

Melvin G. McInnis, MD, FRCPsych

Thomas B. and Nancy Upjohn Woodworth
Professor of Bipolar Disorder and Depression
Professor of Psychiatry

Rachel Upjohn Building
4250 Plymouth Road., Box 5765
ANN ARBOR, MI 48109
734-936-6018 (phone) 734-615-8739(fax)
mmcinnis@umich.edu

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Keith Famie
Executive Producer
Visionalist Entertainment Productions

Dear Keith,

It is an honor to participate in your documentary on suicide and mental health “Death is not the Answer”. Illnesses that affect the brain and emotions are of critical importance as they influence the individual in all aspects of their personal, vocational, and social lives. Most, if not all, of the individuals whose lives end with suicide have such illnesses – centered in the brain but manifesting in emotional and behavioral expression.

It is of major concern that the suicide rate remains high worldwide, and in fact the prevalence is increasing. This is happening despite the increase in use of antidepressants and other medical treatments aimed at towards illnesses of the brain.

I am the scientific director of the Prechter Bipolar Research Fund at the University of Michigan and our research focuses on long-term studies of bipolar disorder. It is our goal to understand fundamental biological elements of bipolar disorder using innovative technologies of cell and developmental biology. We are also engaged in innovative research aimed towards identification of early signs of mood changes that may be identified using mobile technology.

I am particularly enthusiastic in your perspectives of including happiness at a personal and social level in considering this topic. I like your ideas of examining several countries and social systems about their views and perceptions. Our studies include social and vocational aspects of moods and perceived well-being.

I am delighted to share my expertise in mood disorders. I have 25 years of clinical and research experience in mood disorders. I was raised in rural Canada, spent 10 years living in Iceland where I completed my medical training; I trained in Psychiatry at the Maudsley Hospital, Kings College London and at the Johns Hopkins University. I have been here at Michigan for the past 10 years.



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Thomas B. and Nancy Upjohn Woodworth
Professor of Bipolar Disorder and Depression
Section Director, Dept. of Psychiatry
Director of Prechter Bipolar Research Programs