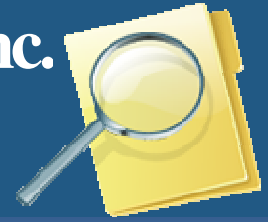


Newsletter issued by Forensic Nursing, Inc. At Your Service



November 2007



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“ It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”

Aristotle

EXTERNAL INCENTIVES

What is the origin of *Compensation Neurosis?*

In 1879 compensation laws were established in Prussia due to numerous railroad construction injuries.

Following compensation implementation, railway management and medical staff noted a dramatic increase in invalidism following apparently *minor injuries*. These injuries were so numerous that they became known as railway spine injuries. The medical community became uncertain and skeptical to this novel and vague disability.

In response, three causal factors were proposed in the late 1800's to account for this puzzling presentation.

These factors included:

1) undiagnosed neurological forces
2) psychological reactivity
3) malingering. Consequently, the term *compensation neurosis* was coined to describe the potential power of an *external* incentive. Today, 128 years later, clinicians continue to struggle with identical causal considerations for those individuals who present with *unresolved minor injuries*.

What is malingering?

“The *conscious fabrication or exaggeration* of physical or psychological symptoms *as motivated by external incentive*. It is important to keep in mind that effective malingering is a developed skill often accompanied by high intelligence. As with any other talent, there are both skillful and inadequate malingerers. Inadequate malingerers are fairly easy to detect because they have a tendency to exaggerate symptoms. Whereas, accomplished malingerers are extremely difficult to identify.”

MAXIM: To accentuate *your detection of potential malingerers*, you must *construct a case* by being familiar with: *1) the mechanism of injury* *2) the injury-severity indicators* and *3) the client's pre-injury integrity*. Symptom validity testing during psychiatric examination is also beneficial. [Continuing Care-1999].

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Your thoughts and comments are welcome!