

"This book was written by Johann Hari who is the New York Times bestselling author of Chasing the Scream which is being adapted into a feature film."

Part 1 The Crack in The Old Story

The emperor's new drugs on anti-depressants book by Professor Irving Kirsch (director of a leading program at Harvard Medical School) who advocated for anti-depressants on some studies.

Max Hamilton Scale for a basis of depression and metric to detail improvements (scale 0 to 51 invented in 1959 by scientist called Max Hamilton)

Professor David Healy written the most detailed history of antidepressants we have. When it comes to the idea that depression is caused by low serotonin, he told me: "There was never any basis for it, ever. It was just marketing copy."

John Ioannidis "Typically, it's the company people who write up the [published scientific] reports."

Adverse effects of antidepressants/SSRIs are weight gain, sexual dysfunction, increase the risk of suicide (young people), increase the risk of death of all causes (old people), type 2 diabetes, miscarriage in pregnant women, and more.

Dr. Peter Kramer saw a patient recover and become better than well. He wrote a book called Listening to Prazac, which became a best-selling book. Peter saw that trials themselves are fraudulent and detailed that conclusions could not be made (trials involve recruiting volunteers to swallow dangerous pills, pay small amounts, requires patients to have only depression and no other mental disorders, and poor people are bussed into buffet / comfy style environments where they are incentivized to be inauthentic for a basis of self preservation type idea.

Joanne Cacciatore had a acrimonious relationship with her body for a long time. "The only thing I could think of is that my body killed her-just literally suffocated her to death." "It felt like I was dying. Every day, I would open my eyes-if I slept- and say: I don't want to be here. I don't want to feel like this anymore. I can't do this anymore." "We act like human distress can only be assessed solely on a checklist that can be separated out from our lives, and labeled as brain diseases."

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) to identify how doctors identify depression. DSM known to have changes over time with limitations on the importance of external circumstances.

George Brown and Terri Harris did studies on depression in women (horrible environmental factors affecting their well-being) and characterized events as difficulties and stabilizers. Their research highlighted how focus shifted from the conversation from figuring out what was making us so unhappy in our lives, to trying to block the neurotransmitters in the brain that allow us to feel it.

Part 3

Cause 1: Disconnection from meaningful work

Joe and he shook more paint. He tried Oxycotin with some friends and it became hooked as he saw his job as a dead-end. Had notably tried drugs before in college, but nothing like this before.

Michael Marmot (trainee psychologist in Australia) saw those experiencing hardship in Australia. He found himself in London in 1970s doing a study with the British Civil Service (a hierarchical system). Found that as your position in the civil service rose, your chances of developing depression fell, step by

step (social scientists refer to this as a gradient). British government called back Michael for the Whitehall studies a year later to study staff working on tax returns kept killing themselves. It felt like it would "engulf them. The greater the height of the in-tray, the greater the threat of feeling like you would never get your head above water."

"There's a part to all of us, he says that thinks "if I keep buying stuff, and I get the Mercedes and I buy the house with the four garages, people on the outside [will] think I'm doing good, and I can will myself into being more happy." - Joe's response on Johann's return to Philly post Whitehall studies.

Cause 2: Disconnection from other people

"What would happen if, instead of studying the brain as if it were an isolated island, we did it differently? What if we tried to study it as if it were an island that is connected by a hundred bridges to the outside world, where things are being carried on and off all the time as you receive signals from the world?"
- John Cacioppo (neuroscientists questioning mid 1970s)

Sheldon Cohen study on social connections of people and ability to contract the flu when exposed. Isolated people were more susceptible to becoming sick (up to 3 times more likely!).

Harvard professor Robert Putnam exploring trends. In 2004 seen that most people had no one they thought they could depend on for an emergency situation.

Humans need tribes as much as bees need hives.

Loneliness can lead levels of cortisol to soar.

Ideas explored that nature is connection and that the loneliness is a way to revert back to connection (almost an instinctual reversion to what is happening)

Anecdotes about social media escapism explored through gaming. James a ivy league dropout of Everquest and more. Dr. Hilarie Cash finds program reSTART life for internet addicts.

Cause 3: Disconnection from Meaningful values

Intrinsic (doing things for self-enjoyment) vs. Extrinsic (doing things for others) values explored. Tim says we live under a system that "distracts us from what's really good about life." We are being propagandized or live in a way that doesn't meet our basic psychological needs-so we are left with a permanent, puzzling sense of dissatisfaction. (Golden Rule vs. I-Want-Golden-Things rule).

Internalized oppression for working more. "The system trains us, Tim says, to feel "there's never enough. When you're focused on money and status and possessions, consumer society is always telling you more, more, more." Tim talks a bit why this form of junk values leads to anxiety.

Cause 4: Disconnection from childhood trauma

Dr. Vincent Felitti dealing with obesity. "These patients weren't just a bit overweight: they were eating so much that they were rendering themselves diabetic and destroying their own internal organs."

"I thought with a tremendously clear insight that sending this woman to a dietitian to learn how to eat right would be grotesque." (Obese people don't need to be told what to eat; they knew the nutritional advice better than he did. They needed someone to understand why they ate.)

"When you look at a house burning down, the most obvious manifestation is the huge smoke billowing out," he told me. It would be easy, then, to think that the smoke is the problem, and if you deal with the

smoke, you've solved it. But "thank God fire departments understand that the piece that you treat is the piece that you don't see - the flames inside, not the smoke billowing out. Otherwise, house fires would be treated by bringing big fans to blow the smoke away. [And that would] make the house burn down faster."

(Obesity isn't the fire, it is the smoke) - Vincent

"Depression isn't a disease; depression is a normal response to abnormal life experiences." - Allen Barbour

Cause 5: Disconnection from Status and Respect

I was really happy to see Robert Sapolsky's study of stress again in this portion of the book. I studied Robert Sapolsky's ideas about stress and responses when I took SOCI 314 with Thaddeus Atzmon freshman year in college. I find the idea of hierarchical structures both in capitalism and natural systems both fascinating, depressing, and elucidating with conjunction of stress hormones and social settings.

Sapolsky studies depression alongside Baboons: he saw the dominant male Solomon get challenged and defeated by Uriah. He used a tranquilizer to quantify stress through measuring stress hormones. Found that high ranking males were more stressed during times of war for position changes, but majority of the time the lower-ranking Job-like monkeys were stressed. This can be seen to be akin to ideas of "submitting response" in an evolutionary sense. Job-like monkeys get the beat down from everyone and carry a large degree of inadequacy or shame (physical manifestation is looking down and posture).

Cause 6: Disconnection from Natural World

Isabel Behncke studied bonobos and stress in enclosures. Found that enclosure significantly raises stress.

E.O. Wilson-one of the most important people in his field in the twentieth century-argued that all humans have a natural sense of something called "biophilia." It's an innate love for the landscapes in which humans have lived for most of our existence.

Cause 7: Disconnection from a Hopeful or Secure future

Psychology professor Michael Chandler made a discovery on Native Americans in Canada. Communities with the highest control had the lowest suicide. Communities with the lowest control had the highest suicide. Also deliberately destroying families in the boarding schools devastating people is another suppression of control. This was the "First Nations citizens." A lot of this is noted about personal control over destiny and the ability to construct a vision of a hopeful future, rather than oppression.

Anecdote about Angela working in a call center who was overqualified/underqualified and stuck in the job search with a Master's degree. "It's like being squeezed - like trying to fit down a very tight tube all the time. You know-like trying to go down a slide, and just realizing everything about you is not right, and not being able to breathe, and feeling quite sick, and like you'll never get out."

Paolo Virno says we have moved from having a "proletariat"-a solid block of manual workers with jobs-to a "precariat" a shifting mass of chronically insecure people who don't know whether they will have any work next week and may never have a stable job."

Cause 8/9: The Real Role of Genes and Brain Changes

Geneticist Avshalom Caspi did one of the most detailed studies of genetics found that gene 5-TT does relate to becoming depressed, however the genes are activated by the environment.

Standard of the culture explored and how having everything by the standards of a culture can still be wrong. "You aren't broken, we'd tell them. The culture is." (reflections on historical women inequality, slavery, etc.)

Rufus May (British Psychologist) telling people that their distress is due mostly or entirely to a biological

malfunction has dangerous effects on them. He tells his patients that come to him with deep distress or anxiety: You're not broken. You are not defective. He sometimes quotes the Easter Philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti who explained: "It is no measure of health to be well-adjusted to a sick society."

Part 3 Reconnection. Or, a Different Kind of Antidepressant

A big problem is not necessarily an insoluble problem.

Kotti suburb in poorer district in Germany overthrowing and coming collectively together for stipend. Very neat anecdotes of poorer people who found sense of purpose and hope in the movement. Tuncai, a mentally ill person from a psych ward, found great purpose in the movement. Nuriye was a suicidal mother who had been through great hardship.

"The more you think happiness is a social thing, the better off you are." - Brett Ford (social scientist)

"I started to think of one of the most banal, obvious clichés we have: Be you. Be yourself. We say it to one another all the time. We share memes about it. We say it to encourage people when they are lost, or down. Even our shampoo bottles tell us - because you're worth it." (idea is the opposite! Don't be you for combating depression | be part of a group or collective | makes me think of Josefina or Hispanic community and their resiliency amidst hardship) - Johann Hari

Study of the Amish investigated (they have a sense of being at home/community). If you can be everywhere - in vehicles, or online - you end up being nowhere. Amish admittedly united by some brutal theology. Women are subordinate; gay people are treated appallingly; the beating of children is seen as a good thing. This shows the value system and is more or less adherent to a strict form of discipline.

Garden planting for sense of community and recovery group coming together to heal and connect.

"Everybody wants to feel useful, and have purpose." - Meredith Mitchell Baltimore Bicycle Works
Democratic workforce (reminds me of the co-op REI where less hierarchical structures are used)

Book closed with LSD (see Roland Griffiths) and UBI (Rutger Bregman) ideas/study.