

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 30-32 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:20:22 AM

Reusing good software is easy; it is what allows you to build good things quickly;

- Software is limited not by the amount of resources put into building it, but by how complex it can get before it breaks down; and
- The main value in software is not the code produced, but the knowledge accumulated by the people who produced it.

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 233-235 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:24:02 AM

But soon after he began the treatment, his wife began to notice a sinister transformation. A previously reasonable man, he became explosively angry and – out of nowhere – developed a tendency for road rage. During one memorable episode, he warned his family to keep away, lest he put them in hospital.

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Alarmed, the couple turned to the study's organisers. "They were very hostile. They said that the two couldn't possibly be related, that he needed to keep taking the medication, and that he should stay in the study," says Golomb.

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Ironically, by this point the patient was so cantankerous that he flatly ignored the doctors' advice. "He swore roundly, stormed out of the office and stopped taking the drug immediately," she says. Two weeks later, he had his personality back.

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 248-248 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:25:32 AM

Antidepressants may not just lighten moods, they may also reduce expressions of neuroticism, research suggests

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According to Golomb, this is typical – in her experience, most patients struggle to recognise their own behavioural changes, let alone connect them to their medication. In some instances, the realisation comes too late: the researcher was contacted by the families of a number of people, including an internationally renowned scientist and a former editor of a legal publication, who took their own lives.

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 256-259 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:26:50 AM

Back in 2011, a French father-of-two sued the pharmaceutical company Glaxo-SmithKline, claiming that the drug he was taking for Parkinson's disease had turned him into a gambler and gay sex addict, and was responsible for risky behaviours

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 256-259 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:26:54 AM

Back in 2011, a French father-of-two sued the pharmaceutical company Glaxo-SmithKline, claiming that the drug he was taking for Parkinson's disease had turned him into a gambler and gay sex addict, and was responsible for risky behaviours that had led to him being raped.

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 276-290 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:28:16 AM

Golomb first suspected a connection between statins and personality changes nearly two decades ago, after a series of mysterious discoveries, such as that people with lower cholesterol levels are more likely to die violent deaths. Then one day, she was chatting to a cholesterol expert about the potential link in the hallway at her work, when he brushed it off as obviously nonsense. “And I said ‘how do we know that?’,” she says. Filled with fresh determination, Golomb scoured the scientific and medical literature for clues. “There was shockingly more evidence than I had imagined,” she says. For one thing, she uncovered findings that if you put primates on a low-cholesterol diet, they become more aggressive. There was even a potential mechanism: lowering the animals’ cholesterol seemed to affect their levels of serotonin, an important brain chemical thought to be involved in regulating mood and social behaviour in animals. Even fruit flies start fighting if you mess up their serotonin levels, but it also has some unpleasant effects in people – studies have linked it to violence, impulsivity, suicide and murder. If statins were affecting people’s brains, this was likely to be a direct consequence of their ability to lower cholesterol. Since then, more direct evidence has emerged. Several studies have supported a potential link between irritability and statins, including a randomised controlled trial – the gold-standard of scientific research – that Golomb led, involving more than 1,000 people. It found that the drug increased aggression in post-menopausal women though, oddly, not in men.

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In 2018, a study uncovered the same effect in fish. Giving statins to Nile tilapia made them more confrontational and – crucially – altered the levels of serotonin in their brains. This suggests that the mechanism that links cholesterol and violence may have been around for millions of years.

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 295-297 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:29:12 AM

“Even adjusting for confounding factors, it was still the case that people with lower cholesterol at baseline were significantly more likely to be arrested for violent crimes.”

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“There’s much more of an emphasis on things that doctors can easily measure,” she says, explaining that, for a long time, research into the side-effects of statins was all focused on the muscles and liver, because any problems in these organs can be detected using standard blood tests.

Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your Highlight on Location 324-333 | Added on Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:32:03 AM

Empathy doesn’t just determine if you’re a “nice” person, or if you cry while you’re watching sad movies. The emotion comes with many practical benefits, including more stable romantic relationships, better-adjusted children, and more successful careers – some scientists have even suggested that it’s responsible for the triumph of our species. In fact, a quick glance at its many benefits reveals that casually lowering a person’s ability to empathise is no trivial matter. Technically, paracetamol isn’t changing our personalities, because the effects only last a few hours and few of us take it continuously. But Mischkowski stresses that we do need to be informed about the ways it affects us, so that we can use our common sense. “Just like we should be aware that you shouldn’t get in front of the wheel if you’re under the influence of alcohol, you don’t want to take paracetamol and then put yourself into a situation that requires you to be emotionally responsive – like having a serious conversation with a partner or co-worker.” One

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“We found that massive changes in neuroticism were brought about by the medicine and not very much at all by the placebo [or the therapy],” says Robert DeRubeis, who was involved in the study. “It was quite striking.” The big surprise was that, though the antidepressants did make the participants feel less depressed, the reduction in neuroticism was much more powerful – and their influence on neuroticism was independent of their impact on depression.

**Your P2K Articles (2020-02-12) (P2K) - Your
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day, February 13, 2020 9:35:56 AM**

“We take a lot of stuff that is not necessarily always good in every circumstance. I always use the example of alcohol, because it’s also a painkiller, like paracetamol. We take it because we feel that it has a benefit for us, and it’s OK as long as you take it in the right circumstances and you don’t consume too much.”.