



**mhca's e-Newsletter**

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## Mental Health in a Time of Templosion

*A guest article by Future Hunters Erica Orange & Jared Weiner*

Mental illness is on the rise all over the world with much of it being clinically under- and undiagnosed. But rising in parallel is a generalized stress and anxiety which is permeating much of our modern culture. We are swimming in a growing sea of tension, worry and unease.

One of the reasons behind this is the rate of change. Change has always been a constant, but now it is happening faster than ever before. Very large things are happening in increasingly compressed amounts of time, and the impacts of this acceleration will be felt everywhere. We call this effect “templosion” – or the implosion of the biggest of events happening in shorter and shorter periods of time.

Time is something we all value. And time has become our greatest asset and our greatest luxury. It's something we continually seek to amplify, manipulate, and leverage. Time is the new currency. Consequently, the optimization of time itself will likely be the single most important value proposition for any organization in the future.

And we see the effect of templosion playing out in myriad ways. Here are just a few:

- **Virtual Reality:** We are living in a time when the boundaries between what is real and what is virtual are starting to blur. VR – which we define as tricking the brain into believing it is someplace else, doing something else, in real time – is changing our notion of time. This could have a profound affect on mental health care and be a potential gamechanger for the industry.
  - Empathy: VR is being used to enhance empathy, and can, through augmented storytelling, profoundly change the viewer’s perspectives as the narratives unfold. VR has already proved useful in treating phobias and PTSD. But what if you could almost literally walk in someone else’s shoes? What would that do to combat stress?
  - Healing: “Robots for Good” is printing a life-size humanoid robot that strolls around London Zoo, all under the control of a child back at the hospital. The robot is hooked up to an Oculus Rift VR headset, so children can feel like they’re interacting with the animals. Eventually, the team envisions them being put in nursing homes for the elderly.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Through affective computing – machines that can interpret, respond, and simulate human emotion – we are not only building the digital equivalent of human emotional intelligence, but we are quickly reaching a new level of emotional transparency. But having advanced AI recognize human feelings, and express the appropriate feelings in return, is a challenge. WoeBot, a chatbot therapist, is the first iteration of this. And it’s not just that computers can express feelings, it’s when and how they do so. Increasingly, we may defer to AI to monitor, shape, visualize and define our emotional experiences for us.
- **Gen Z aka Cybrids:** Cybrids (“Cyber Hybrids”) is our term for Generation Z – those under the age of 20 – because they have a symbiotic relationship with technology from the time they are born. This generation is distinctly different than millennials – and other preceding generations – particularly because Cybrids have different neural wiring. We are, in fact, growing different brains because of technological exposure, which will undoubtedly lead to new understandings around mental health and wellbeing.

Templosion is upending everything we thought we knew and is creating greater uncertainty. But it is also creating greater opportunities. In this ever-evolving ecosystem, more people may seek out environments that are considered fun or pleasurable, and adding a touch of playfulness into any experience, both in the physical and digital worlds, can be the secret to increasing engagement, decreasing stress and forging deeper human connections.

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**The Future Hunters** provided a thought provoking presentation during our Spring Conference in Savannah this month. You can access *The Future Begins Now* presentation via the **mhca** Spring Conference app at <http://my.yapp.us/MHCA2018MAY>.

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