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## Preface

This now over 50 year-old man was hurt for life by the abuse of a Psychiatrist, a luminary of the “Surgical Treatment of Psychiatric Disorder” field at that time.

While these kinds of stories are examples that come from that dark past, patients were also helped by surgery, otherwise it would not have arrived as far as it did during those years, when it was even a reason for a Nobel prize, at a time when the psychiatrists did not see the brain structure and function in a living patient as we can see today. Therefore, surgery was performed based on the subjective decision of a doctor, influenced by the desire of mal-intentioned people (this 12-year-old boy’s story exemplifies this influence), by doctors’ vanity and greediness, and by the financial pressure of public administrators dealing with the burden of overcrowded psychiatric hospitals. Unfortunately, the field was victim of the later reasons, since the most important tool supporting a surgical indication and precision was not available at that time, i.e., the visualization of the diseased brain and its functioning.

Presented in the pages of this textbook, written by specialists in Psychiatry, Neurosurgery, Neurology, Neuroanatomy, Neuroradiology, and Ethics, the reader will decide by himself if he is prepared to assume the heavy responsibility to help patients suffering from the most terrible suffering that a human can suffer, the suffering of the mind. They are not understood by their family members and society, and are therefore discriminated and doped so they do not participate and do not disturb normal lives. They become depressed to a point of not having the drive to work, date, and enjoy life. This leads to a very high addiction and suicidal rate, so high that it accounts as one of the diseases that kills most humans, close to the death rate of cancer, stroke, or heart disease. It also represents a terrible economical burden to society on jobs loss, absenteeism, and expenses with the care for these patients.

The first three chapters of the book bring the reader updated with the neuroanatomy and pathophysiology of the Psychiatric Disorders based on modern imaging, including connectivity and functional changes in specific areas of the brain. Following, come three chapters bringing lessons learned from the past, when the poor practice of this important field reigned and no rules existed. The ways lesions were made in the brain and the consequences of these lesions are stressed. These historical lessons are employed to discuss

the ethical meanders of the Psychiatric Surgery practice. Once these issues are settled, the patients are prepared for surgery in a chapter dedicated to preoperative issues. At this point the reader is ready to learn and judge applications of novel techniques for modifying brain function, comparing them to the older approaches used for specific diseases. Further, applications in development, expanding the horizons of the field, are presented in the last six chapters.

This book is to be seen as an update of anatomical, ethical, and indications of “Surgery for Psychiatric Disease,” opening the mind of the reader to the future of this promising field. It is expected that the reader acquire understanding of the surgical anatomy, the surgical techniques at hand, and ethical judgment of the power of this field, with the knowledge that this practice is in frank evolution and therefore controversial.



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