



In Genesis 3, God walks through the garden looking to have a conversation with Adam and Eve. This is a pattern of God's greatest desire—He searches for us because He wishes to dwell with us and for us to dwell with Him (Revelation 21). **He delights in conversing with us** and says in John 16:24, “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” And in Revelation 3:20 we read: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

- 6. While many bizarre treatments for mental afflictions were tried in ancient days, one treatment that *did* prove effective and is still used today is **talk therapy**. In what ways is **communication** a powerful healer for us?

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Over the centuries, millions of people have immigrated to the United States to pursue “the American Dream” of freedom and prosperity. Developments in technology, industry, and politics have made this dream a reality for many. The same goes for plenty of other countries around the world that have become democracies and financial powerhouses. These are societies built around “hard, honest work” and the ability to craft your own success. But while that ability is a treasured freedom, the way it has evolved has had some drawbacks.

- 7. What changes resulting from **industrialization** and **capitalism** have negatively affected our society and the mentally ill, specifically? What can we do as a society to promote freedom, advancement, and prosperity while not sacrificing **compassion** and our duty to each other?

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In the 18th and 19th centuries, scientists began to postulate that mental disease was **hereditary**. If one wanted to eliminate it, well, then the treatment was simple: don't let the mentally ill reproduce! Family trees

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and genealogies were consulted, resulting in the institutionalization of not just the patient who was ill, but also family members who, it was thought, might have contributed or also been affected. The later **eugenics** movement led to countless more crimes and horrors.

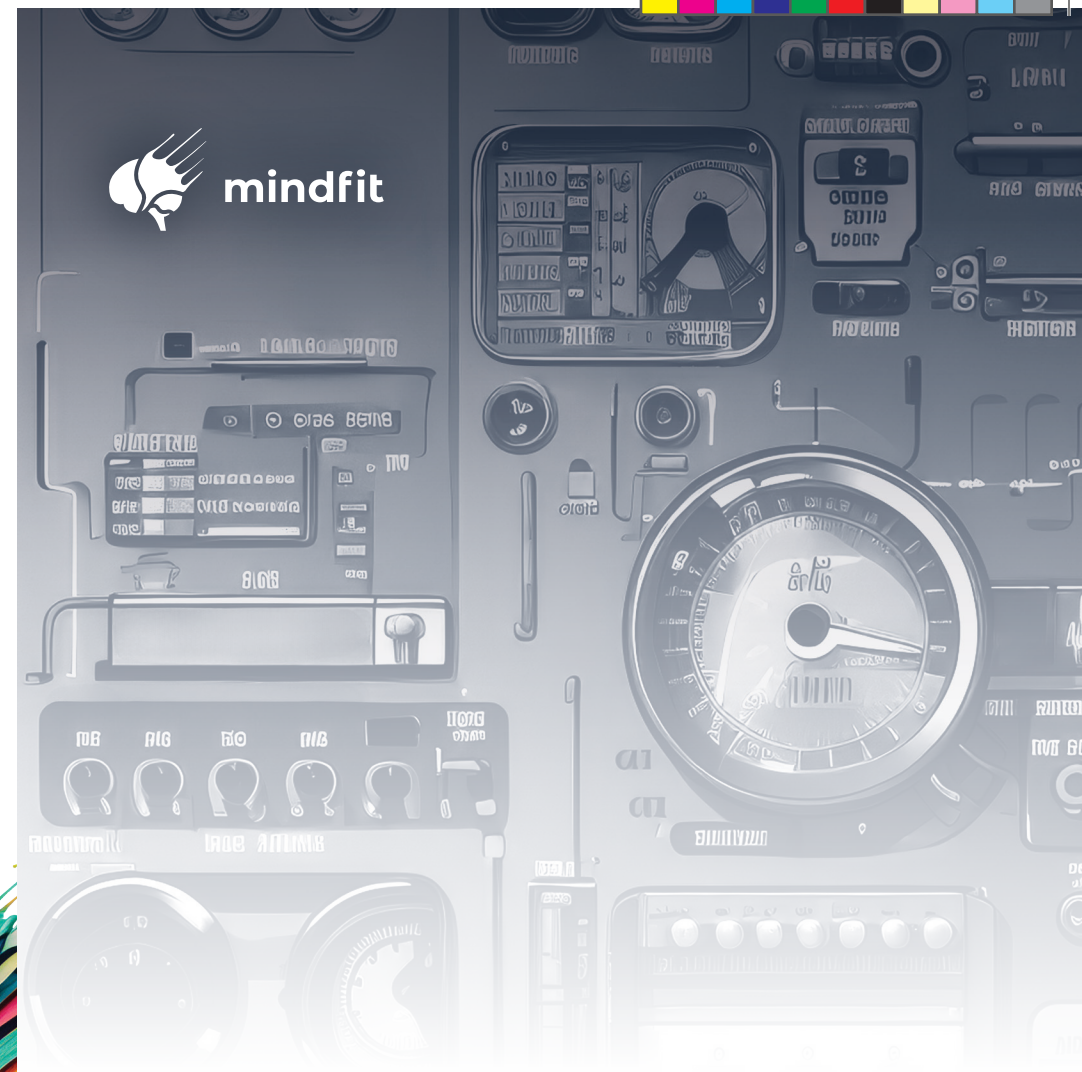
More recently, **brain scans** have garnered much attention. Maybe with enough scans, the thinking goes, we could see and understand patterns to help us not only treat what's *currently* going wrong with an individual, but also determine what could **potentially** go wrong.

- 8. What dangers are there in projecting someone's potential future actions and illnesses through modern methods such as scans—or even today's hot button topic, **artificial intelligence**?

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# Not Your Grandpa's Electroshock Therapy

## Guide 03

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### Study Guide 3

# Not Your Grandpa's Electroshock Therapy

The story of **Rosemary Kennedy** is tragic. Despite some intellectual challenges and later struggles with violent mood swings, she was far from needing a full-on *lobotomy* to help with her issues. But doctors insisted otherwise, and her father agreed. After her lobotomy, Rosemary was left severely injured and with a mental capacity of a small child. She could no longer participate in family activities. She would spend the rest of her life institutionalized.

It is believed that this terrible tragedy inspired her siblings to champion the fight against mental illness. President Kennedy initiated major changes to the ways Americans with disabilities were treated, promising to cut by half those currently institutionalized. Eunice Kennedy Shriver started a program that eventually became the Special Olympics. And Jean Kennedy Smith founded Very Special Arts (VSA) to promote creative arts opportunities for those with disabilities.

But back to Rosemary's father, Joseph Kennedy. It's reported that Rosemary's post-surgery plight was **kept a secret for many years** and that even her siblings didn't find out until 20 years later.

1. What role does **guilt** play in our actions and decisions as human beings?

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2. In today's society, there's a strong push to treat mental illness just as seriously—and humanely—as physical illness. Do you think that this focus on mental health is due more to increased awareness of the issues at hand, or more to guilt and a deep urge to atone for the many atrocities of past treatments? Does the exact motivation behind the change really matter?

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The lobotomy procedures of Dr. Freeman were violent and savage—totally out of place, one would think, in a reasonable, educated society. **However, history is filled with such abuses.** Think of the medieval church, deploying brutal torturers to “correct” those who didn't toe the line. Or the many scientists of modernity who forced unwilling test subjects to endure excruciating pain and sickness.

It has happened in every age. In John 11:49, the Bible records the words of the high priest Caiaphas while he and his comrades plotted to kill Jesus: “It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.” In Caiaphas' estimation, killing a man who had done nothing wrong—a man who had given evidence of being the divine *son of God*—was better than losing their place and position in society. In other words, he proposed **murder for the greater good.**

3. In what ways does this concept of “the greater good” sometimes lead us to do unthinkable things?

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Mark 5:1-5 records this story:

*“Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. And when [Jesus] had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an **unclean spirit**, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.”*

Although this story is truly about demon possession, the actions of the demoniac could have easily been a result of mental illness.

4. While not discounting the realities of spiritual forces at play in the world today, what dangers lie in **assuming** that an individual is **demon-possessed** and not mentally ill?

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5. Why are solutions such as pray more, study the Bible more, go to church more, etc., not always the best remedy for mental illness?

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