined as a prescription drug that has an altering effect on the mind. We often associate the phrase “mind altering drugs” with illegal street drugs, such as LSD, that produces hallucinations and delusions. That’s NOT what I’m talking about here! What we often fail to remember is that ALL prescribed medications have altering effects on one or more of our organs as well as other parts of our body and that is why we take them!

Another concern that is frequently mentioned is the “side effects” of psychotropic medications. However, there are “side effects” for EVERY prescribed medication and even “over-the-counter” medications. The pharmaceutical companies are required by law to document every possible problem that COULD happen if their product is used. If we know of a physician whom we trust to know what he or she is doing, they can usually tell us if and what the REAL probabilities are of having most any of these side effects.

So why then does it seem much more difficult for many of us to go to a psychiatrist (a medical doctor who specializes in the study, treatment, and prevention of disorders of the mind)? Without considering the financial crises of our times, I think that many of us have been raised in a culture that STILL assumes that you have to be CRAZY to go to any kind of psychological treatment, and especially a psychiatrist!

Those of us who are Christians often also struggle with feeling “guilty” that we are not praying more, or have been told that we are not trusting God enough to help us deal with things like anxiety or depression. We are afraid to share with our fellow believers that we are seeking help in a therapeutic setting and/or taking psychotropic medications.

I would like to share that the Creator God has given us even MORE ways to help yet another part of our body that has problems on this side of eternity – our brain. HOPE is created when we have additional treatment available for problems such as ADD, Sleep Disturbances, Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Hormonal Disorders, Sexual Dysfunction, Suicidal Thoughts, Anxiety, Marital Issues, and Family Problems. Of course there are many more issues with which we have to deal, but I have listed some of the most common ones that we, as psychotherapists, see in our offices.

I am not proposing that every client who is in counseling needs medication. What I AM saying is that our Heavenly Father continues to reveal to us more and more information to help us deal more effectively with the challenges of this world, and there are professionals in our communities that can recommend the help if needed. Thanks Be To God!



Diane Kapp is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist. She enjoys working with individuals, couples and families in our Orland Park location.

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