

## Why do so many physicians struggle to recognize catatonia?

**Dr. Fricchione:**

So for me as a doctor, when I think about why it's so hard for me to help patients with chronic pain, if I didn't know what I just said, it would perplex me and it perplexes a lot of doctors who don't know. They'll use epithets to talk about patients who are in chronic pain. "Oh, that person's a crock or is just a malingerer. They're lazy," this kind of thing. They don't realize that that area of the brain, which houses the receptors and the neuronal material, that that is responsible for physical pain. So if we break a leg or if we perf an ulcer, or if we have a heart attack, we have to affect neurons in the anterior cingulate in order to feel it. But we also need to know that social rejection, pain, emotional pain is housed right next to it in the anterior cingulate.

This makes our job as physicians awful, because we're continually thinking, "What's physically wrong with this person that they're having this tremendous pain?"