



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on September 3, 2025

MAGA: Make Asylums Great Again? Trump Considers Reopening Mental Institutions

When asked in 1987 if he was crazy, late “Helter Skelter” mass murderer Charles Manson issued a memorable response. “Sure, I’m as mad as a hatter,” he said. “You know, a long time ago being crazy meant something. Nowadays everybody’s crazy.”

Manson wasn’t kidding. I’ve heard it said by *certain* psychologists that “everyone has a mental disorder.” In fact, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (the Bible of faithless head shrinkers) has been [criticized](#) for having “something for everyone.” Of course, this makes sense if you’re in the psychiatric field and aim to broaden your market, and earning potential, as much as possible. It also makes sense if one’s worldview states that everything we formerly called a “sin” should be diagnosed as a disease or condition of the brain.

“Everyone is a sinner” becomes “Everyone has a mental disorder.”

(The exception is when your “disorder” becomes a favored political cause — such as “transgenderism.” Then it becomes a lifestyle choice, and the only disorder, perhaps, is your oppression-induced *discomfort* over being “trans.”)

The problem, though, is that if everyone is “crazy,” the word loses its meaning. And then, perhaps, tolerance for having the truly crazy walk unfettered among us may increase. A case in point is today’s rampant mental-illness-related vagrancy, normally euphemized as “homelessness.” Another is the disturbed “trans” individuals. Their problems are encouraged by the establishment, and, just sometimes, as with killer Robert Westman, one commits a heinous crime.

This is a timely topic with President Donald Trump having recently [floated the idea](#) of reopening long-shuttered psychiatric institutions. This may be prudent, too, says one commentator. Do also remember, however, she adds, that too many kids are diagnosed today with “mental” problems. Yet most aren’t actually crazy — they’ve just been raised in a crazy time.

Is the Whole World a Mental Institution?

As many know, numerous psychiatric facilities were closed decades ago during the “deinstitutionalization” process. (What many don’t know is that, contrary to myth, this wasn’t all “President Ronald Reagan’s fault.” The process actually began in the mid-1950s and continued well beyond Reagan’s tenures as California governor and then president.) But while many more disturbed people are outside such institutions, many more people outside them are treated as if they belong



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within. The aforementioned commentator, the Daily Caller's Amber Duke (no relation), addressed this Tuesday. After mentioning the Minneapolis killer Westman, she [wrote](#) about our "mental health crisis" that

America has fundamentally transformed how we address mental health over the past several decades.

In: Talking about your feelings incessantly, seeing a therapist that says you have generational trauma, blaming your parents, taking SSRIs and anxiety meds to numb uncomfortable feelings, and collecting diagnoses (self- or otherwise) to explain poor behavior

Out: Powering through tough times, exercising regularly, amending your diet, going to church

Despite the increased medicalization of mental health — antidepressant use among people ages 12 to 25 has increased by 64% since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic — young people are struggling. In 2023, nearly [one in three](#) adolescents in the U.S. received mental health treatment.

Let's be honest, a lot of these kids are not actually crazy. Big Pharma and medical associations have convinced parents and doctors that the big feelings of adolescence: sadness, loneliness, anger, insecurity and anxiety are pathological disorders rather than normal parts of life.

At the same time, our loss of community ties, a rise in social media use, and lingering societal effects from the pandemic have driven some young people totally insane. RFK Jr.'s HHS is now investigating SSRI use and potential links to school shootings. Good on him.

What's Really Going On?

The "loss of community ties" is significant. Regarding an example of this loss' effects, author Johann Hari [has emphasized](#) how human connection is essential for overcoming addiction. Yet the real problem is deeper:

America doesn't have a mental-health crisis as much as a *moral*-health crisis.

Decades ago, family psychologist John Rosemond warned of this. The issue, he essentially said, is that what are now viewed as psychological problems were once, correctly, considered *moral* problems.

For sure. Returning to the "broaden your market" point, is it plausible that "one in three adolescents" *really* needs "mental health treatment"? It's perhaps more likely that the mental-health establishment suffers from Disorder Diagnosis Obsession Disorder.

Just ponder how society has changed. Children were once raised with firm moral guide rails; "This is right, this is wrong. This is good, this is evil." And with the wider society explicitly upholding a universally recognized sense of virtue, this was reinforced socially, too.

Those days are gone. Consider, for instance, what G.K. Chesterton called in 1926 the "next great heresy." That is, "an attack on morality; and especially on sexual morality." Kids today are inundated with sexual content via sources ranging from entertainment to sex "education." They're also essentially



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told, “Sex? It’s a matter of taste. Maybe you’re ‘gay’ (as we again euphemize) — or something else. And ~~trial and error~~ experimentation is how you find out. Explore!”

“Or, if you’re a boy who likes boys, you may not be ‘gay,’ after all. You may really be a girl. We will, too, give you puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and, ultimately, surgery to make you look like one.

‘Cause, junior, we’re in your corner.”

Psychological Poison

Now consider: It’s well known that sexual abuse can twist a child — perhaps permanently. And aren’t these sexual devolutionary norms, expressed above, a type of institutionalized sexual abuse?

Moreover, add to this other confusing, anti-Truth messages our society transmits, and is it any wonder youth are messed up?

Also realize that as ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle pointed out, living a moral life is a prerequisite for happiness. And, well, our entire culture today is *geared toward steering kids away from that prerequisite*.

The truth is, most youth who therapists make money “treating” don’t need “mental” help, but spiritual, philosophical, and moral help. They need to cultivate in themselves those [objectively good moral habits](#) that have an age-old name: the [virtues](#).

(And one more thing: Insofar as mental help does go, how can it be effective when we refuse to call certain “psychological disorders” just that? In fact, in “transgenderism’s” case, it is considered not a problem, but a remedy.)

What Asylums Are For

Returning to Duke, she also mentions the group that does often require institutionalization: Our large population of vagrants. A statistic years ago held that 85 percent of such people are mentally ill or alcohol- or drug-addicted. And a good example of the former is Jordan Neely. He was the [deranged man](#) who died after being restrained on a New York City subway car in 2023. His case became, of course, front-page news with a woke spin. Yet the real story is that he had serious mental illness, including schizophrenia, and a 42-arrest-long rap sheet. Why was he still on the streets?

As for addiction, people well down that rabbit hole generally won’t become clean without forced rehabilitation. Living and defecating in *public* spaces shouldn’t be considered a right, either — and a civilization that truly is civilized won’t allow it.

Lastly, know that deinstitutionalization didn’t result because we found a “better way” of handling the deranged and addicted. Rather, budgetary constraints, poor conditions at some institutions, and perhaps a skewed conception of rights were the impetus.

The bottom line is this: Our society probably does need to open more mental institutions. And it certainly needs to stop trying to resemble one itself.



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