

June 24, 1965

Mr. Irwin Schwartz  
New York Medical College  
5th Avenue at 106th Street  
New York, New York 10029

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

I enjoyed my visit on Monday with your staff, and indeed the only disturbing note was the news that you were having some difficulties with the building on 105th Street.

During the day I met with Dr. Sharoff and his associates, Drs. Sorvino, Schusdek and Major. The discussion centered about the two principal research programs planned by Dr. Freedman—blocking of heroin addiction by cyclazocine and methadone. Dr. Sharoff and his associates have had some unusual results in their first group of nine patients.

There is need for replication, and for some additional studies to complement the clinical observations. Three types of supporting studies were discussed: biochemical examinations for re-exposure to heroin, psychological tests for the evaluation of personality of addicts who may or may not respond to such treatment and neurophysiological studies to measure the duration of blocking action. Dr. Sharoff and his staff are well equipped to carry out the second and third parts of these ancillary programs but will probably need better supervision for the biochemistry. It seems to me that their experience is sufficient, if codified, to warrant the planning of an application to NIH or to other sources for support with which you may be acquainted. I left Dr. Sharoff with the recommendation that his associates write up each of the nine cases in a short (2 page) summary and that I would be pleased to review these.

Dr. Sharoff invited me to sit in on his staff meeting, following which I lectured on the subject "EEG in Psychiatry." During lunch with Drs. Schneck, Loewenkopf, Sharoff and Sorvino, we continued to discuss the drug addiction problem.

Dr. Sorvino presented the model of establishing an EEG laboratory for clinical investigation. I indicated that it was probably difficult to establish a second clinical EEG laboratory at Metropolitan Hospital, but that a research laboratory dedicated to the problems of the drug addict or to the other projects of the department could probably obtain support. It became clear that Dr. Sorvino was very much interested in carrying our neurophysiological studies in drug addicts. To assist him, I gave him some reprints of work that might be helpful to him. I would like very much to continue our discussion at the next meeting.

Dr. Schneck discussed his interest in ECT. At an earlier visit he seemed interested in comparing Indoklon convulsions with electrical convulsions. After reading some comparative literature and in the course of our discussion he seemed to focus more on studies of the mode of action of ECT. After describing my experiences at Hillside and the corroborating studies of others, we seemed to agree that a predictive study of the ECT process could be undertaken at Metropolitan. I indicated that two types of data would be necessary, psychological tests and neurophysiological indices. It was apparent that if Dr. Sorvino established a research EEG laboratory, Dr. Schneck could obtain the necessary EEG data. For the psychological test data, however, he would probably need the collaboration of a clinical or experimental psychologist. He suggested that he arrange for the three of us to meet during my next visit. I also promised to send him some literature which I am doing under separate cover.

Finally, I spent some time with Dr. Loewenkopf. We discussed his program of drug evaluation in the out patient department. As he described his interests it seems that he is less interested in the testing of new compounds than in developing predictors for the application of the drugs. We discussed the Downstate Psychopharmacology Program and also some of the behavioral typology approaches developed at Hillside. Since Dr. Sorvino already had the references from Dr. Overall, I suggested that he and Dr. Sorvino get together. Since I know Dr. Engelhardt well, I indicated that I would write to him and obtain some of his reprints. I also suggested that I would send Dr. Loewenkopf some of those from Hillside and that we should be able to continue this dialogue after his vacation.

Mr. Irwin Schwartz

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I am impressed with the enthusiasm of your staff and believe that a number of projects can be stimulated. It may be advisable for me to return to New York in mid-July, to meet with some of these staff members and any others that you would care to recommend. The date is probably irrelevant and I can suit your convenience on any Monday or Friday.

I had the enclosed forms with me but decided to send them to you personally as Dr. Freedman had requested.

I am also enclosing a statement of my expenses for this trip as well as a receipt for the air transportation.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.  
Professor of Psychiatry

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enclosures

TO: DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY  
NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

Expenses in consultation and lecture June 20/21, 1965:

Air Transportation	\$108.00
Ground Transportation	8.00
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Total	\$116.00