

Not Depressed-LOST

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Abstract: While depression is often a major psychological dilemma and difficulty, for some individuals, they are not depressed, but are experiencing a number of adjustment issues, and have a wide variety of other issues and concerns. This paper will explore some adjacent domains and offer some realms for parents, counselors, teachers and others to explore and consider.

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Introduction

Depression is said to be the "common cold" of psychology. Many individuals in work settings, church settings, and in the community may appear to be depressed, but there are many other concerns that seem to manifest as depression. These will be cursorily reviewed and some discussion provided as to causal factors.

While some of these concerns may be very appropriate to what we term millennials, there are a number of other individuals from age 20-70 or 80 who manifest a wide variety of emotions and signs and symptoms that are mistaken for clinical depression. These signs and symptoms are the result of a wide variety of limitations and weaknesses, some the result of poor parenting, some the result of culture and some the result of inadequate instruction and supervision in the schools as well as a lack of any kind of spiritual or religious upbringing.

In the past, much has been written about "lost" generations- During World War II, there seemed to be a large number of individuals, that were referred to as the "lost generation".

Signs and Symptoms of the "The Lost"

- 1) Many of these individuals do not present with any type of ambition. They are not interested in working, they are not interested in "getting ahead" and the values of their parents and do not manifest much of a "work ethic". Indeed, the idea of a 9 to 5 schedule does not seem to be relevant to them, and they abhor the idea of "signing in" on a time clock (do they even exist any more?)
- 2) Many of these "lost" individuals are lost thru no fault of their own as they have received minimal if any guidance from the schools, minimal if any guidance from parents, and often the only guidance is from the peer group and

their culture. And we are skeptical of the quality of the values proposed by the current zeitgeist or culture.

- 3) No aspirations- they do not seem to have any clear dreams, hopes, goals, objectives, and simply seem to exist, often looking only as far as their next meal, or next paycheck of next shift at Wendy's or McDonald's or wherever they are employed.
- 4) No inspiration- they do not seem to get excited or enthusiastic or energetic, or vivacious or express positive feelings about certain things. They exist and often go thru the motions, but unlike Olympic athletes who want to "go for the gold", they merely skate along in life, purchasing the latest technology and Face Timing and Instagramming and texting their way through life.
- 5) No Career/Vocational Occupational awareness. This may be the fault of the schools in some respect- individuals have no clue as to the various and sundry opportunities they have available out there in the world in terms of training, and learning and advancement. They may have very unrealistic expectations regarding the amount of money they are going to be paid as an "administrative assistant" since they are given some fancy title, they assume perks and a large salary will be forthcoming.

This is a big concern since some jobs that were well thought of many years ago- may have been replaced by computers or technology. Making a phone call today- but not necessarily get you to a real live human being- but a machine with some menu- if you press 1 you get so and so, 2, you get a different department, 3, records, 4 another recorded message and so forth. Students today are not necessarily exposed to the demands of the future. They may hear something about medicine, but not know the

difference between psychiatry, neurology and proctology. They may confuse these things with taxidermy and stamp or coin collecting.

- 6) No Initiative- The "lost" seem to have no "get up and go" or their get up and go has gotten up and left. Thus, they are often stuck in some dead-end job or minimum wage job. They may not want to learn anything additional in terms of their job, they may not want to learn about the inner machinations of things, they may not want to learn about people and what motivates them and what makes some people want to succeed and achieve and the underlying motivations of people striving on a daily basis for success. Now there MAY be a physiological reason for this lack of energy- the person may in fact be anemic or diabetic or hypoglycemic. So, good clinicians have to be careful in all instances. Blood work is often warranted.
- 7) No curiosity- Some of these lost individuals are not very curious about the world about them. They flip on a switch and the computer works- but they have no idea why it works. They may work at some menial job in a hospital but are not curious about X-ray machines, CAT scans, MRI's and PET and other fascinating machines that help humanity and aid physicians in the healing process. They could care less about a Sonogram and confuse it with a telegram.
- 8) No depth. Some of these "lost" may get a job in a restaurant, and know the basics of the menu- there are hamburgers, hot dogs and French fries- but there are also Chile rillenos, fajitas, tacos, quesadillas- and they are unable to answer questions about the other items on the menu. They have a vague knowledge of spaghetti- but not rigatoni, macaroni, noodelroni or rice a roni. And they have no desire to learn and prochuutto or mimosas or tiramisu or vichyssoise- as that would be too much trouble. They have a very superficial approach to the world- that is often mistaken for mild depression. Supervisors and bosses may worry about a worker who displays many of the mentioned traits and characteristics and refer the adolescent or young adult to human resources for mild depression.
- 9) Dependence- They are often unable to make independent decisions, and thus rely on managers or supervisors to provide them with the guidance that they do not have internally. They seem to require an inordinate amount of supervision, and ask for things to be repeated inordinately.
- 10) They exhibit "bare minimum" thinking. In the classic movie with Mike Judge as the supervisor in Office Space, he chides Jennifer Aniston as only wanting to do the "bare minimum". Jennifer sadly does not seem to have the insight to understand what her supervisor, played by Mike Judge is talking about. This is another problem manifested by the "lost" in that they don't seem to "get it". They do not seem to receive some of the underlying messages sent by others. Often they do not understand humor, mirth, sarcasm, cynicism, satire and other forms of humor.
- 11) Communication issues---The "lost" and the millennials also prefer not to communicate face to face- they dislike confrontation, they dislike argumentative individuals. They prefer to text, and e-mail at the worst. While Their have these cell phones, calls are meticulously screened.

- 12) Over focus- The "lost" tend to overfocus on money and perks and quick rapid, advancement and promotion in their jobs. They concept of working their way up the ladder is negligible. They believe that simply by spending time at a job, that they will automatically receive substantial pay increases. They tend to overfocus on technology as if it were some magic bullet that is going to solve all of their problems. If they have Microsoft 11.1- they absolutely, positively HAVE to have Microsoft 11.2 or else they will be behind the curve and will not be able to function.
- 13) Self-gratification. The "lost" are more concerned with their own needs, wants and desires than humanity, altruistic motives or others. They may neglect their elderly parents, and significant others so that they can get their nails done or get a massage. They would not volunteer at a local hospital or local dog pound for fear that they would be "found out".
- 14) Self-absorbed they are content with mediocrity and only care about the immediate future and immediate gratification. Their concerns are superficial- clothes, technology, the latest apps or snap chat or icons or memes or whatever.
- 15) Materialism- Many of these individuals are more concerned with material things than people, feelings, emotions, ideas and philosophical stances.

Needs and Desires

The "lost" are often content to amble thru the world as long as others do not bother, hassle, or aggravate them. They want the largest amount of money for the least amount of work. In colleges and universities-they want the highest grade for the least amount of work, using the cheapest or least expensive book.

- 1) They seem to need much reassurance that they are doing well and making good progress towards more money or a raise or a supervisory position.
- 2) Their priorities are somewhat warped. In a job interview, they may ask if there is a Starbuck available nearby or even in their workplace. They want "flex time" so as to be able to work on their schedule.
- 3) Commitment is sorely lacking. The "lost" travel from job to job, from relationship to relationship, from Snapchat, to Twitter to Facebook to Tumblr to Tinder to tender. Of course they avoid SKYPE- since SKYPE requires face-to-face interaction. Although they may think they are Linkedin, they are rarely networking with anyone. The young and millennials are into Instagram and if they want to find out what is happening in their world, they use WhatsApp" (You may have read about it on Reddit).

YouTube is another venue that allows the "lost" to view "Lost in Space" and old Seinfeld episodes.

Often when these individuals enter counseling and or therapy, they are incorrectly diagnosed as GAD- Generalized Anxiety Disorder. While anxiety is in fact a pervasive ailment that permeates society a skilled clinician will do a lengthy diagnostic process. (Shaughnessy and Johnson, 2018) College students who are confronted with a variety of challenges often feel a good amount of anxiety as they attempt to cope with tests, purchasing books and everyday issues (Shaughnessy and Shepherd 2023) Some students may have been labeled as gifted back in elementary

or high school but have not received the nurturing, encouragement and mentoring to fulfill their potential (Shaughnessy and Bryant, 2024) If they are in fact mildly depressed there is assistance for them with practitioners using a multimodal approach (Shaughnessy, 2018)

Mentoring and mentor relationships are important. Torrance (1984) has cogently written about this and the construct of mentoring continues to hold promise as an avenue for advancement, For some individuals, there is absolutely no meaning and purpose to their lives. While I may have been somewhat sarcastic and caustic in earlier paragraphs- this is quite serious in that many theorists believe that a central part of man's existence is to seek some meaning or purpose to their lives. The "lost" have minimal if any serious meaning or purpose to their lives.

Causality-

Part of the causal factor for all of the above is a lack of mentoring, a lack of parenting, and a lack of sincere interest in individuals as they were growing up and probably very little prompting that these individuals should "get their act together". While we hear about "life coaches" one wonders how much real substantial coaching is going on and how much accountability is going on and transpiring. As an aside, over the last 20 years- these online classes seem to have permeated college campuses across America. Students have been Power Pointed to death (see Don McMillan) and have been bereft of the feedback from caring, competent instructors. The few and far between successful students seem to be the athletes who have been coached, and not just coached but mentored by their coaches and had some individual interest invested in them.

Summary and Conclusions

The NAACP used to have a phrase "A mind is a terrible thing to waste", and it is sad that so much potential is wasted in this world by people who have so much to give, but have gotten so little guidance to utilize the skills and abilities that they have. Some individuals have never had an outlet for their skills, and have never been recognized for their contributions. While college advisors are not psychologists or psychiatrists they have a key role in the nurturance and advising of their advisees. Perhaps more training is indicated for college and university advisors.

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