

Discussion of the Society of Epicurus' 20 Tenets of 12/21/19

Post by “Elayne” of December 30, 2019 at 3:24 PM

Oscar, because my adult son has schizophrenia, I have a little bit of a different take on this. The most current research shows that schizophrenia is truly a neurologic condition. It may eventually even be possible to treat it as an immune disorder using medications designed for MS-- there's research with preliminary encouraging results.

So of course, they did do whatever they did. But if one day treatment can reliably remove the illness that caused the actions, it is possible they could be safely released. My son now that he consistently takes his medications is at no higher risk of harming someone than an average person. When psychotic and delusional, off medications, I had to have him committed, which is very hard to do.

Some of the work I have been doing is to implement evidence based commitment strategies-- outpatient commitment to f/u inpatient-- for people who have not committed a violent crime but are at risk of doing so. This is very effective at reducing violent acts. A major problem with schizophrenia is that the disease itself impairs reality testing and thus the person's ability to know they are sick is lost. They can think they are normal, so why take medicine? Commitment, if adhered to by the court and treatment team, provides that the person be re-committed to inpatient care if they cannot manage to follow instructions outpatient.

For those who already have done violence, some need to be confined for life if we want to be safe, to protect our pleasure. However, I personally do not feel anger towards them, because now I really understand that the same person can be entirely different when sick and untreated.