

Mental



Health

Your Faith, and You.

By Barrington H. Brennen



Christians believe and teach
a wholistic message:

Spiritual

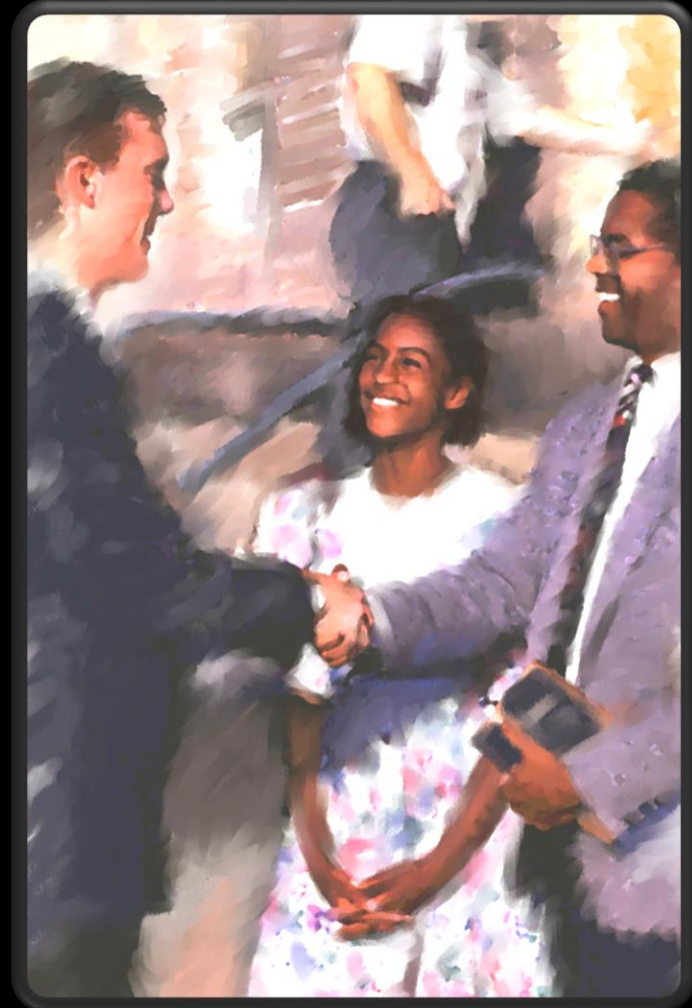
Social

Physical

May is Mental Month

This month reminds us of the
need to talk more about
mental health.

Of all people who should
have a comprehensive
understanding of a holistic
approach to life, which
includes mental health, it
should be Christians.

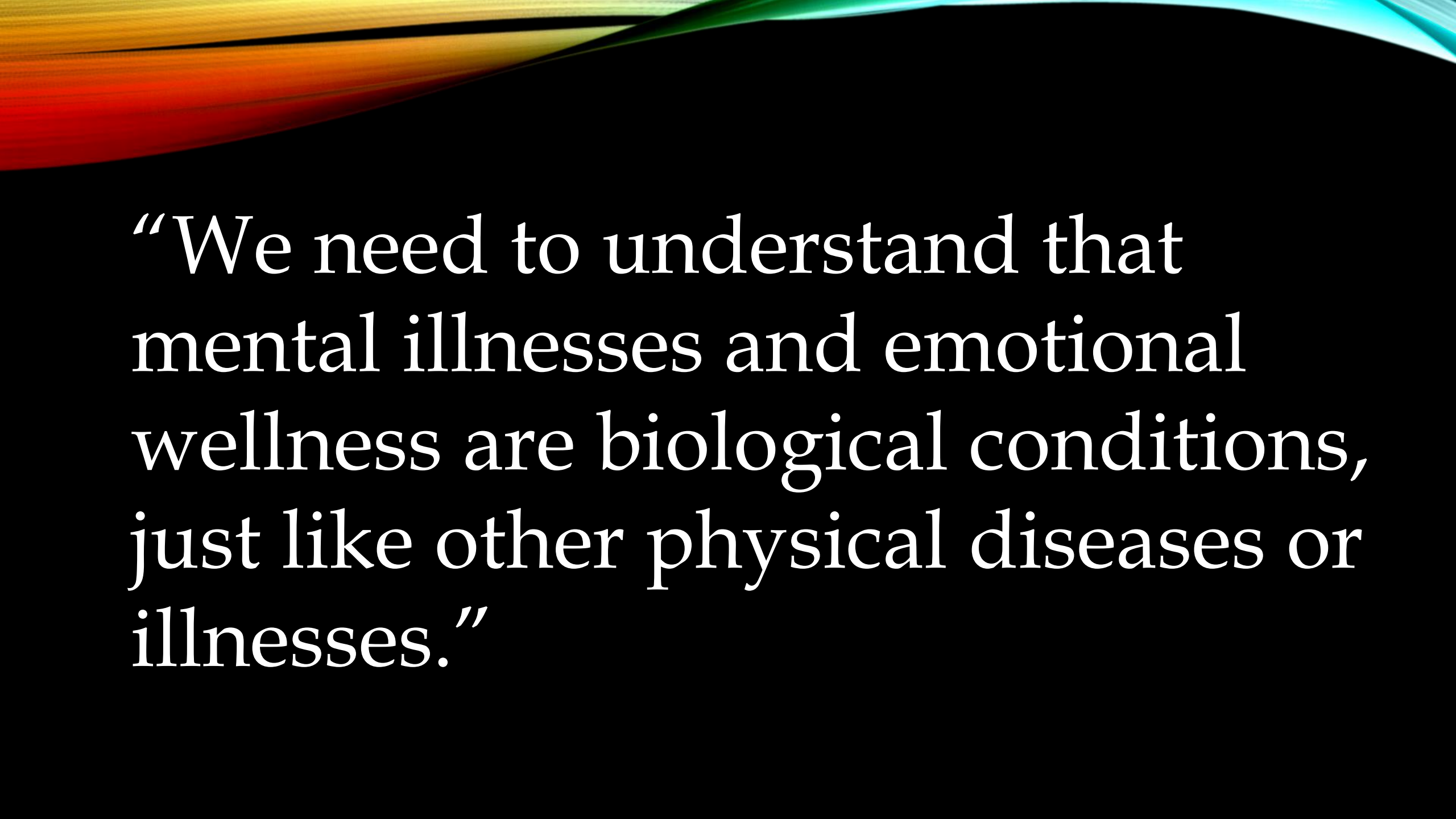




What is mental health?

Mental health is brain health.

“Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.”



“We need to understand that mental illnesses and emotional wellness are biological conditions, just like other physical diseases or illnesses.”

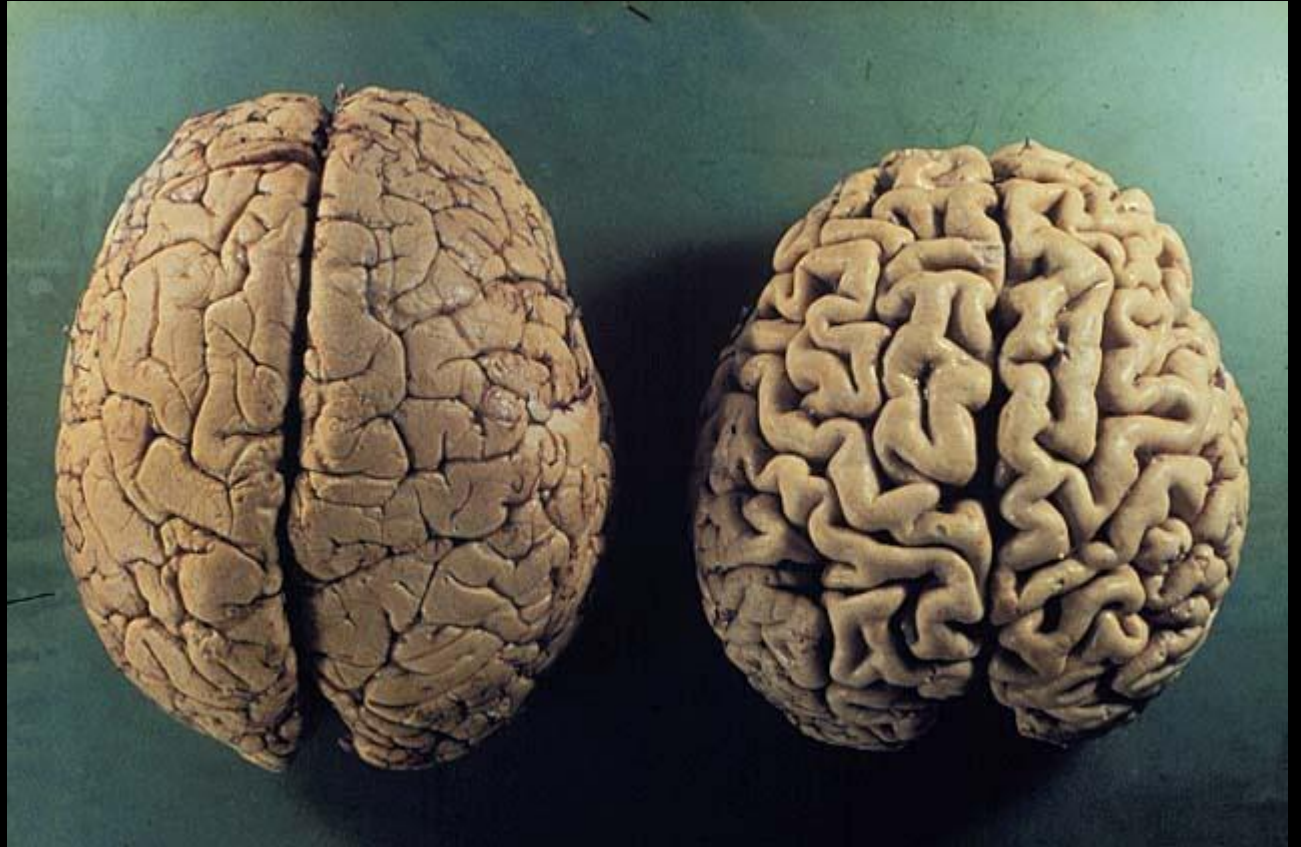
“It’s important that people understand that mental illness is **not** about weakness or inability to cope.”



By Daniel Martin Haycraft, MD of Adventist Health

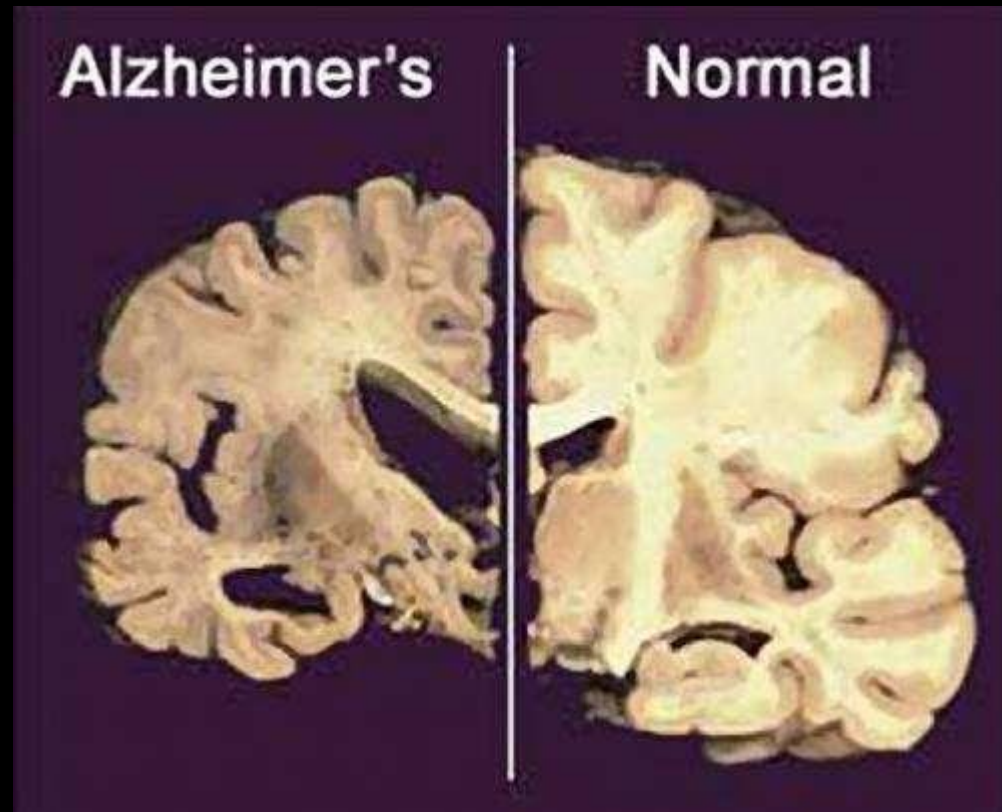
Mental health is brain health too.

Healthy brain vs. the brain of a person suffering from Alzheimer's



The one on the left is the healthy one. Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia cause memory loss, which is caused by the brain tissue slowly diminishing over time and then those big gaps and crevices form.

Mental
health is
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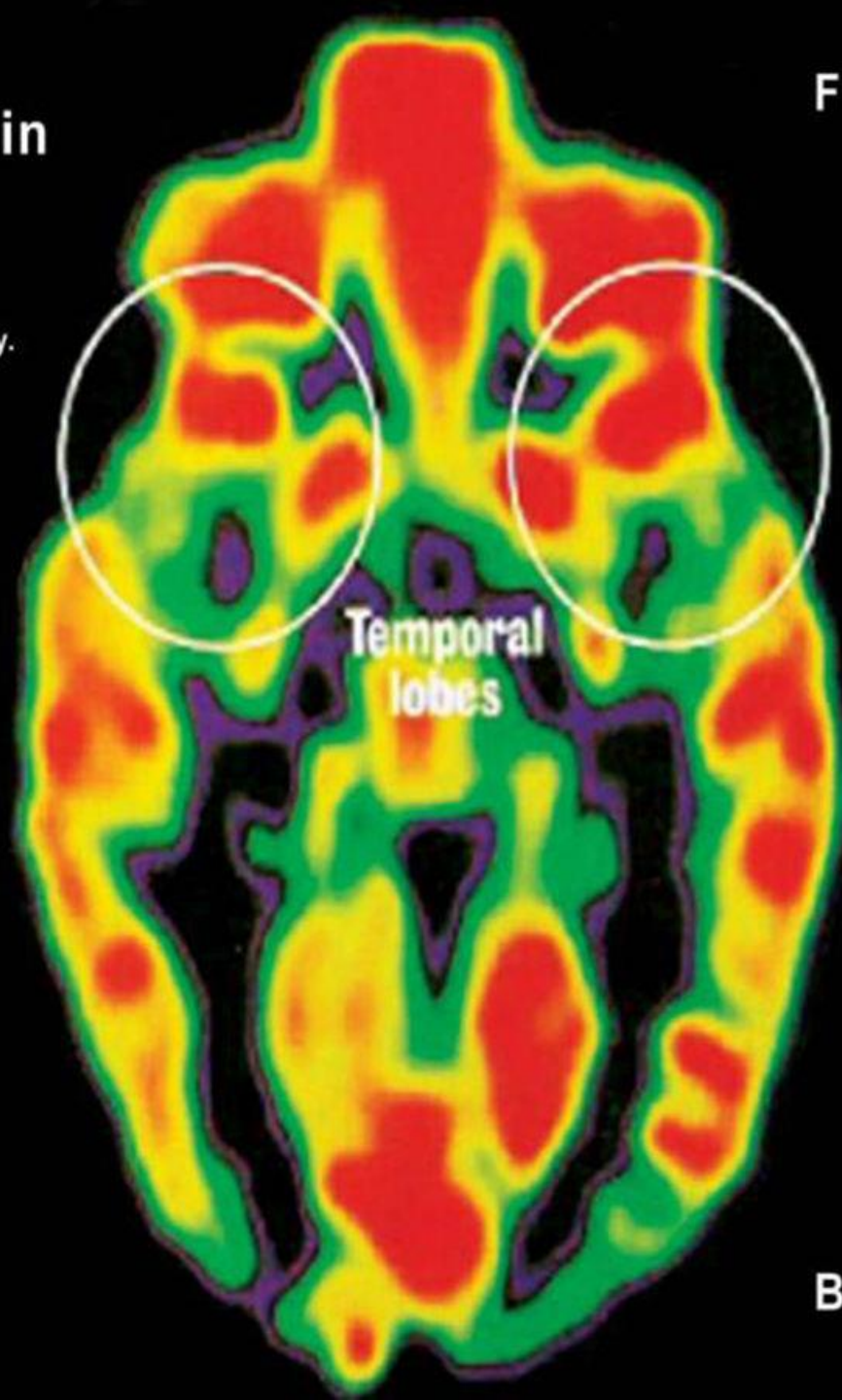






Healthy Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional; in regions like the temporal lobes (top), early childhood experiences wire the circuits.

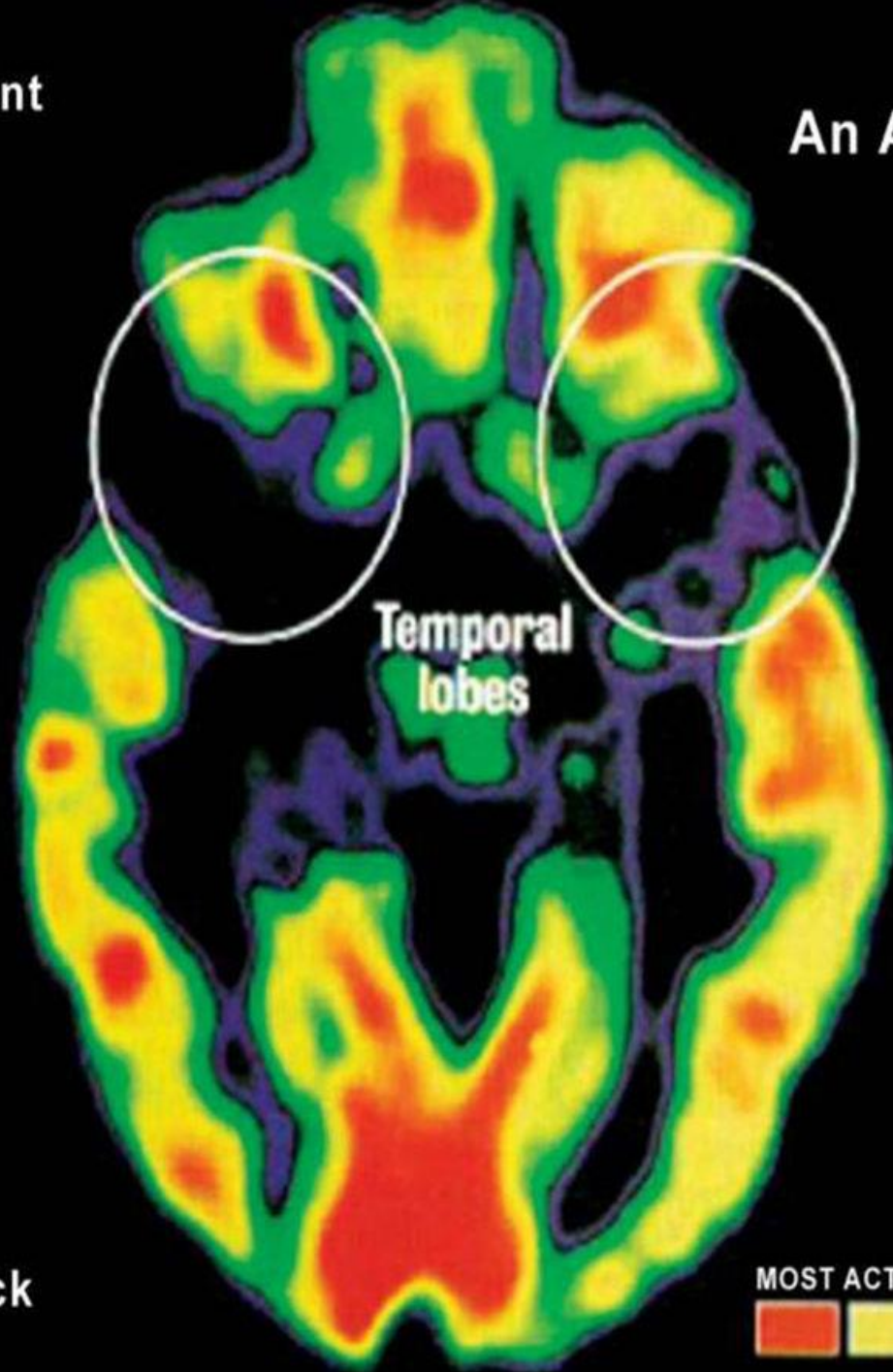


Front

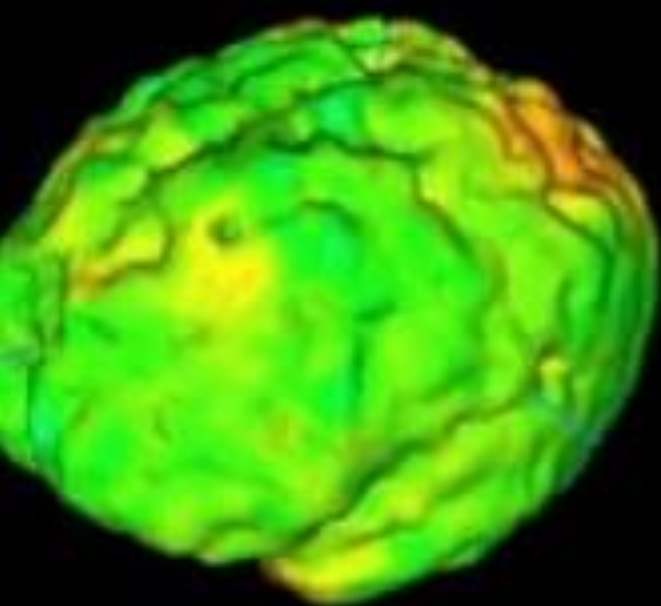
Back

An Abused Brain

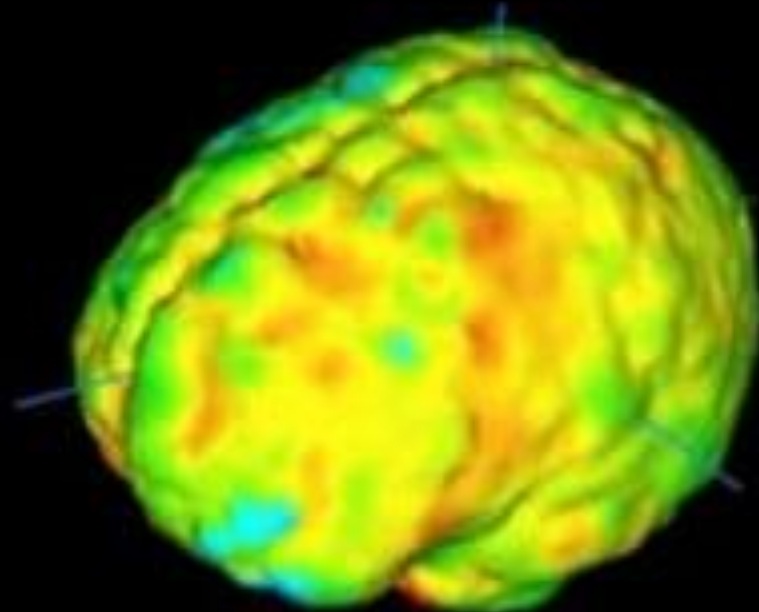
This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian Orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.



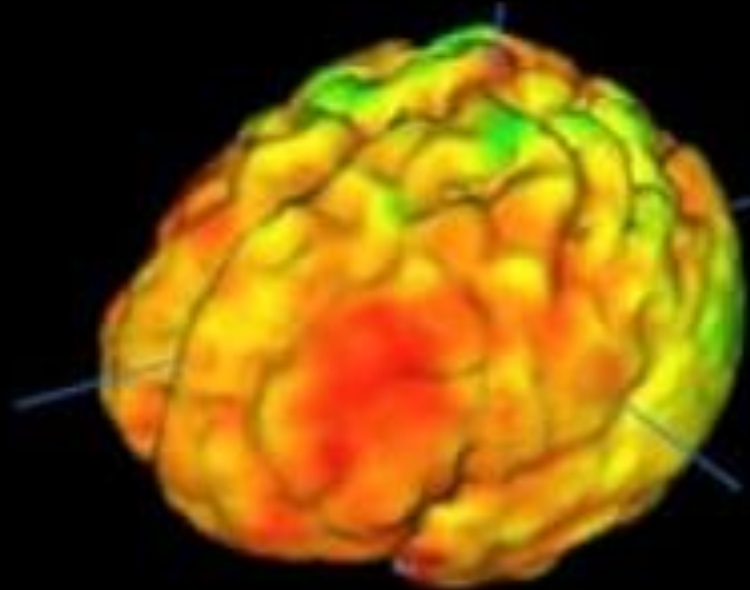
Healthy

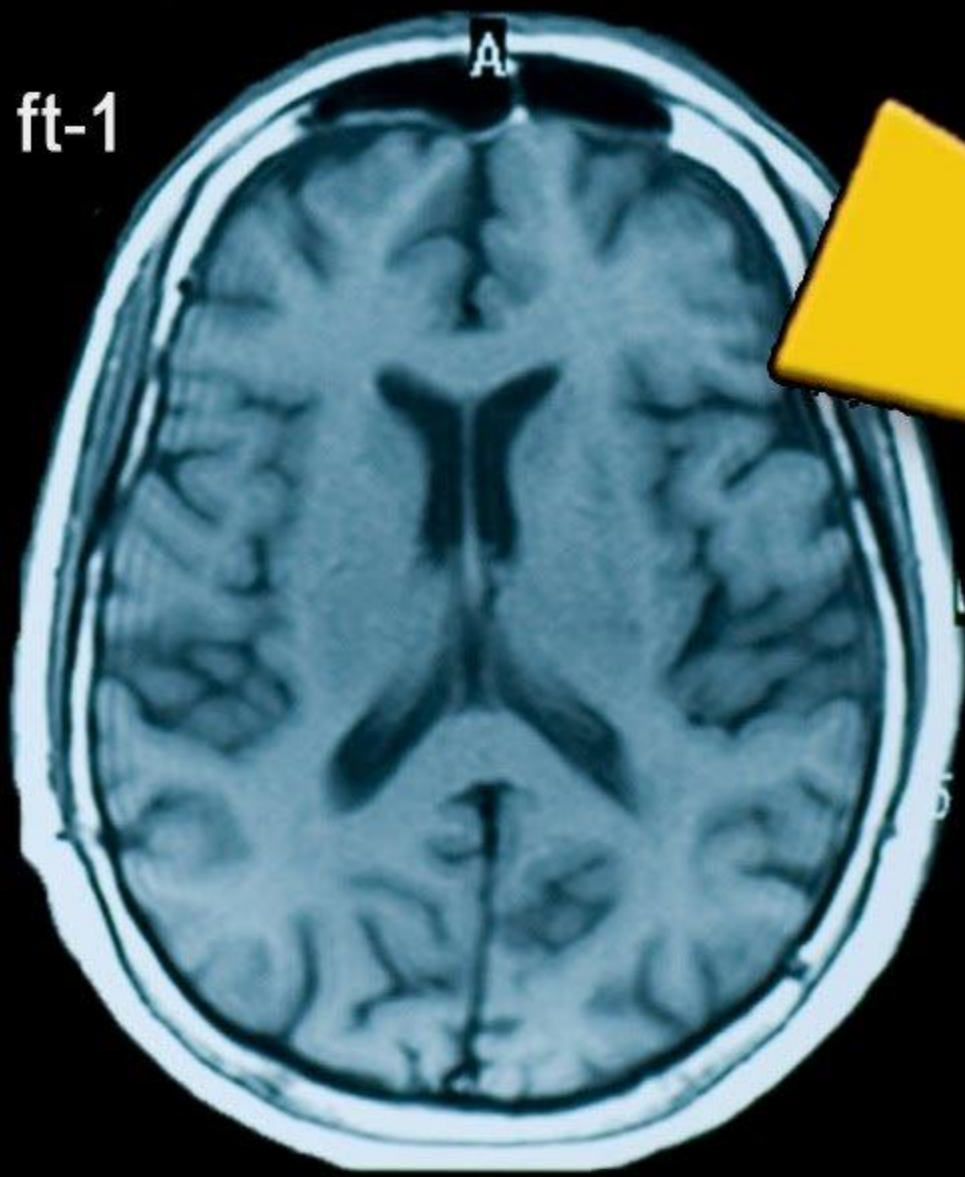


High risk

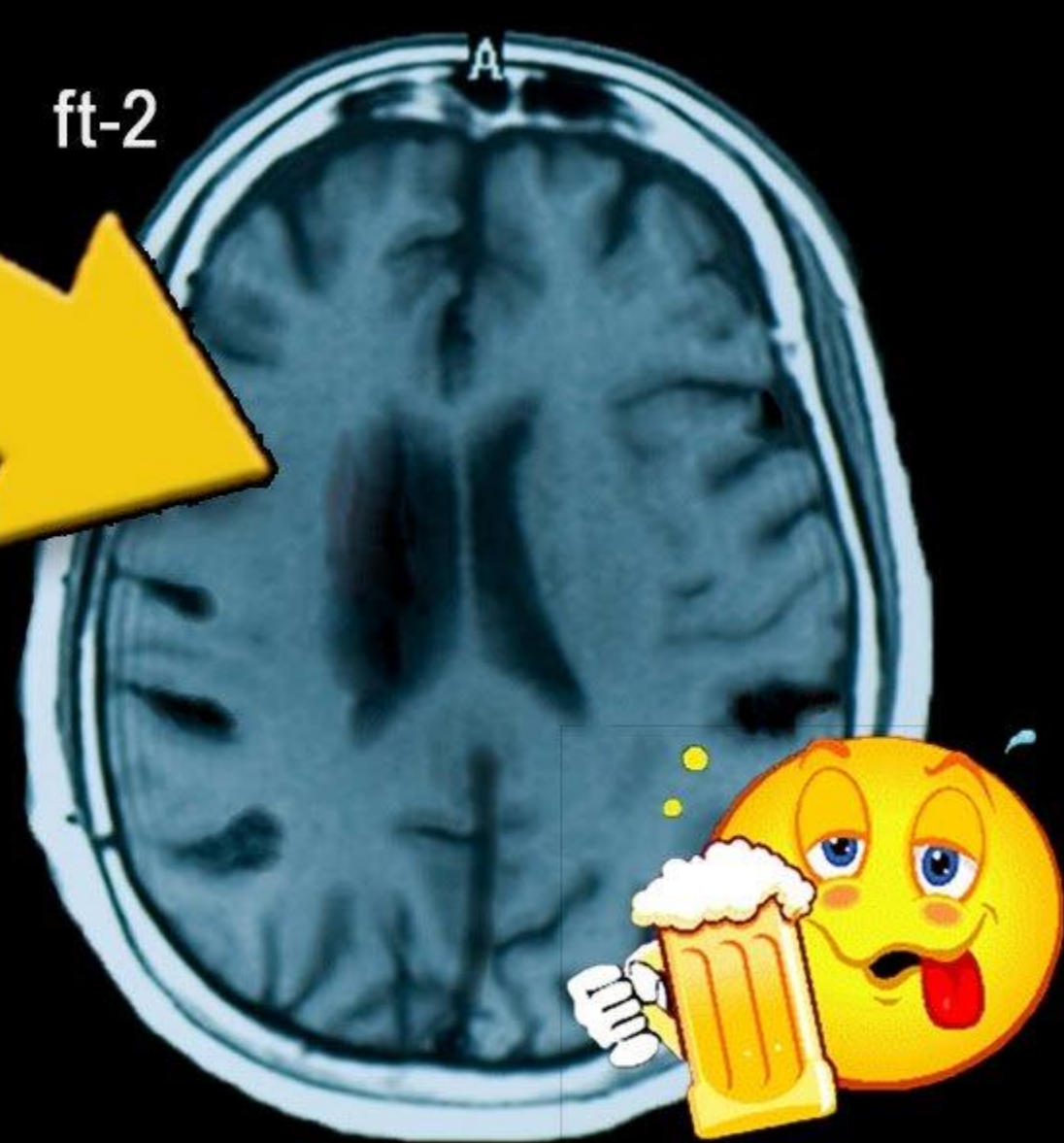


Schizophrenia

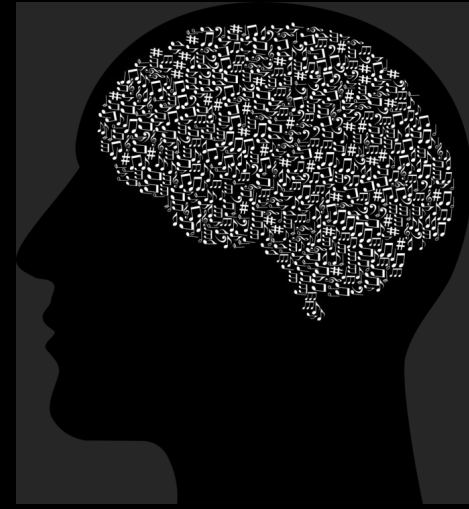




non alcoholic



alcoholic

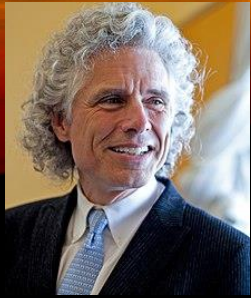


The Brain

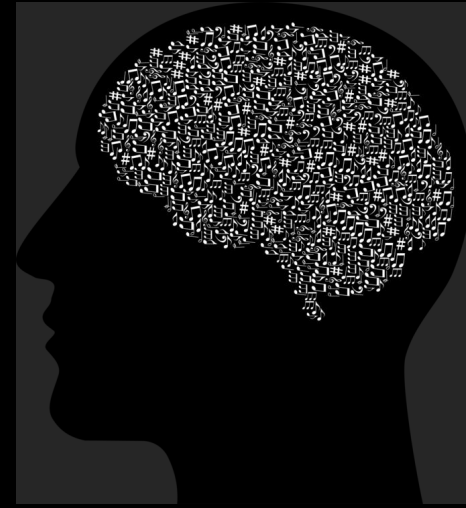
Is a physical organ of the body.

MIND

What then is the mind?

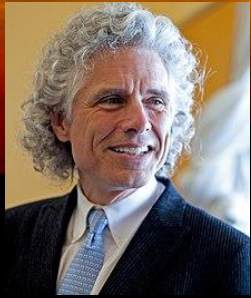


How the Mind Works, by Dr. Steven Pinker
Professor of psychology and director of the Center for Cognitive
Neuroscience at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



“ . . . The mind is not the
brain but what the brain does.

MIND



How the Mind Works, by Dr. Steven Pinker
Professor of psychology and director of the Center for Cognitive
Neuroscience at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



... Which makes us see,
think, feel, choose, and act.

MIND

These special things is information
processing or computation.

This means when the
brain is physically sick
it impacts what the
brain does — the mind.



Or

This means when the brain is not functioning the way it should, it impacts what the brain does — the mind.





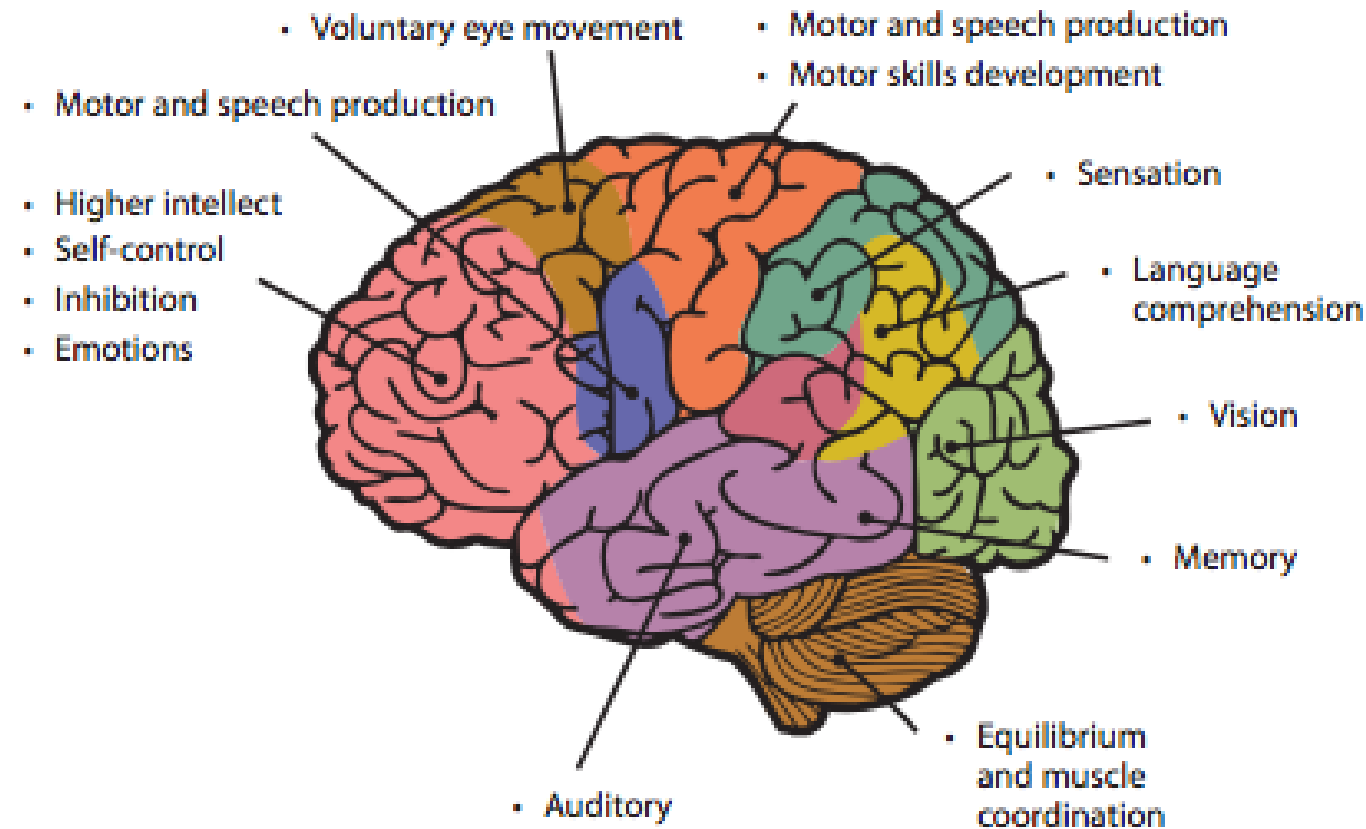
“Mental health is essential to our overall health, and the importance of attending to mental health has become even more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic . . .



... which has not only negatively impacted many people's mental health but has also created barriers to treatment."

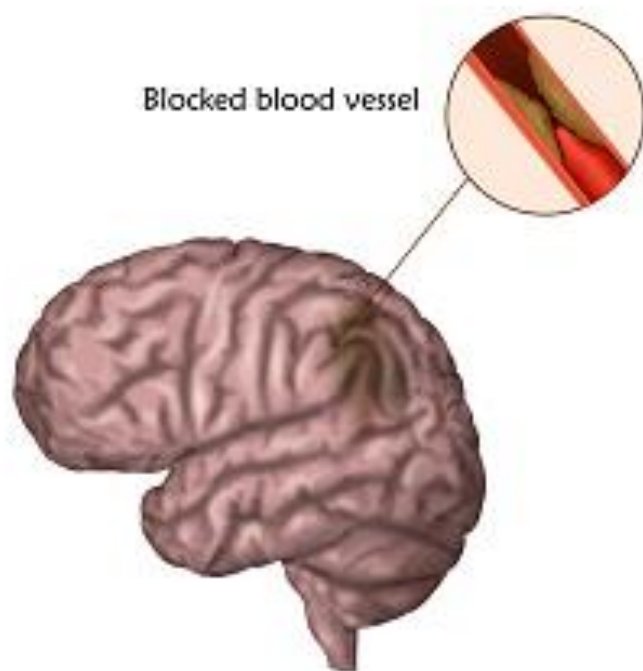
Functional areas of the brain

This illustration shows the brain's functional areas. After a stroke, deficits in function depend on which cerebral artery is affected.

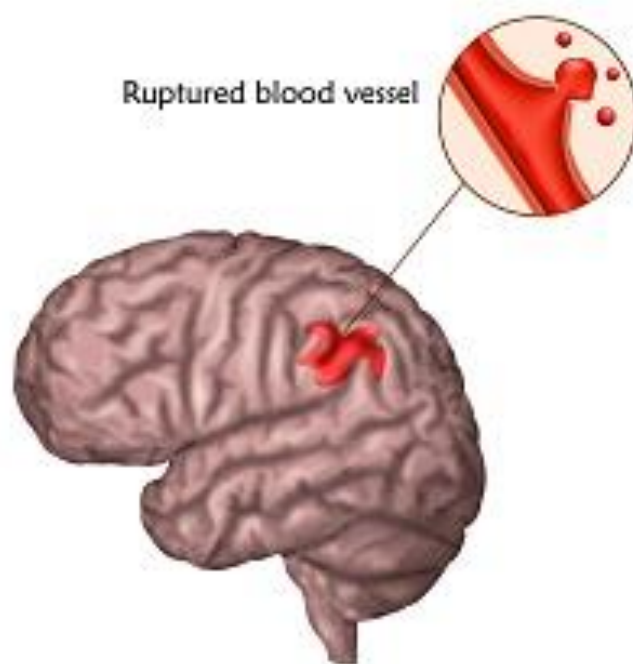


Types of Stroke

Ischemic stroke



Hemorrhagic stroke



Enriched Environments

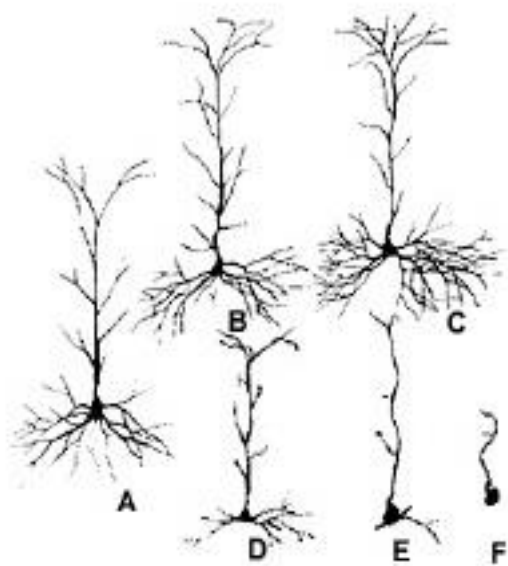
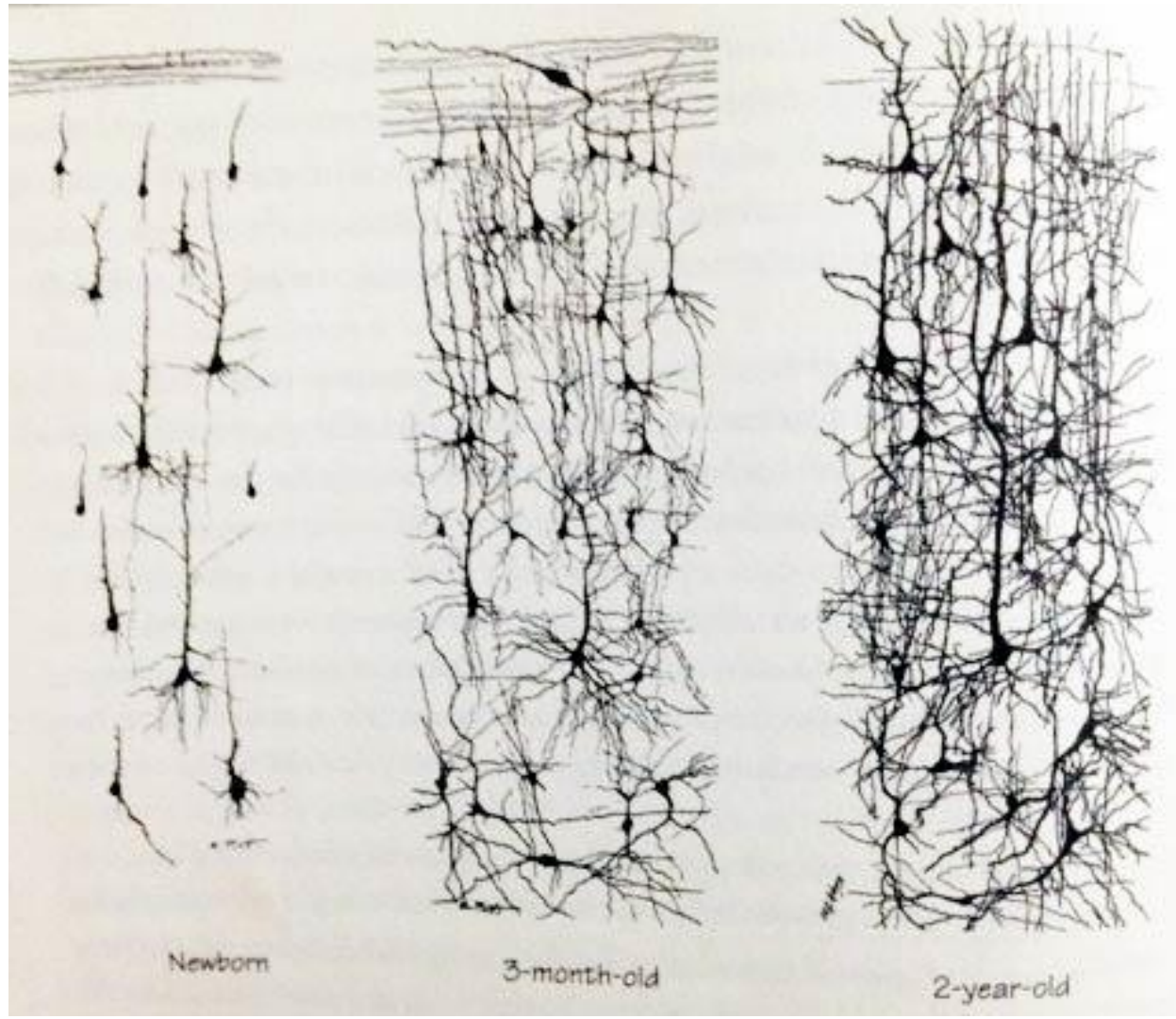
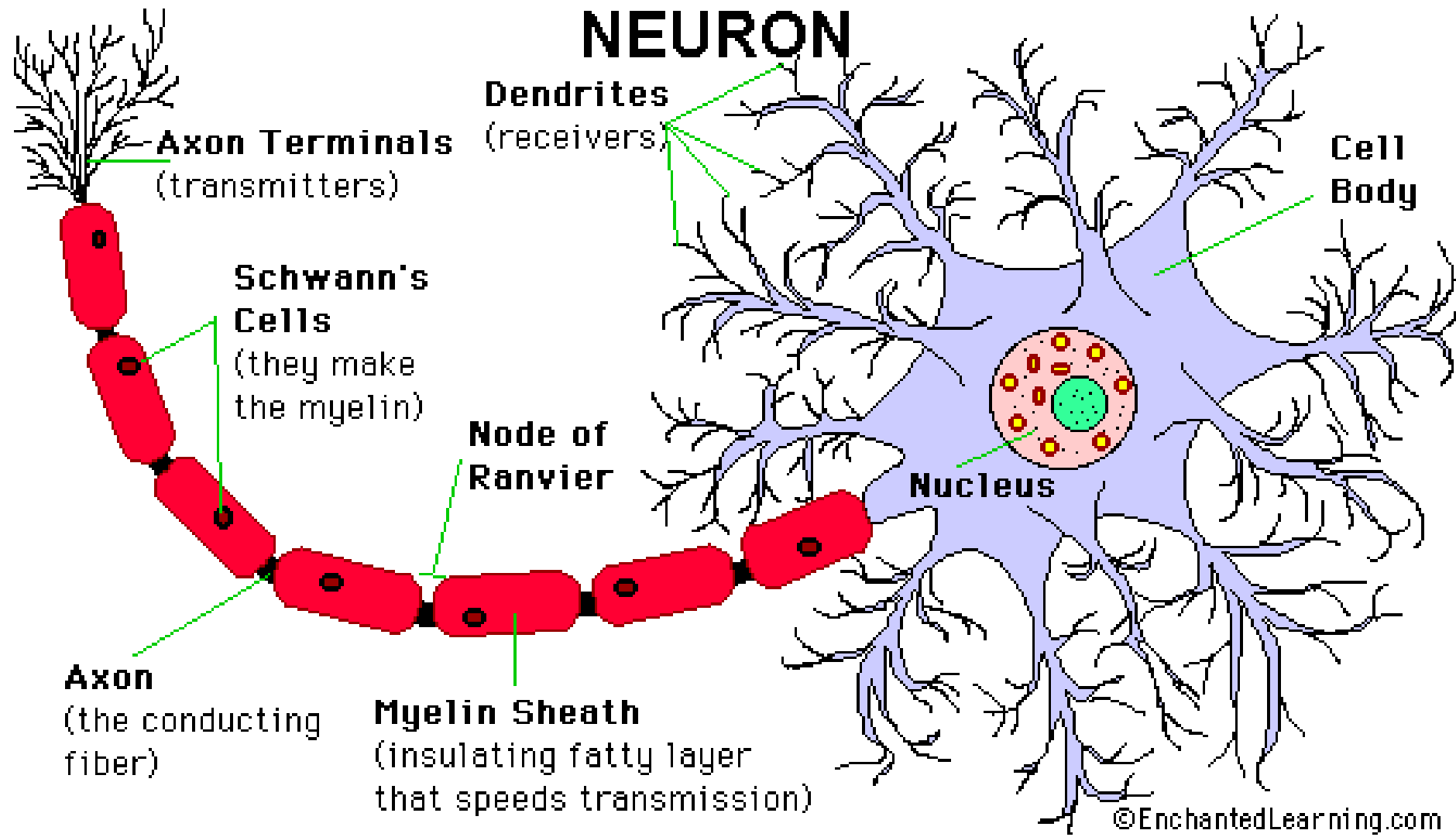


Fig. 1 – Two possible patterns of age-related alterations in cortical pyramidal cells. The normal mature neuron (A) may show regressive dendritic changes characterized by loss of basilar dendritic branches and eventual loss of the entire dendritic tree (D, E, F). Other neurons (B, C) may show progressive increase in dendritic branching. Drawing based on Golgi impregnations.

- Active involvement in a stimulating, challenging and loving environment causes the brain to grow and flourish (B and C)
- Passive involvement, isolation and an impoverished environment diminish the brain. (D, E, F)



NEURON



Brain Chemicals

1. **Melatonin** *Sleep aid. It helps your body know when it's time to sleep and wake up.*
2. **Dopamine**
3. **Oxytocin** *Feel like loving*
4. **Serotonin** *Mood stabilizer*
5. **Endorphins**

Serotonin

- Affects appetite, sleep, learning
- **Elevates mood**
- Reduces aggression
- Makes you resistant to **depression** and **anxiety**
- Makes people think more positively of intimacy and **romance**
- Levels are lower during **winter** months

Dopamine

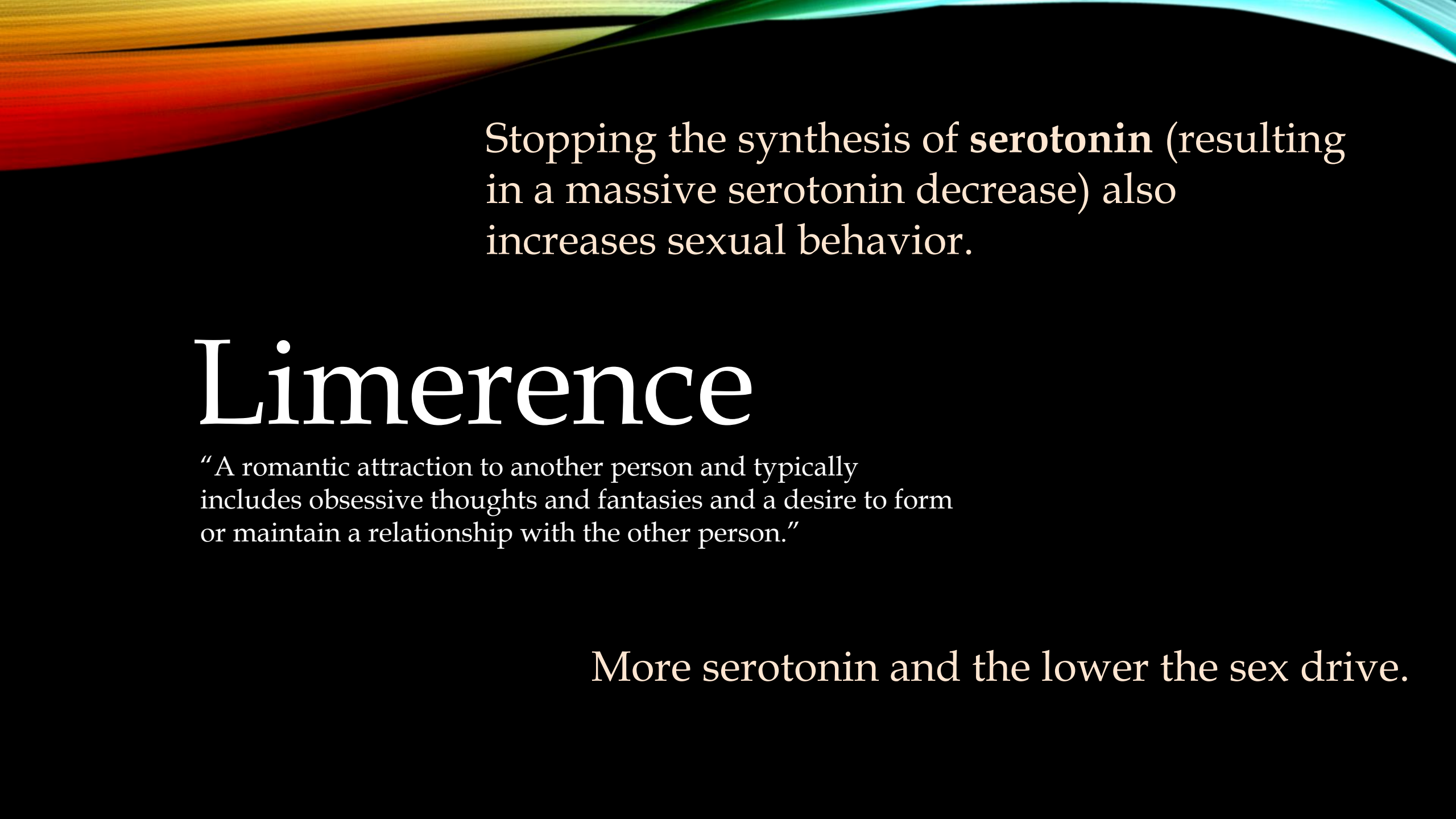
- **Pleasurable reward:**
 - released during pleasurable situations
 - causes you to seek out rewards
 - Role in **addiction**
 - Affects motivation, **arousal**, decision making
 - Improves focus and attention
 - Sexual gratification
 - Increases **sociability**
-

Gamma Aminobutyric Acid (GABA)

- Promotes **relaxation**
- **Relieves anxiety**
- Improves mood
- Can induce **sleep**
- Can release sex hormones
- Inhibitory neurotransmitter - **sedative**
 - sluggish movements
 - slurred speech

Oxytocin

- Actually a hormone
- Sometimes called the “**love**” chemical
 - involved in pair **bonding**, **trust**, intimacy, attachment, **maternal love**, sex, **empathy**, generosity, **social recognition**, social memories
- Also promotes **ethnocentric** behaviour
 - trust and empathy with in-group, but
 - suspicion and rejection of outsiders
- Autistic people have less



Stopping the synthesis of **serotonin** (resulting in a massive serotonin decrease) also increases sexual behavior.

Limerence

“A romantic attraction to another person and typically includes obsessive thoughts and fantasies and a desire to form or maintain a relationship with the other person.”

More serotonin and the lower the sex drive.

Depression

Biology of Depression - Neurotransmitters

Rashmi Nemade, Ph.D.

“Depression has been linked to problems or imbalances in the brain, specifically with the neurotransmitters serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine. . .

Depression

Biology of Depression - Neurotransmitters

Rashmi Nemade, Ph.D.

... It is very difficult to actually measure the level of neurotransmitters in a person's brain and their activity. What we do know is that antidepressant medications, which are used to treat the symptoms of depression, are known to act upon these particular neurotransmitters and their receptors."



Faith Religion

& Mental Health

Luna Greenstein
National Alliance on Mental Health

“Religion gives people something to believe in, provides a sense of structure and typically offers a group of people to connect with over similar beliefs. These facets can have a large positive impact on mental health — research suggests that religiosity reduces suicide rates, alcoholism and drug use.”







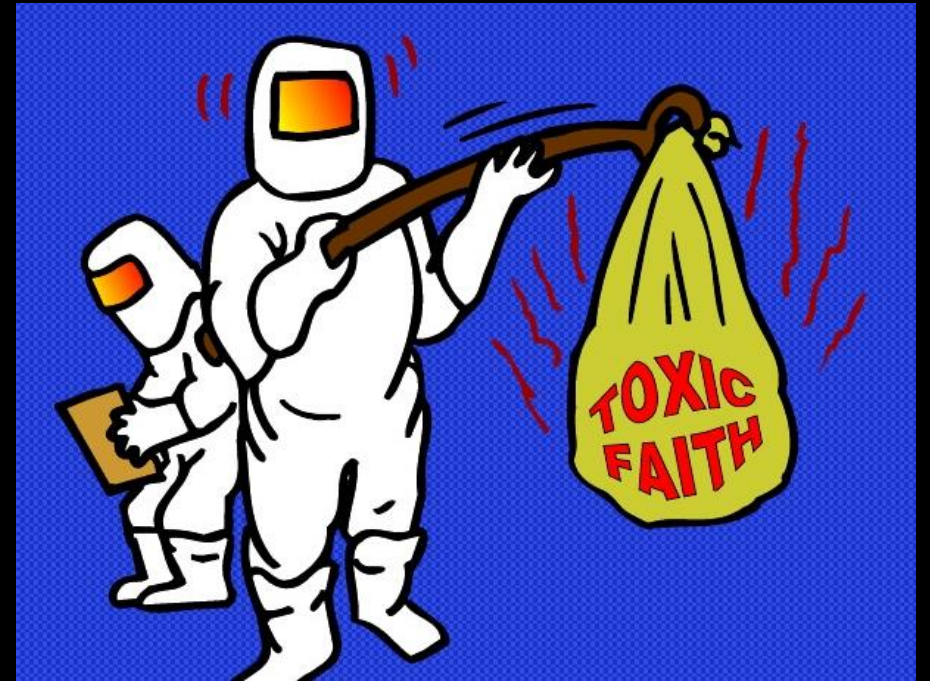
Toxic Faith Fanaticism Extremism

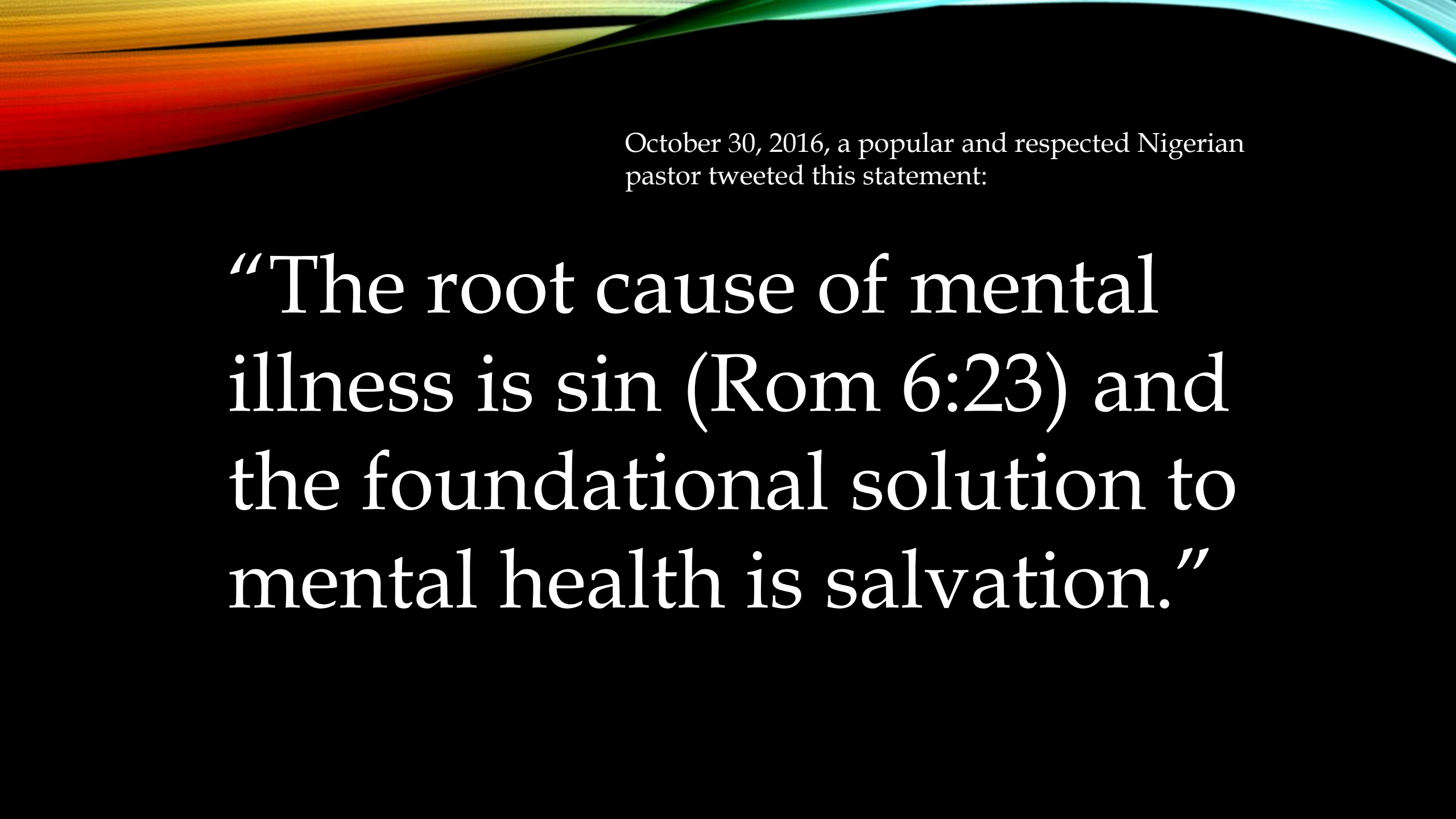
There are some Christians beliefs
that can drive you crazy.

Toxic faith or poisonous religion
freezes people in a state of
legalism, rigidity, and
oftentimes aloofness. When
religion should be bringing us
closer with a spirit of kindness
and compassion . . .”



far too many religious leaders are actually creating members who are judgmental, harsh, and self-righteousness. The concepts of understanding, tolerance, sensitivity has lost their importance in many religious houses.”





October 30, 2016, a popular and respected Nigerian pastor tweeted this statement:

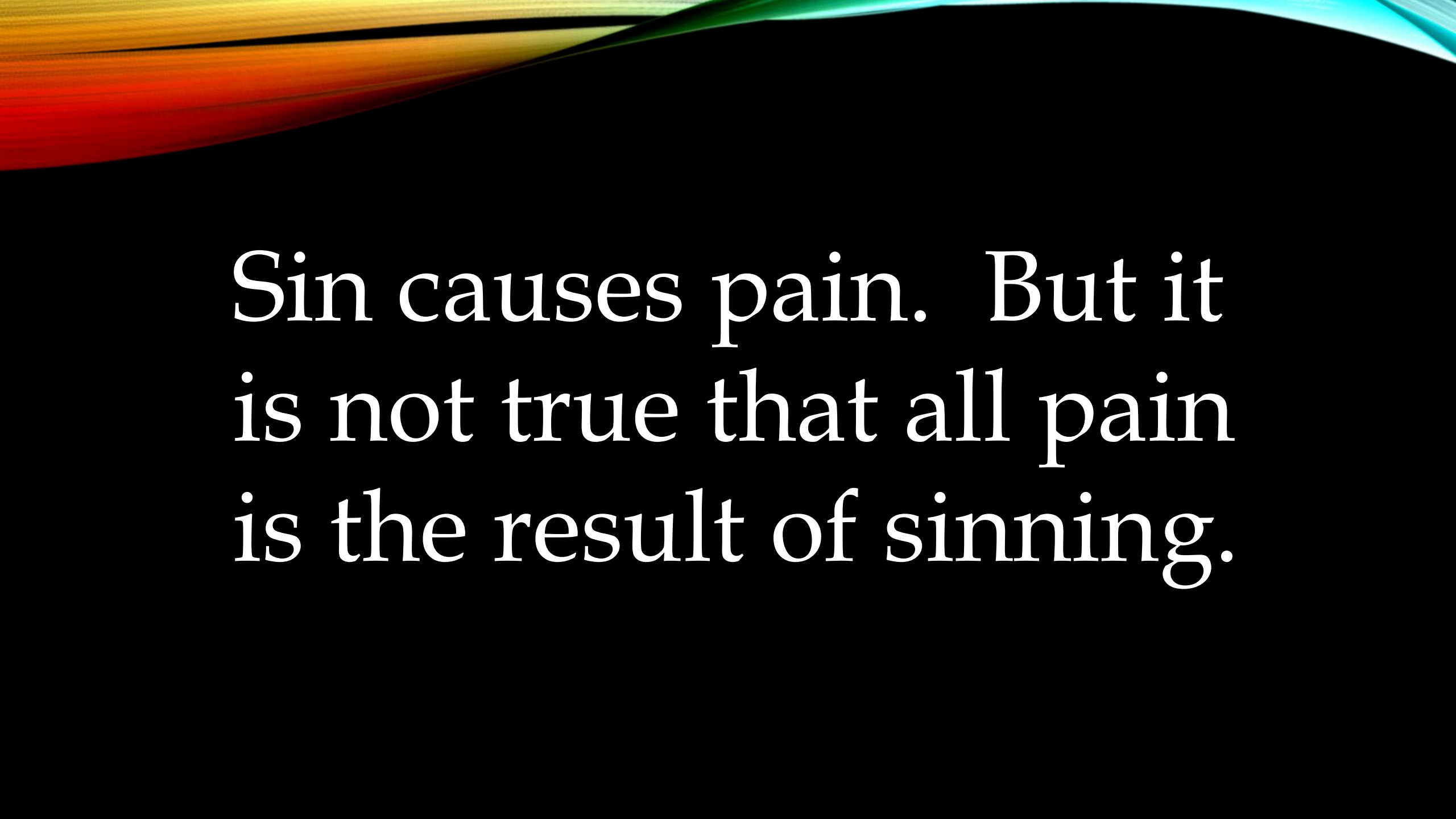
“The root cause of mental illness is sin (Rom 6:23) and the foundational solution to mental health is salvation.”



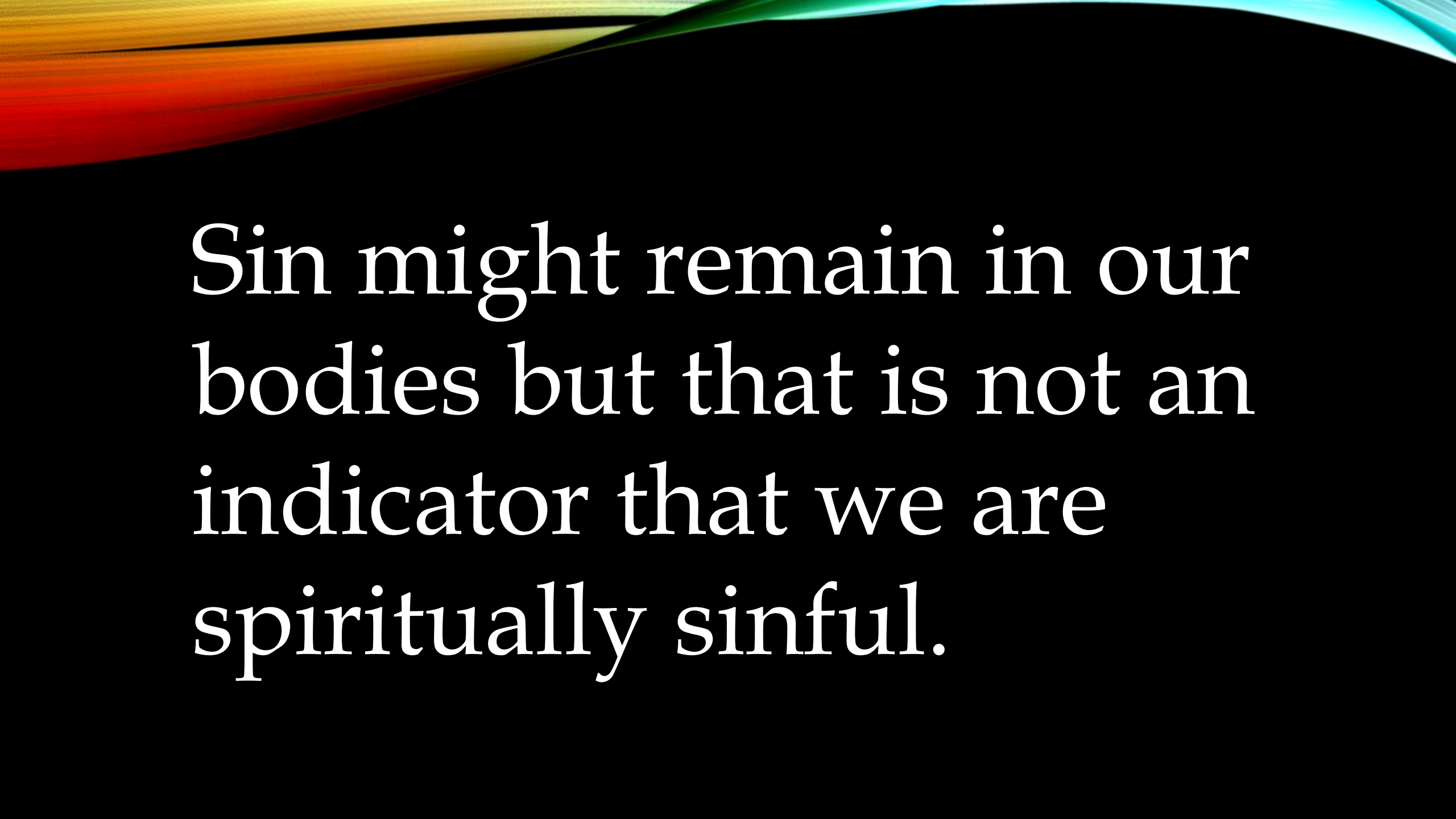
Is this true?

The image features a solid black background. At the top, there is a decorative border consisting of several overlapping, wavy bands of color. From left to right, these bands transition through shades of yellow, orange, red, and finally into a bright cyan or light blue on the far right. The text "This is false." is centered horizontally in the middle of the image, rendered in a white, classic serif typeface.

This is false.



Sin causes pain. But it
is not true that all pain
is the result of sinning.



Sin might remain in our
bodies but that is not an
indicator that we are
spiritually sinful.



The belief can
cause mental
illness.

Article Title

“I’m Christian and I
don’t believe mental
illness is “spiritual.”



Dr. Ayomide Adebayo

Nigerian medical doctor specializing in mental health



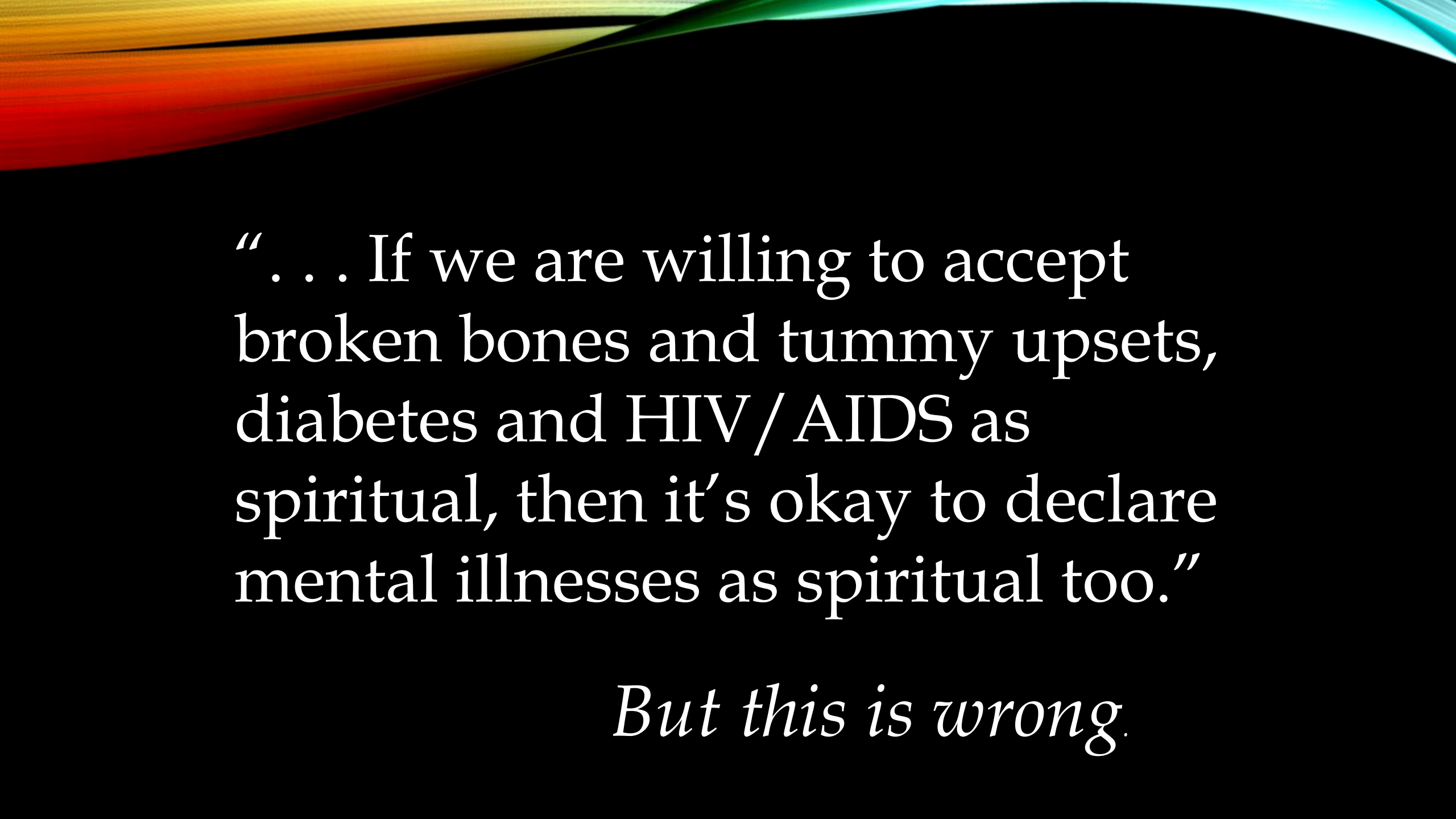
He argues

“What do people mean
when they say mental
illness is spiritual?”



He presents the following syllogistic argument:

1. Everything is either physical or spiritual.
2. Mental illnesses are not physical.
3. Therefore, mental illnesses are spiritual.
4. The root cause of mental illnesses must therefore be sin.



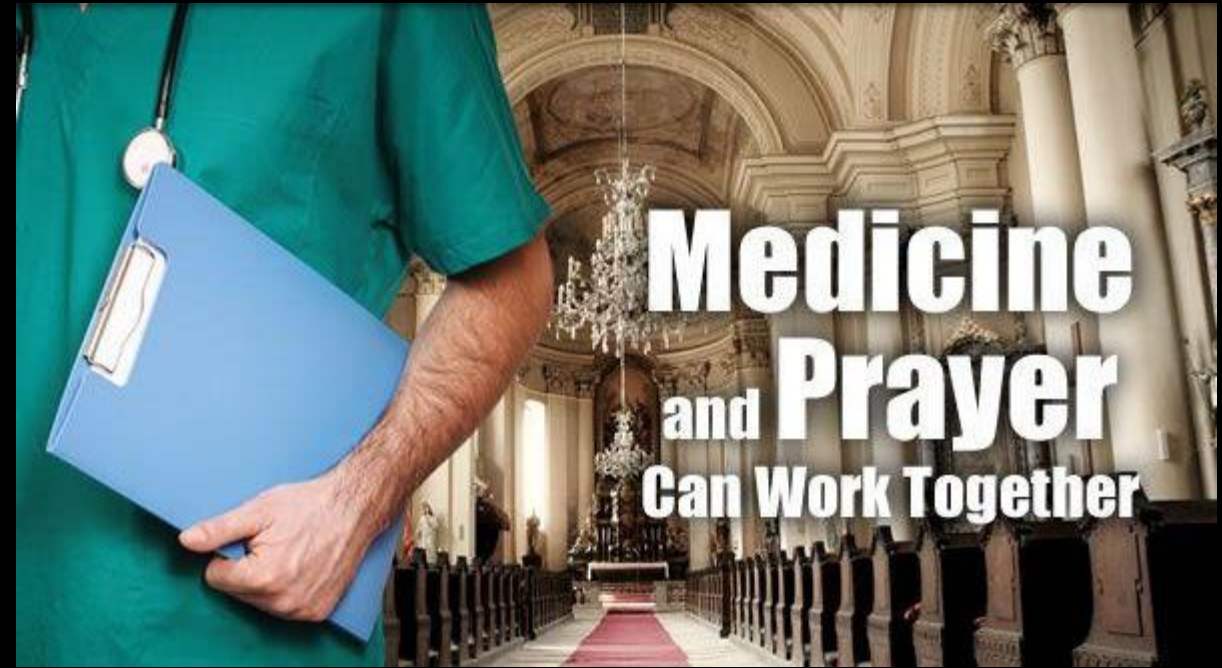
“ . . . If we are willing to accept broken bones and tummy upsets, diabetes and HIV / AIDS as spiritual, then it’s okay to declare mental illnesses as spiritual too.”


But this is wrong.



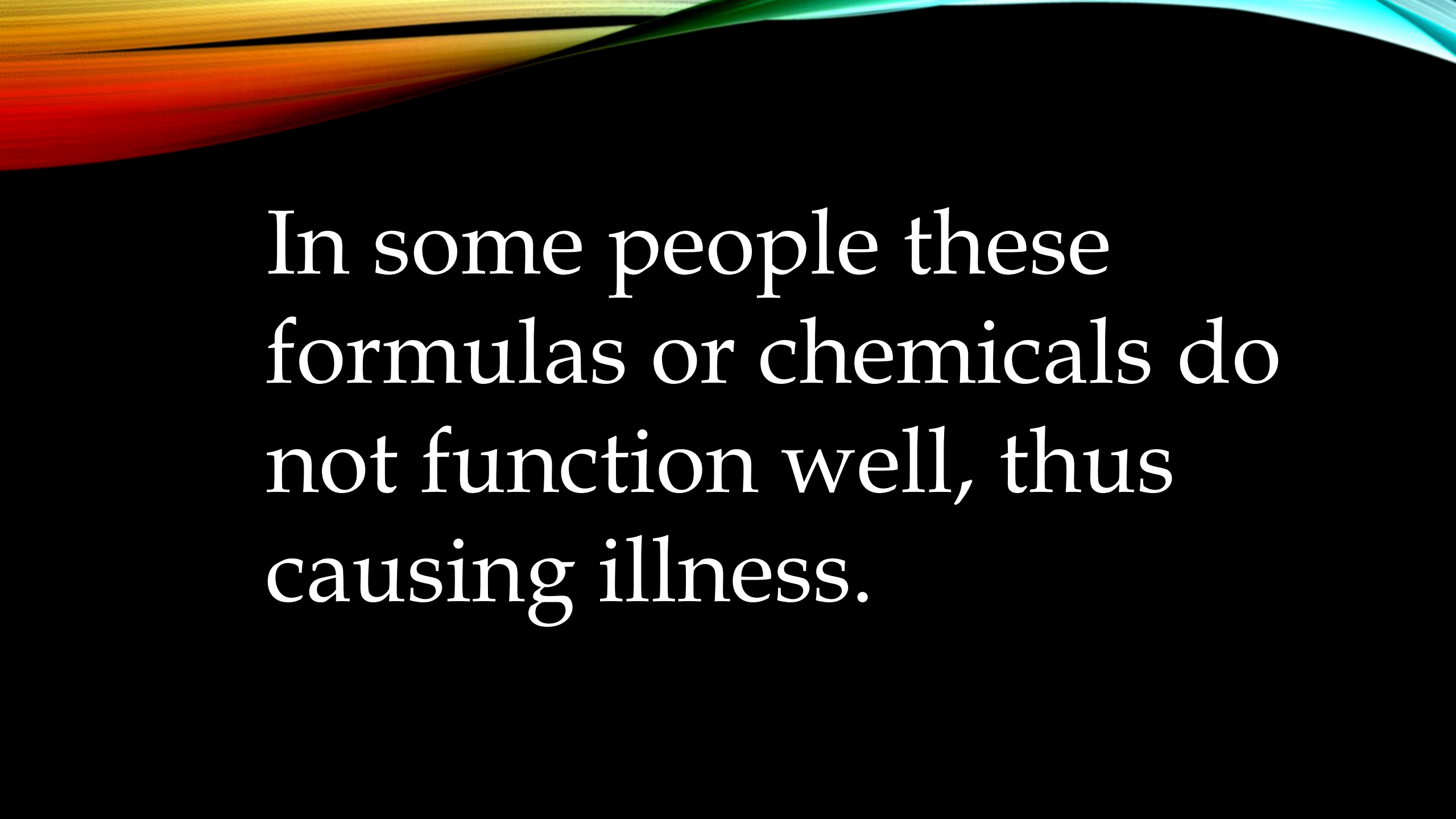
Prayer is not enough.
Medication is needed.

God uses both
prayer and
medication.





The brain has its own
formula to store and
recall information.



In some people these
formulas or chemicals do
not function well, thus
causing illness.




Everything we do
affects the brain.


In a physical way.




Religious Fanaticism



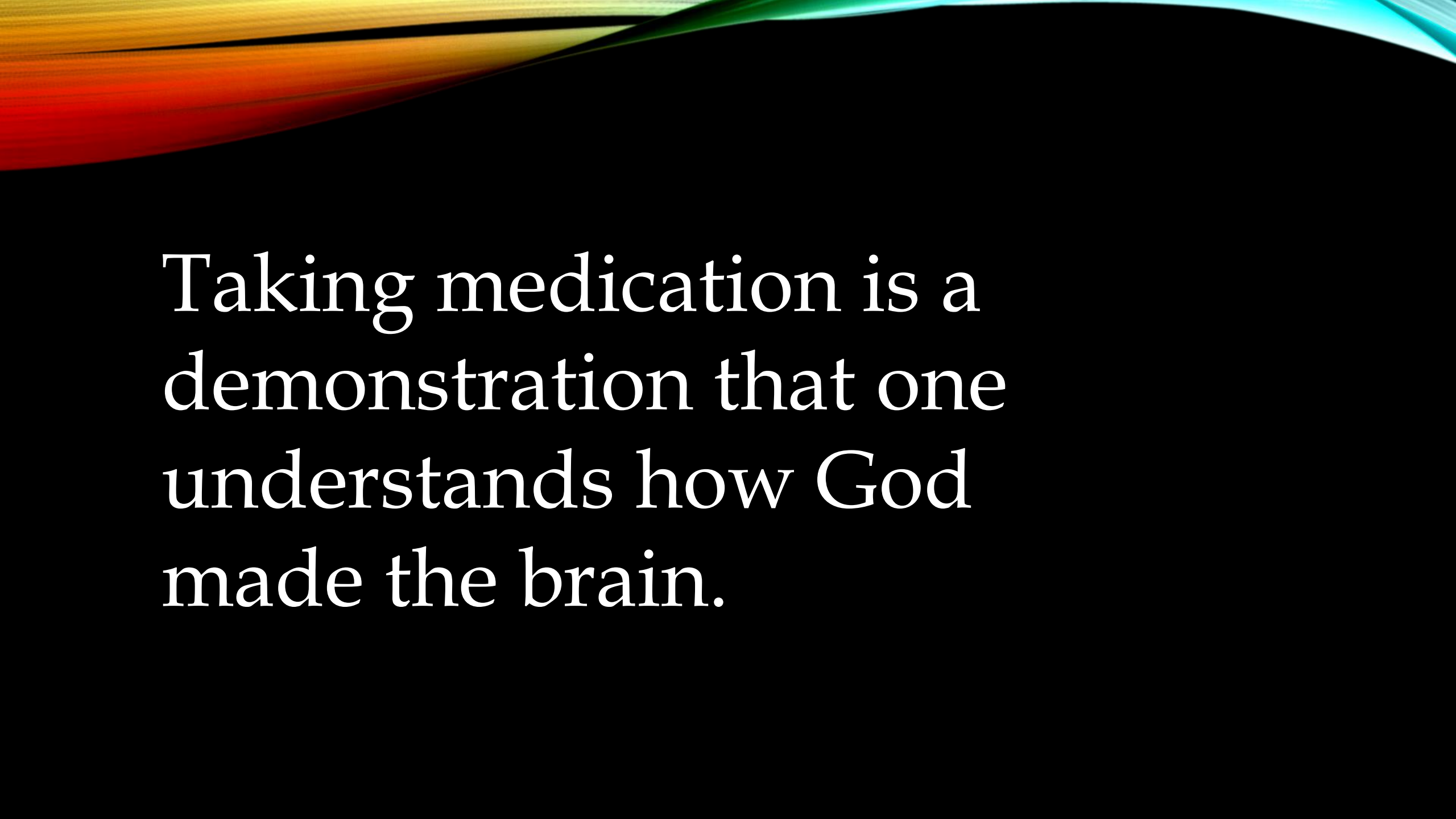
We know that patients
with schizophrenia usually
exhibit religious delusions
and hallucinations.



We know that extreme
fanaticism is evidence of a
mental illness.



This is when taking a
pill is as practical as
praying on your knees.

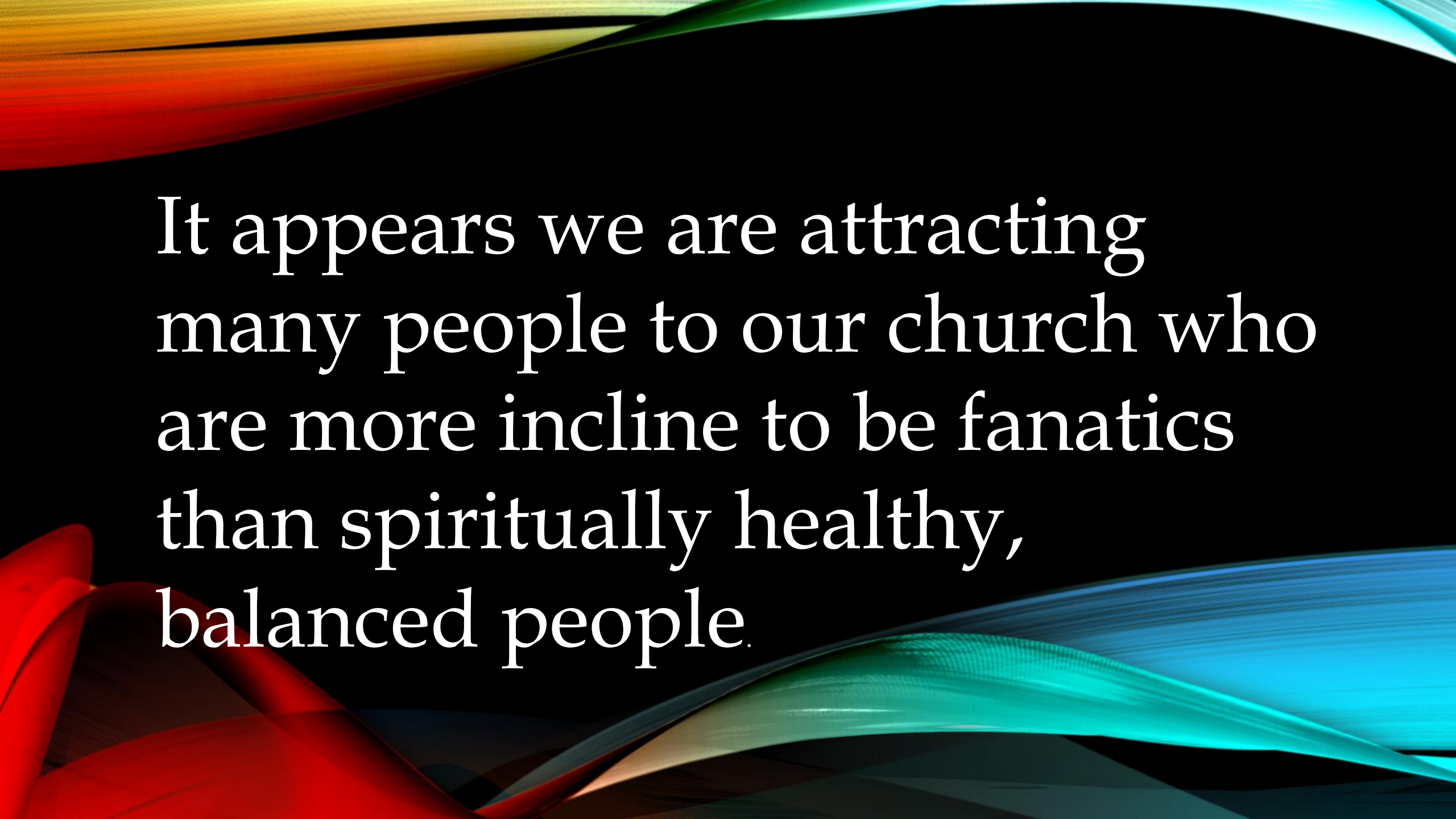


Taking medication is a demonstration that one understands how God made the brain.



Shocking Information

Fasten your seatbelts



It appears we are attracting
many people to our church who
are more inclined to be fanatics
than spiritually healthy,
balanced people.

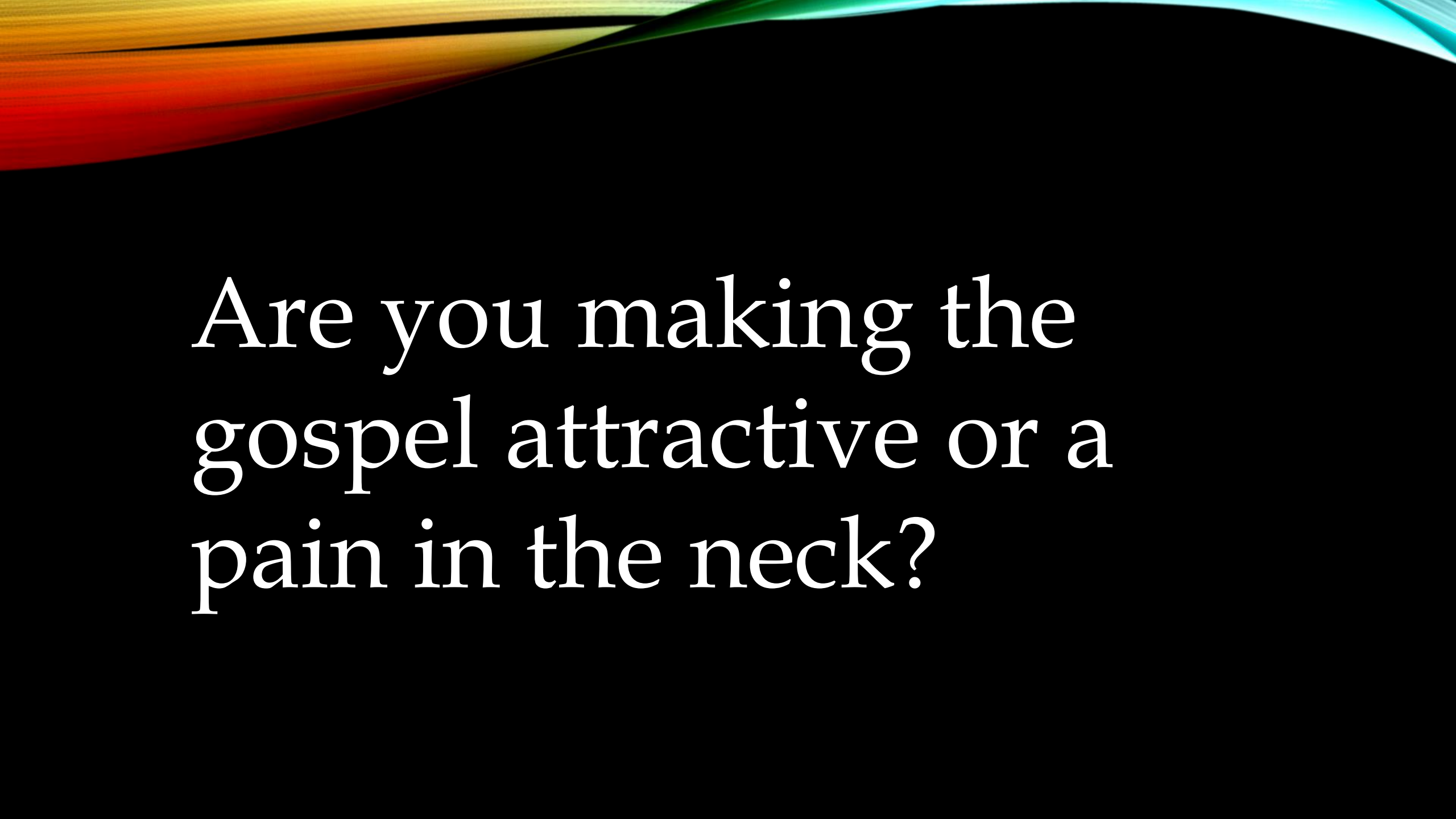
Alister McGrath
Irish theologian and church historian



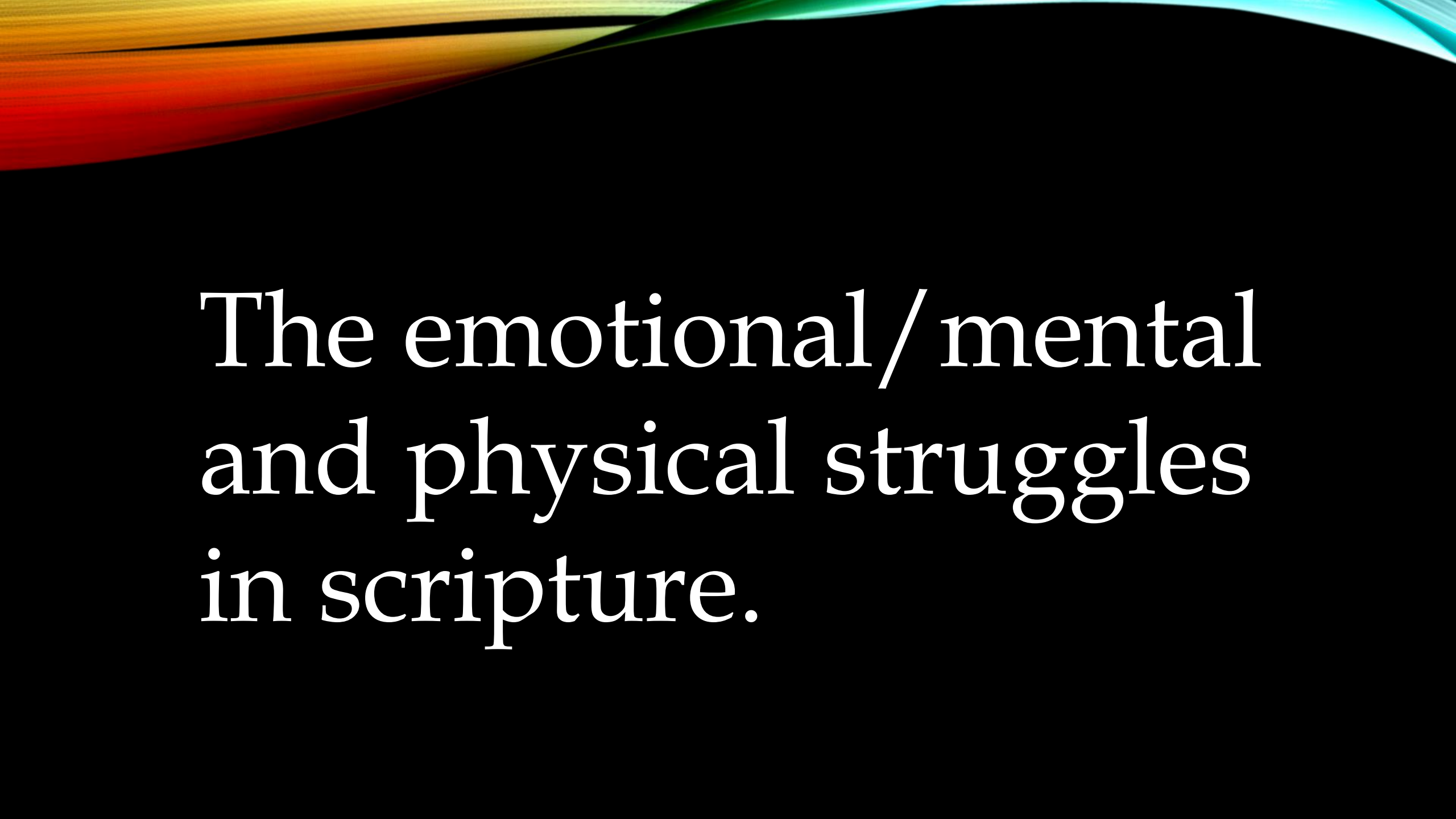
“One of the reasons the Reformation happened is that there was a rediscovery of the attractiveness of the gospel.”




“A rediscovery
of the
attractiveness of
the gospel.”



Are you making the
gospel attractive or a
pain in the neck?



The emotional/mental
and physical struggles
in scripture.

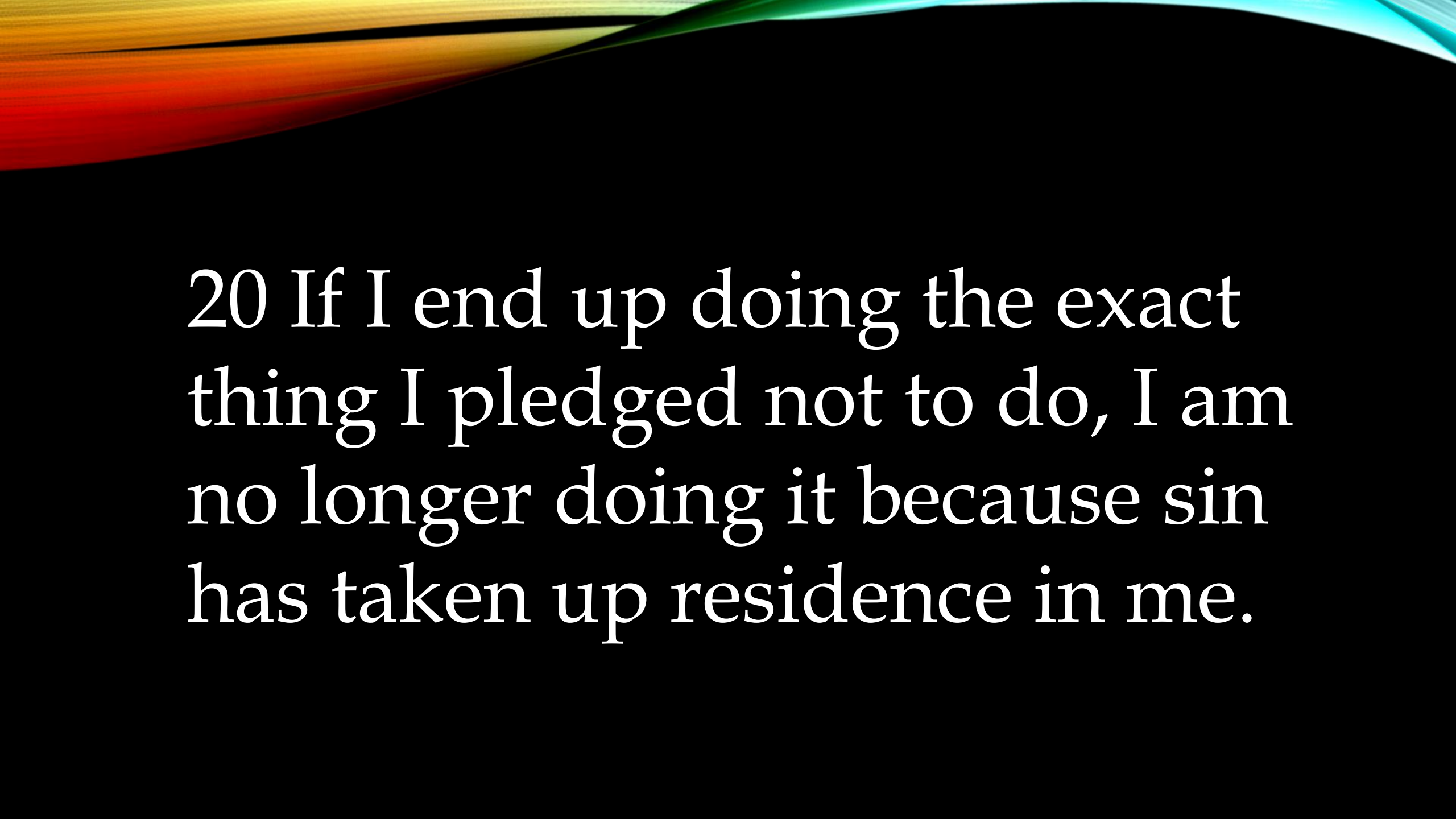


The connection between
the physical and the
mental in scripture.


Romans 7:15-20

15 Listen, I can't explain my actions.
Here's why: I am not able to do the things
I want; and at the same time, I do the
things I despise.

16 If I am doing the things I have already
decided not to do, I am agreeing with the
law regarding what is good.



20 If I end up doing the exact thing I pledged not to do, I am no longer doing it because sin has taken up residence in me.



A tranquil heart gives life
to the flesh, but envy
makes the bones rot.

Proverbs 14:30 ESV



Proverbs 17:22 *The Voice*

A joy-filled heart is curative
balm, but a broken spirit hurts
all the way to the bone.



Ecclesiastes 7:3:

Sorrow is better than
laughter, because a sad face
is good for the heart."

New International Version



1 Corinthians 7:19

Do you know that your body is a temple of the holy spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body."

To Be Mentally Healthy

- Live a practical Christian life
- Acknowledge you own idiosyncrasies, weaknesses, vulnerabilities, desires, traits
- Avoid extremes
- Practice self-discipline
- Express unconditional love and acceptance to everyone
- Develop and maintain a close relationship with Jesus

For good mental health we need . . .

Balance





Balance



Balance



Balance





Balance



Balance



Balance





Balance



The Greatest Thing in All my Live

The greatest thing in all my life is **knowing** you (repeat)
I want to know you more, I want to know you more
The greatest thing in all my life is knowing you.

The greatest thing in all my life is **loving** you (repeat)
I want to love you more, I want to love you more
The greatest thing in all my life is loving you

The greatest thing in all my life is **serving** you (repeat)
I want to serve you more, I want to serve you more
The greatest thing in all my life is serving you



The background features a solid black field. At the top, there is a decorative, wavy horizontal band with a color gradient. From left to right, the colors transition from a warm orange-red to a bright yellow, then to a vibrant green, and finally to a light blue on the far right edge.

Health

Mental



Health

Your Faith, and You.



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