

## **Psychiatria Danubina: promote transdisciplinary integrative approach in psychiatry and global mental health**

**Miro Jakovljević**

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Psychiatria Danubina has entered the 37th year of regular publication, promoting transdisciplinary integrative and person-centered psychiatry approach (Jakovljevic, 2008; Jakovljevic & Ostojic, 2015; Jakovljevic, 2024a) and concepts of public and global mental health and empathic civilization (Jakovljevic, 2016; Jakovljevic, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c). Psychiatry, as a rapidly evolving branch of medicine in our era of digital and artificial intelligence revolution, still requires significant improvement of its theory and practice promoting more precision and person-centered approach and emphasizing importance of family, public and global mental health (Shin et al., 2025). As current psychiatry is characterized by the most varied competing branches and very different views on causes, definitions, classifications, treatment and prevention of mental disorders, transdisciplinary integrative and comprehensive approach is of vital importance in its theory and practice. Psychiatria Danubina is a scientific and humanistic journal that encourages readers to think in trans-disciplinary contextual and systemic ways from different perspectives in order to recognize the truth (epistemic justice and intellectual honesty). Regrettably, knowledge in psychiatry has been often pursued against the truth. Considering the specific contributions of Psychiatria Danubina, we hope our journal will be included again in the Web of Science (WoS) after a two-year embargo. Our open-access, international, peer-reviewed scholarly journal is dedicated to pursuing a common foundation across deep divides and to promoting a trans-disciplinary integrative approach in psychiatry and other mental health disciplines worldwide.

### **MENTAL HEALTH IS ENDANGERED IN OUR RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD**

In our turbulent VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) world, we face unprecedented challenges of relentless competition, increasing divisions, and conflicts between cultures and civilizations with very detrimental consequences for mental health at individual, family, public and global levels (Jakovljevic, 2022b; Jakovljevic, 2024a). Conflicts and wars in many parts of the world,

syndemics, infodemics, accelerating climate changes, air, water and environment pollution, and deforestation are causing increasing instability, insecurity, unpredictability, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and vulnerability. These factors contribute to terrible suffering in an increasing number of people and various phenomena of new normality, pathological normality, normal pathology and an increasing incidence of various mental disorders and suffering (Jakovljevic, 2022; Jakovljevic et al., 2024a, 2024b). The growing global burden of mental disorders and slow progress in their prevention and treatment has prompted calls for more coherent, effective and efficient psychiatry and global mental health enlightenment. Our global world dominated by narcissistic, manic and paranoid psycho-cultures and characterized by competitive and confrontational ethics and many political and war conflicts across the globe, is broken and needs healing processes (Jakovljevic & Tomic, 2016; Jakovljevic, 2024c). Cultures of empathy, knowledge, solidarity, coherence, cooperation and unity are key factors for positive global mental health, long-term survival, and flourishing of humankind. The challenges of mental health problems in our VUCA world have highlighted the need for a new field called trans-disciplinary integrative psychiatry.

### **TRANS-DISCIPLINARY INTEGRATIVE PSYCHIATRY: WHERE SCIENCE MEETS MEDICINE, HUMANITY, SPIRITUALITY, VIRTUAL REALITY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

The crux of psychiatry lies in its scientific background and coherence, trans-disciplinarity, epistemic justice, clinical utility and therapeutic effectiveness, and promotion of public and global mental health (Jakovljevic, 2024a). Psychiatry is overwhelmed with varied ideas, rules, principles, techniques and methods, but lacks comprehensive scientific theories and optimal treatment outcomes (Gautam et al., 2024). Current psychiatry faces

unprecedented challenges as old theories and concepts about mind and mental disorders crumble and new ones emerge. The question of psychiatry's identity as a medical profession and its future has been the subject of highly controversial discussions (Jakovljevic, 2007, 2012). As treatment response remains a serious problem with approximately one third of patients with serious mental disorders being treatment-resistant, palliative psychiatry is emerging as a field (Yakubu et al., 2025). Trans-disciplinary integrative psychiatry aims to create an overarching concept that unifies all scientific and humanistic discipline dealing with the human mind, mental wellness, mental health and mental illness. The concept involves several essential elements:

- Comprehensive and complementary interdisciplinary approach enabling information and knowledge synergism in theory and practice
- Person (body/brain-mind-spirit) centered care, not only decrease illness, but also increase mental, social and spiritual wellness, resilience and salutogenesis
- Emphasis-based clinical relationship and therapeutic partnership
- Promoting human rights at individual, family, community and global level
- Mental healthcare continuity understanding
- Public and global mental health promotion

This concept is attractive as it offers all mental health scientists and practitioners a common language that may bridge epistemic gaps and facilitates the exchange of insights and paradigms across academic borders. It also offers more effective promotion of mental health and mental wellness and more effective and efficient treatment of mental disorders. Brain is place where biological, psychological, social and spiritual mechanisms meet each other and interact through neuronal networks. According to systems thinking, the genome operate within the context of the body, the body within the context of the person, the person within the context of family and society, and the family and society within the context of the Earth, the Earth within the context of the universe (see Jakovljevic & Jakovljevic, 2019). Psychiatry should move from a pluralistic aggregative and conflicting coexistence of the many disciplines and sub-disciplines to a coherent trans-disciplinary and comprehensive mental health science and practice (Jakovljevic, 2008; Jakovljevic & Jakovljevic, 2019). Artificial intelligence offers immense potential for advancing our understanding, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental disorders as well as promotion of mental health, mental readiness and resilience (Thakkar et al., 2024; Hatch et al., 2025).

## HEALING DIVIDED SELF OF PSYCHIATRY AND FRAGMENTARY IDENTITIES

Psychiatry today is facing unprecedented challenges, old theories and concepts about mind and mental disorders are crumbling, and new ones emerging. However, current psychiatry is still not a coherent field of science and clinical practice. Many of the psychiatric schools, branches and sub-disciplines, not only do not respect, but oppose and negate the most basic theoretical tenets and treatment principles of the others (Jakovljevic, 2007, 2008; Jakovljevic & Jakovljevic, 2019). It is quite understandable that there is a strong need for establishing synergistic, comprehensive and complementary frame of reference. At the conceptual level contemporary psychiatry can be divided in four approaches: dogmatic, eclectic, pluralist and integrationist (Ghaemi, 2003). In practice most psychiatrists are still, more or less, dogmatic claiming to be eclectic in theory. The culture of empathy and epistemic justice is essential for healing divided self of psychiatry and its fragmentary identities. The pluralist and integrationist concepts are the most challenging, particularly from the perspective of personalized medicine and person centered psychiatry. The concept of predictive, preventive, precision, person-centered and participatory medicine (5PMed) is a new emerging paradigm in psychiatry. 5PMed promotes the paradigmatic shift from delayed interventional to predictive and preemptive psychiatry, from blockbuster to person tailored psychiatry, from palliative to preventive psychiatry, and from illness to wellness. Trans-disciplinary integrative approach increases possibility of achieving information and knowledge synergism and epistemic justice.

## REPLICATION CRISIS AND A NEED FOR A NEW EPISTEMOLOGY IN PSYCHIATRY

Psychiatry has never been as scientific, effective and efficient as it does today, but it is not at the level as it could be. The replication and reproducibility crisis is commonly reconsidered in relation to medicine, psychology and psychiatry (see Ioannidis, 2005; Brailas, 2025). Epistemology is the philosophical discipline of the nature, origin, and limits of human knowledge. It is about how we know what we know about salutogenesis and mental health as well as about psychopathogenesis, mental disorders and its treatment. The origin, duration and legitimacy of knowledge in psychiatry and epistemic injustice (a wrong done to someone as a knower

or transmitter of knowledge) are hot topics. Epistemic injustice in psychiatry may be related to research, classification, diagnosis, consultation, and treatment (Kidd et al., 2025). Psychiatry fluctuates between science and pseudoscience, between brainless and mindless concepts remaking the replication crisis an important issue. Replication is a cornerstone of science and evidence-based medicine in psychiatry. Psychiatry is a multilevel discipline with different kinds of logic and explanations that are not well integrated. The validity and utility of diagnosis in psychiatry remain elusive, with confusion between mental health and mental ill-health (illness) as well as regarding the definition of mental disorders and their soft or hard boundaries, staging and stratification (McGorry et al., 2025). Public trust in psychiatry is very important, but psychiatry has commonly been criticized as science in question.

Modern psychiatry utilizes insights from the most varied disciplines such as biology, neuroscience, pharmacology, physics, anthropology, philosophy, ethics, axiology, psychology, sociology, salveology (lat. salveo: to be well, be in good health), informatics, etc. As biological, psychological, social and spiritual processes have complex interplays heterogeneity in mental disorders is a rule, so blockbuster and stratified medicine should be replaced by precision and person-centered medicine in psychiatry. Reconsiderations of causes and remedies have induced increasing interest in a new discipline, metapsychiatry or theoretical psychiatry (Jakovljevic & Jakovljevic, 2019).

## CULTURE OF EMPATHY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND MENTAL HEALTH

The protection of human rights is a long-neglected priority in health care in general and for people with mental illness in particular, it is timely and essential to act now (Gill & Sartorius, 2024). However, violations of human rights are associated with suffering and causes of mental disorders. Human rights' violations are commonly consequences of different types of epistemic injustice. Promoting a culture of empathy is the most important mental health and wellbeing for all approach. Culture of empathy places human rights principles and standards at the core of mental health promotion and treatment of mental disorders. In essence, the human rights-based approach is the process by which human rights are respected and practiced through a culture of empathy in private, family, social, professional, and political life by adherence to the underlying core values of fairness, respect, equality,

dignity and autonomy (FREDA) (Curtice & Exworthy, 2010). The FREDA concept involves:

- **Fairness:** Everyone's thought and attitude are always valued and respected;
- **Respect:** Everyone's life, property, rights, values, and beliefs are respectfully and objectively treated;
- **Equality:** Everyone has equal opportunities and is treated fairly and without discrimination;
- **Dignity:** Everyone's uniqueness is valued and treated with compassion and empathy;
- **Autonomy:** Everyone's freedom of thought, conscience, and right to make choices and have preferences is respected.

All human beings are born with human rights regardless of who they are, where they are from, or their social status, sex, race, nationality, religion, political orientation... Human rights are bi-directionally connected to mental health and culture of empathy. Promoting a human rights culture of empathy makes our lives healthier, more peaceful, meaningful, and fulfilling through dialogue, trust, and collaboration. The essence of successful treatment is empathizing cognitive-emotional-behavioral interaction with the patient evoking and expanding the patient's empathy, understanding, wisdom and creativity.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), DIGITAL PHENOTYPING AND DIGITAL THERAPIES IN PSYCHIATRY

Psychiatry faces challenges using artificial intelligence, machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL) in its theory and practice. AI involves a computer system or intelligent machine that can reason, learn, plan and exhibit behavior associated with biological intelligent systems, ML involves computer programming behavior that is not fully determined by code and can adapt itself to input data, while DL is a special variant of ML often modeled on artificial neural networks consisting of interconnected nodes with an input layer, hidden layers, and an output layer of artificial neurons (see Brunn et al., 2020). With help of the AI, ML, and DL psychiatry could better define the etiology and pathopsychophysiology, psychodynamics, and socio-cultural dynamics of mental disorders, as well as taxonomy, classification, diagnostics and early recognition, prevention and treatment of mental disorders and promotion of salutogenesis, mental health care and well-being (Stein et al., 2025). AI offers many benefits to clinical practice, treatment effectiveness and efficiency, research and professional development in psychiatry.

## TRANSDISCIPLINARY INTEGRATED PSYCHIATRY FOR THE BETTER WORLD, COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY AND GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH

Empathology, a new science of mutual wellbeing and understanding may be of utmost importance in creating a sustainable world and global mental health. According to Plato, “the highest form of knowledge is empathy, for it requires us to suspend our egos and live in another’s world”. A culture of empathy provides a promising framework for harmony and justice, well-being, and mental health for all that is realistic, holistic, and sustainable.

Our global world dominated by toxic narcissistic and paranoid toxic psychocultures and characterized with competitive and confronting ethics and many political and war conflicts across the globe, is broken and needs healing processes (Jakovljevic & Tomic, 2016; Jakovljevic et al., 2019). We have become accustomed to hearing that we live in a selfish society in which self-interested and self-sufficient individuals have forgotten to love one another and made money instead (Gerhardt, 2010). Bringing

together multiple disciplines and universities with knowledge sharing is the best way to provide a transdisciplinary integrative approach to our understanding the world and life and creating an empathic civilization, giving us better chance for surviving and well-being. The triad of empathy with reason and cooperation makes a great combination for empathic civilization. Global mental health today is a challenging discipline, “with specific departments established at several universities, textbooks and journals devoted to the subject” (Stein et al., 2022). It is to be hoped that the global mental health programs and their vision of helping our world will bear fruit (Sartorius, 2016).

## INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

In our VUCA world and the era of digital and artificial intelligence revolution, psychiatry and other mental health sciences are in urgent need of significant improvement and cooperation, promoting more precision, pre-emptive, personalized and person-centered approach and emphasizing family, public and global mental health.

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*Correspondence:*

Miro Jakovljević, Professor Emeritus  
School of Medicine, University of Zagreb  
Šalata 3, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia  
[jakovljevic.miro@yahoo.com](mailto:jakovljevic.miro@yahoo.com)

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