

Book Club at Empowerment Initiatives: Critique of the DSM-5 – by Allen Frances

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is published by the American Psychiatric Association and provides a common language and standard criteria for the classification of mental disorders. It is used by clinicians, researchers, psychiatric drug regulation agencies, health insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, and policy makers. The DSM provides legal, medical, and ethical justification for physicians to diagnose and treat, judges to incarcerate, and insurance companies to pay – or not. There have been five revisions since it was published in 1952.

The DSM-5 has generated controversy right from the beginning:

- It would dramatically raise the numbers of people with mental disorders, thru new diagnosis that would be extremely common in the general population
- Children would be exposed to potentially dangerous medication side effects in larger numbers and at earlier ages than ever before
- Some new diagnostic criteria are not very reliable, and physicians will disagree about diagnosis, leading to inconsistent healthcare
- And much more...



Every Thursday from 3:30p to 5p

At [Empowerment Initiatives](#),

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Bus lines: #14 & #75

If you need more information, contact:

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Our Book Club comes from the unique perspective of people with a lived experience of mental health issues. Our facilitators are Dianne James and David Green, who have both worked in the mental health field, and are persons with that lived experience.

Allen Frances was the chair of the DSM-IV Task Force and of the department of psychiatry at Duke University School of Medicine. He has been a leader in the effort to raise concerns about the flawed process of the development of the DSM-5, and the bad effects it can have on mental health care. In a series of articles in Psychiatric Times, he explores these issues.

Now, we invite you to join the conversation! Everyone is welcome – don't worry about whether you feel the material is too challenging – we are all here to learn together, and have the opportunity to empower ourselves both with the information in these articles, and also the thoughts of our fellow book club members.

The articles we will be discussing are included in the document available by [Clicking Here](#).