

## **PE1651/ZZ**

Linda Lawson submission of 8 January 2018

I was disabled, my life destroyed for 20 years by the prescription drugs the doctor gave me for fibromyalgia pain and sleep disturbance: Elavil and benzodiazepines, including Clonazepam.

Benzodiazepines were pushed on me as “safe” though I said to the psychiatrist who suggested I take them for insomnia: “No – they’re addictive, they’re harmful, they’re damaging. You don’t get real sleep, and studies show you perform worse on tasks.”

(I had read the nearly 700-page American Medical Association Guide to Better Sleep.) The truly evil psychiatrist replied, like any good pusher: “That’s true, Linda. You’re right.... But the new ones – they’re safe – and you need to sleep.”

Misusing his authority -- I was very ill with fibromyalgia and stressed because of magazine job losses in the hundreds across Canada during a recession – a perfectly good reason to have insomnia. Instead of helping in any way – he pushed Zopiclone – known in the streets as “Zim Zims.” But when they gave me a terrible taste in my mouth, ruining my enjoyment of food – he happily gave me Clonazepam, the “unsafe” and addictive ones. (He had admitted to it.) Bucketloads of them, reissuing them long before I was out. A pusher, worse than any on the street – knowing they were just as dangerous, they just hadn’t been studied as much!

I was housebound and bedridden for two decades, unable to write or think. Sleeping 12-17 hours a day most days. Too weak to stand because of “orthostatic intolerance;” terrible swelling in face, feet and ankles from “Venous Insufficiency Disease”; a malaligned pelvis caused, I thought by a yoga injury causing agonizing pain; IBS gut issues that had me only digesting 4 foods; and hundreds more symptoms from rashes to “Interstitial Cystitis.”

Until I realized these drugs were doing me no good whatsoever – had not in a year – and neither were the Elavil given also for pain and sleep, and 3 other prescriptions for “menopause symptoms,” “Interstitial Cystitis”, etc. So I slowly tapered off them over two years – and to my astonishment mostly recovered – I just knew I had become addicted and thought I would die clean and sober, still likely to end up missing some toes and in a wheelchair.

Instead I recovered 80% of my health, strength, clarity and energy! The horrendous pain lessened, broke up, shifted, dissolved, then mostly disappeared! What fibromyalgia! I gradually reinstated foods till I was eating and digesting well over 400, including my beloved organic coffee! I recovered the mind I thought long lost – began writing again, started a blog, began performing once more – exercising, dancing, more fit than I’d been in 30 years. The “Venous Insufficiency Disease” all but disappeared, my cheekbones returned, my ankle bones the same. The “Interstitial Cystitis” became a slightly cranky bladder, but no longer woke me a dozen times a night with bladder pain.

My doctor said, “It’s not humanly possible to recover from Orthostatic Intolerance. It’s not humanly possible to heal Venous Insufficiency Disease. She

denied this, while looking at my sharp cheekbones, my thin normal nose, my elegant anklebones no longer shrouded in edema.

Then I lost my mind – another tiny little side effect neither drug companies nor doctors warn you about: clinical depression, hallucinations, and a year-long psychotic break with reality. Because I've had therapy, done my dream and nightmare work decades before – the latter two were largely fun – more like a cross between a trip to Oz (Benzo Oz) and what I've read of a peyote or ayahuasca healing shamanic journey. I became more fully myself.

I would not, however, wish clinical depression on my worst enemy! A horrific nightmare, none of them ever experienced in nearly 60 years – only normal healthy grief depression that transforms ultimately into sorrow, acceptance, and compassion for self and others.

Psychiatrists in particular know precisely what they're doing – that 75% of people will be harmed, damaged, and disabled by these drugs – brain-damaged, twice as likely to get dementia, three times as likely to die prematurely in the next 7 years according to English studies. And they hid the evidence.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/side-effects/201011/brain-damage-benzodiazepines-the-troubling-facts-risks-and-history-minor>

Also attested to is further evidence that psychiatry tells those who have neurotoxic reactions to drug withdrawal caused by having defective DNA – are then told they are permanently mentally ill with some ludicrous label, and pushed or forced to take psychoactive drugs that reinjure them further -- knowingly. Please read the testimony of Dr Yolande Lucire – a researcher who tested and proved the dangers of such drugs decades ago. <http://www.drucire.com/attention-health-ministers.html> (She may already have testified.)

I myself possess the double gene mutation, MTHFR, which means you don't methylate or detox properly. This is why we have such severe reactions to these toxic drugs – but they harm everyone who takes them for more than two weeks – the outside safe limit. I was prescribed them for 20 years. No ethical physician does this – yet they're handed out like candy. Pushed or forced on innocent victims, whose lives are destroyed – and often killed by them. They cause suicidality, homicidality. All major mass murderers in the United States were on these toxic drugs.

I beg you to STOP the dangerous psychiatrists – who are NOT scientists. There are no lab tests, not hard science diagnosing people with normal grief “mentally ill” for example. Psychiatry is a mad bad pseudo-science based on drug company trials which hide crucial evidence by testing in Third World countries and Madison Avenue advertising spinning nonsense like “biochemical imbalances causing mental illness -- -which psychoactive drugs fix.” NOT ONE STUDY ever verified that little fallacy – yet it is touted daily as scientific gospel.

One ethical psychiatrist wrote that: “The ‘biochemical imbalance theory’ needs to be retired to the dustbin of history, along with ‘masturbation causes mental illness.’”

The good and ethical psychiatrists who know that trauma and toxic chemicals cause both physical and mental diseases also know that good therapy, love, compassion, and tangible help in fixing power imbalances cure and heal. Psychoactive drugs addict, disable, and cause premature death of up-to 30 years. If any other medical specialty – or alternative one – destroyed 30 years of life they’d be branded quacks – and even called “murderers.” Instead, psychiatrists are funded by the government as well as pharmaceutical companies, who may pay for their schooling – purchasing a compliant drug-promoting skill while still in school.

Please do not allow this ugly fraudulent racket to continue. Help by banning the overweening and overreaching power of psychiatry. In the days before pharmaceutical drugs were invented, people recovered from even the worst episodes of mental illness, and never experienced them again. Now there’s an epidemic of “mental illness” – much of it caused by the very drugs given to “cure” it.

I’ve taken them – and nearly lost my life. I got off them – and recovered my health. I write, perform at story-telling venues around town, have written a play called *Benzo Oz: A Comedic Drug Withdrawal Romance*. I dance, exercise, socialize, and live a good life, despite two disabilities and 3 diseases.

I currently take no drugs, preferring coping skills such as meditation, therapy, exercise, journaling, etc. Transforming pain into art. Were I still taking pharmaceutical drugs I would be in a hospital or home, dependent, sleeping 12-17 hours a day, often unable to rise from the bed – having to crawl to bathroom or kitchen – as I did for so many wasted years, in agonizing pain.

You can help – or you can harm. It’s up to you. I am part Scottish, though Canadian. Make me proud of that ancestry.