

bipolar disease. The issue, however, is quite complicated. Recall that several of the women I have presented had a family history of bipolar disease. Was their bipolar disease a product of genetics or of malnurture? We don't really know, but it is sure worth thinking about.

Now, what is the relationship of childhood trauma to pain? Do we have any evidence that the two are related? Yes, at a statistical level, the evidence is most impressive. Some 50 percent of painful women (and a lot of men also) that I see carry the heritage of childhood abuse, and I do not believe the relationship can be ignored.

Before closing this chapter, I want to present the story of someone I met only once and briefly at that. It was at a book signing in a neighboring state. I had a good crowd, and the discussion was spirited. A man, and I would put his age about forty, sat on the back row but involved himself with some intensity in the conversation. I knew right away that he had read my book, and his comments suggested strongly that he was challenging my thesis that chronic pain is a disease of the mind. He told the group that his problem was interstitial cystitis, or inflammation of the bladder. He had with him photographs of his bladder obtained during a urologic procedure. They showed ulceration and hemorrhage throughout the bladder wall. He passed the photographs around and recounted to the group that his suffering dated many years and that he had to leave a six-figure income with a manufacturing company because of his bladder pain. He was telling me and the group that his pain was coming from his bladder and not from his mind. The photographs showing ulcers and hemorrhage were graphic testimony to that fact.

I elected to not pursue the issue or to ask him, in the presence of others, any potentially embarrassing questions. I only offered my sympathy and told him that he was not alone, that I had seen many people whose lives had been destroyed by chronic pain.

At the conclusion of the discussion, he came forward and asked that I sign his book, which I did. He thanked me, looked me in the eye, and as his eyes reddened, he whispered to me, "He was a member of my father's congregation." And then he turned and left.