

# Psychiatry Grand Rounds

WCM Department of Psychiatry  
Psychology CE Announcement  
Gary Spero Memorial Lecture

## Mental Health for the Anthropocene... Can we thrive?

Gary Belkin, MD, PHD, MPH  
Director, Billion Minds Project at Columbia University  
Chair, COP<sup>2</sup> (cop2.org)

Wednesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023  
11:00am – 12:30pm  
<https://weillcornell.zoom.us/j/92812036154>  
Meeting ID: 928 1203 6154  
Password: 12345

1.5 CE credit available to WCM Department of Psychiatry full time and voluntary faculty Psychologists and Social Workers who sign in with their full name, attend the majority of the lecture and complete a survey which will be emailed following the completion of the lecture. Note the survey must be completed within 30 days of the lecture. Please contact Stephanie Harper at sth4009@med.cornell.edu for additional CE information

#### SPEAKER DISCLOSURE:

Dr. Belkin has no relevant financial relationship(s) with ineligible companies to disclose and DOES NOT INTEND to discuss off-label or investigational use of products or services.

Dr. Gary Belkin is a psychiatrist who approaches mental health as a building block of social policy and progress. He recently founded Billion Minds as a “think-action tank.” The intention of Billion Minds is to link mental health to problems of great scale, specifically to the climate crisis, and to safeguarding sustainable societies through a humane social climate. COP<sup>2</sup> was one outcome of that work—a global network aligned about converging growing activity and learning on climate-psychological resilience connections and putting them to global scale. An initial effort from that is to produce an implementation Roadmap for the UNFCCC [Race to Resilience](#) to incorporate the goal of building capacity to promote those supports to 4 billion people by 2030. Dr. Belkin is also the former Executive Deputy Commissioner in the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene where he led the Division of Mental Hygiene and its development and implementation of the innovative NYC-wide public mental health initiative, *ThriveNYC*. Before joining city government, he was Medical Director for Behavioral Health across the Health and Hospitals Corporation of the City of New York and served as Founding Editor in Chief of the open access journal *Global Mental Health*. As Director of the NYU Program in Global Mental Health, Dr. Belkin partnered with other groups globally to test and scale community-led models of mental health promotion and access in less resourced countries that are now widely used. A graduate of Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, where he also earned his undergraduate degree, Dr. Belkin earned his MPH at Harvard School of Public Health and a doctorate in the Department of the History of Science at Harvard University.

#### Abstract:

Mental health systems and policies need to be reframed to nurture social health and collective efficacy. How can we shift skills into the hands of community to build capacity, nurture wellbeing and inter-community accountability, and subsequently increase social cohesion, emotional wellness, participatory action, and communal learning needed to tackle the great problems facing us, especially the ever-accelerating reality of environmental collapse. There is a rich platform of experience and practice to build on to substantively pursue that aim. This presentation will review some of that platform, and especially argues that heading in these directions ultimately underscores the need to re-think the purposes of democracy.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Summarize the evidence base behind novel approaches to community mental health.
2. Outline the processes by which wellbeing science and Global Mental Health innovation advances multiple social outcomes and democratic practice.
3. Discuss the implications of psychological resilience to address climate change and climate change psychological impacts.

#### References:

1. Belkin, G. S., & McCray, C. I. (2019). ThriveNYC: delivering on mental health. *American Journal of Public Health, 109*(S3), S156–S163. <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2019.305040>
2. Belkin, G. S. (2020). A path for psychiatry to thrive. *Psychiatric Services, 71*(8), 852–854. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201900105>
3. Belkin, G. S., Appleton, S. G., & Langlois, K. (2021). Reimagining mental health systems post COVID-19. *The Lancet Planetary Health, 5*(4), e181–e182. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2542-5196\(21\)00037-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2542-5196(21)00037-1)
4. Chibanda, D., Weiss, H. A., Verhey, R., Simms, V., Munjoma, R., Rusakaniko, S., Chingono, A., Munetsi, E., Bere, T., Manda, E., Abas, M., & Araya, R. (2016). Effect of a primary care-based psychological intervention on symptoms of common mental disorders in Zimbabwe. *JAMA, 316*(24), 2618. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2016.19102>
5. Lawrance, E., Thompson, R., Vay, J. N. L., Page, L., & Jennings, N. (2022). The impact of climate change on mental health and emotional wellbeing: a narrative review of current evidence, and its implications. *International Review of Psychiatry, 34*(5), 443–498. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540261.2022.2128725>