

From the editor

**Wanted: 'Digitalis for the mind'**

I'm suffering from congestive work failure. I'm sure you understand, as many of you probably are suffering from it, too, as you struggle to keep up with your work.

When I studied cardiovascular physiology in medical school, I learned about the Starling curve. Increasing work increases cardiac muscle efficiency up to a point, after which adding more work decreases cardiac output and leads to congestive heart failure. Miraculously, it seems, digitalis helps the failing heart regain its efficiency.

Congestive work failure also follows a Starling curve. I work more efficiently as my workload increases up to a point, after which more work makes me less efficient. As I fall behind and miss deadlines, I become anxious and unhappy just thinking about all the work I have to do. So I go into work avoidance—going out for coffee, surfing the Internet, or even reading journals—to escape from thinking about how far behind I am. Of course, avoiding my work puts me even further behind.

Someday I hope the pharmaceutical industry invents a “digitalis for the mind” to treat my condition. Meanwhile, reading CURRENT PSYCHIATRY is the best treatment I know. It helps me to efficiently keep up with new developments in clinical practice—and sometimes provides a medium to productively channel my work avoidance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Hillard'.

Randy Hillard, MD