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Will ADHD be 'cured' one day? What about not needing one?

ADHD Awareness Month 2023



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Will ADHD Be "Cured" One Day?

What If It Doesn't Need a Cure?

As we wrap up ADHD Awareness Month, let's tackle a question that's often whispered but rarely discussed openly: Should there be a cure for ADHD?

What would the world look like without 'ADHD brains'?

I argue that it would be a significant loss, and perhaps even a frightening prospect for lots of reasons.

Although I'm a strong advocate of the strengths based understanding of ADHD and autism, I don't ever deny that many people with ADHD suffer greatly - the scary statistics I've shared this month are testament to how challenging life in a neurotypical world can be.

The idea of curing ADHD (or autism) raises massive ethical questions. A study by Singh looked into the ethical implications of ADHD treatment, questioning whether we should aim to "normalise" neurodivergent people.

Surely the whole idea of 'NORMAL' itself is the problem - If we know that there are many, many undiagnosed people of all ages, the concept of a standard brain starts to look unlikely. Instead, we have a range of neurotypes - and some will be closer to the 'average' than others?

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- 1. **Pharmacological Treatments**: Medication can manage symptoms but doesn't "cure" ADHD. Indeed, Dr Barkley (and many people who use medication) say that it reduces the impact of ADHD so that it's almost not noticeable... at least until the medication runs out or is unavailable.
- 2. **Gene Editing**: Technologies like CRISPR could theoretically eliminate ADHD traits, but at what cost? The ethical implications are vast and largely unexplored. How could we ever experiment on humans in a way that anyone would think was acceptable? What if, in removing the 500+ genes that we now believe are connected to the constellation of ADHD traits, we remove them from the person who discovers a kind of energy or environmental protection that saves the lives of every person on the planet - in one of their DMN/daydream leaps of insight?

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