

You Can Help Orthomolecular Public Education

Thanks to Abram Hoffer's research, discoveries, integrity and leadership, orthomolecular medicine exists today as a restorative dimension of care.

Most people never hear about it. At the 2007 Orthomolecular Medicine Today conference, in Toronto, Dr. Hoffer asked everyone to join his public education marathon. Anyone can read his books and tell families and friends about Abram Hoffer's restorative treatments for mental illness.

Abram Hoffer left the world an amazing legacy by writing 36 books and hundreds of articles, reviews and editorials. Patients, families and health professionals can read Dr. Hoffer's clearly-written books and learn about orthomolecular research, discoveries and clinical practices. For instance - *How to Live with Schizophrenia*, first published in 1966, still reads fresh and clear today. *Orthomolecular Treatment for Schizophrenia*, published in 1999 as a 55-page booklet, comes with 76 references. *Psychiatry Yesterday (1950) and Today (2007): from Despair to Hope with Orthomolecular Psychiatry*, published in 2008, compares the restorative approach with medications.

If you know anyone with schizophrenia, psychosis or anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder or autism, you can ask how they are doing. If they suffer or deteriorate, you can suggest the International Schizophrenia Foundation at 16 Florence Ave., Toronto. Their web site www.orthomed.org has a 40-year archive of the *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine*, a free book list and a worldwide network of orthomolecular practitioners.

Dr. Hoffer's ABC's - lessons for patients, families and health professionals:

- A) The practice guidelines of psychiatry recommend diagnostic testing before planning how to treat each patient's medical or mental problems. Some doctors may not test, diagnose or treat underlying medical or metabolic disorders.
- B) Patients and families can read about orthomolecular medicine, ask for diagnostic tests and consult physicians who know about restorative treatments.
- C) Vitamin therapies have been researched for decades and found safe and effective enough to treat thousands of patients for disorders of metabolism (and mental illness.) A regimen of vitamins (or other nutrients) can complement prescription medications, facilitate talk therapies and help patients recover and live well.

Please remember the remarkable biochemist, psychiatrist, and author who researched schizophrenia, developed safe and effective treatments, restored **thousands of beautiful minds**, co-founded orthomolecular medicine, and wrote more than 36 books to educate the public – *thank you Abram Hoffer.*

courtesy of

Robert Sealey, BSc, CA, author of www.searpubl.ca

Finding Care for Depression, Mental Episodes and Brain Disorders
90-Day Plan for Finding Quality Care
Remembering Abram Hoffer, PhD, MD
by Reviewing his Books
(68 pg, available free by download)

Resources and references at www.orthomed.org
 International Schizophrenia Foundation
Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine
 Orthomolecular Medicine Today conference

Remembering Abram Hoffer, PhD, MD

by Robert Sealey, BSc, CA

www.searpubl.ca

Abram Hoffer distinguished himself by researching schizophrenia, developing safe and effective treatments and co-founding the concept of orthomolecular medicine. Over his remarkable 60-year career as a biochemist, physician, psychiatrist, researcher, clinician, author and editor, Dr. Hoffer helped thousands of patients to recover and live well. He wrote many books, articles and editorials to educate the public about schizophrenia and orthomolecular medicine. Abram Hoffer's insights, research, regimens and publications could still help many more patients, for decades to come. If we remember his discoveries.

Researching Serious Mental Illness – Discovery, Recovery, Controversy

In the 1940s, Abram Hoffer obtained a PhD in biochemistry. Then he went to medical school at the University of Toronto and graduated as a physician, in 1949. When the time came to choose a specialty, Dr. Hoffer picked psychiatry. He returned home to Saskatchewan and began his residency in the Munro Wing, the psych ward of the Regina General Hospital. He visited asylums in North Battleford and Weyburn, Sask. where he saw hundreds of psychotic patients living in overcrowded conditions. Very few patients ever recovered, saw their families or went home.

In the early 1950s, Dr. Hoffer noticed patients suffering and deteriorating. After realizing that pills, talks, insulin comas and electric shocks did not help, Abram Hoffer decided to research schizophrenia, focusing on the chemistry of psychosis. His PhD in biochemistry enabled him to understand brain chemistry, consider disorders of metabolism and design research studies. Previous researchers had published that the body has several ways to dispose of excess adrenalin, the stress-provoked, fight-or-flight hormone.

Dr. Hoffer and his colleague Dr. Humphry Osmond, from England, wondered if disorders of catecholamine metabolism could cause episodes of depression and psychosis. In the 1950s, they cooperated to start a schizophrenia research program. They theorized that some patients produce too many indoles (as by-products of metabolism). They could have named this disorder *hyper-amino-chromia* (too much adrenalin oxidized into too many indole compounds called aminochromes). Dr. Hoffer's memoirs: *Adventures in Psychiatry* explain how they studied the scientific and medical literature, proposed an adrenochrome hypothesis, researched psychosis and developed restorative treatments.

Before Hoffer and Osmond's time, other doctors had used vitamins and other nutritional supplements as medical treatments. From 1910 to 1929, Dr. Joseph Goldberger researched pellagra. He learned that this serious and debilitating condition was not caused by an infection but by a nutritional deficiency. His diets and yeast supplements helped thousands of patients to recover. In 1937, Dr. Elvehjem discovered the

pellagra prevention factor – nicotinic acid (now called niacin or vitamin B-3). Dr. Spies verified this finding in 1938. In 1941, Dr. Syndenstricker and Dr. Cleckley published that nicotinic acid helped patients recover from non-pellagra psychosis (*American Journal of Psychiatry*). In 1943, Dr. W. Kaufman published his research and case reports of arthritis patients who recovered after getting divided daily doses of niacinamide. In the 1950s, Dr. F. Klenner reported that mega doses of vitamin C (ascorbic acid) helped his patients recover from viruses, infections and toxins.

Note - Niacin, (also called nicotinic acid) and niacinamide are the scientific names for two forms of vitamin B3. No-flush niacin, a third form, is inositol hexanicotinate.

As a biochemist, Abram Hoffer knew that optimum levels of substrates and vitamin cofactors allow enzyme reactions to proceed normally. By reading medical books and journals, Abram Hoffer learned that vitamin therapies were safe and effective. He wondered if a *methyl acceptor* - vitamin B3 - given with an *antioxidant* - vitamin C - could help psychotic patients normalize their metabolism of adrenalin and reduce their vulnerability to episodes of schizophrenia. But, what doses would help?

After several of their early patients recovered, Hoffer and Osmond administered vitamins B3 and C – 1,000 mg. of each, given 3 times a day, to a series of psychotic patients. 75% of those first patients recovered from acute schizophrenia. A remarkable discovery.

To get scientific proof, in the 1950s Dr. Hoffer and Dr. Osmond conducted the first double-blind placebo-controlled experiments in psychiatry. Hoffer's 1962 book *Niacin Therapy in Psychiatry* outlined their research and reported on their first 60 patients. After reading Hoffer and Osmond's 1966 book, *How to Live with Schizophrenia*,

Linus Pauling became fascinated with their report that optimum doses of vitamins could restore normal brain chemistry. Pauling named their approach 'ortho-molecular' psychiatry.

When several other doctors gave mega doses of vitamins B3 and C to patients with acute schizophrenia, 75% of their patients also recovered. Thirty-seven contributors, including twelve clinicians familiar with orthomolecular regimens, wrote chapters for the 1973 text *Orthomolecular Psychiatry*, edited by Linus Pauling, PhD and Dr. David Hawkins.

Ordinarily, a confirmed discovery leads to progress in medicine and better patient care. Unfortunately, mainstream psychiatrists dismissed orthomolecular research and ignored the reports of recovered patients. "Vitamin therapy? Impossible!" scoffed the naysayers.

Even so, Dr. Hoffer continued to prescribe restorative programs and help patients recover from schizophrenia and other serious mental illnesses - - for 60 years!

When he applied the practice guidelines of psychiatry, Dr. Hoffer added three steps:

1. He tested patients, diagnosed metabolic and perceptual disorders, and considered each patient's biochemical individuality.
2. He customized restorative regimens of nutritional supplements - vitamins, minerals & amino acids (methyl acceptors, antioxidants, energy and enzyme co-factors), thyroid or other hormones.
3. He considered food allergies and recommended reducing sugar intake, eating less junk and not eating foods that trigger sensitivity reactions.

Thousands of patients recovered when Dr. Hoffer added restorative regimens to their other treatments. Dr. Hoffer was not satisfied until patients could live well: free of signs and symptoms, get along with their families and communities, finish their educations, work and pay taxes! Year after year, Dr. Hoffer saw patients feel better and live longer. For decades he took vitamins B3 and C himself, so he could experience how people respond to mega doses of vitamins. His response? – Abram Hoffer lived to age 91.

One Patient's Recovery

My episodes of depression, anxiety and hypomania went undiagnosed and untreated for twenty years; then I endured eight years of misdiagnoses and mistreatments. When

I consulted an expert psychiatrist at a large Toronto teaching hospital, he prescribed antidepressants, lithium, benzo's and whatnots. I nearly ended up dead. That psychiatrist did no mental status exams or blood tests. He offered no information, help or hope. He never said that the wrong medications can cause problems if a depressed patient actually has a bipolar mood disorder. He just watched me deteriorate -- *for eight months!* As it turned out, with a bipolar mood disorder, type II manic depression, SSRI antidepressants make me worse. *Psychiatrists knew this risk – more than twenty years ago.*

Depression, anxiety and hypomania are dark and difficult, painful, lonely, life-shredding episodes. Patients often feel helpless and hopeless, but we can still read. For years, I studied psychiatry and psychology hoping to learn *what causes depression* and *how to recover*. I learned that most psychiatrists quickly label patients and write prescriptions; however, their practice guidelines recommend medical testing and differential diagnosing *before* planning any treatments.

Unfortunately, my psychiatrist did not follow the guidelines or warn me that medications can make some sick patients worse. He did not test me or recommend any effective treatments. Was that my fault or was he too busy?

In 1996, I was very ill when another depressed person suggested the *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine* in North York. Editor Steven Carter kindly recommended books by Abram Hoffer. By reading, I learned that Dr. Hoffer noted mental status exams, took medical and mental histories and sent patients for blood tests. He diagnosed carefully before prescribing vitamins or planning other treatments. He treated the root causes of each patient's symptoms. I started taking low daily doses of vitamins, minerals and amino acids, one at a time. These brain fuels soon helped me recover and keep well.

I've been a volunteer for the International Schizophrenia Foundation since 1998. I work as an accountant in North York. Several of my clients and their families know about mental illness. With a BSc degree in biological and medical sciences and psychology from the University of Toronto, I can read about psychiatry and orthomolecular medicine.

I have written books, articles and a web site, including *Finding Care for Depression*.

In 1998, I flew to Victoria, BC, to appear in *Masks of Madness: Science of Healing*. On the film set, I compared recovery experiences with six other patients including Margot Kidder. Then I met Dr. Hoffer. It was an honour to meet him and hear how he spoke about orthomolecular medicine. Our stories on the film tell the world that mental patients can recover if we complement our other treatments with restorative regimens of vitamins, minerals and amino acids. Abram Hoffer made this possible, for thousands of patients.