



**Henry A. Nasrallah, MD**  
Editor-in-Chief

**Might it resolve  
to spend far more  
money on innovative  
research and  
development than  
on marketing?**

# What if ... A drug company's New Year's resolutions

**Making New Year's resolutions is a time-honored tradition. Whether we resolve to lose a few pounds, exercise regularly, or quit a harmful habit, we all partake in self-improvement as the new year dawns.**

**What would a large corporation resolve to do in the new year? We can only imagine, but a corporation that discovers and manufactures CNS pharmaceuticals might resolve to:**

1. **Test new drugs** in patients who resemble "real world" patients, not just in patients with no medical problems, no substance abuse, and no history of treatment resistance.
2. **Develop drugs** with new mechanisms, not just another "me too" agent.
3. **Publish all data** (positive and negative), not just favorable results.
4. **Develop drugs for children**, rather than following the tradition of developing drugs for adults and then waiting many years (during which practitioners use those drugs off-label in children) before finally conducting trials to secure FDA approval of pediatric indications.
5. **Conduct studies** to guide practitioners about the safety of new drugs in pregnant women with mental illness.
6. **Spend far more money** on innovative research and development than on marketing.
7. **Kick the habit** of direct-to-consumer marketing, so that physicians can prescribe the best agent in their clinical judgment, not the drug the patient demands because she saw it on TV.
8. **Accelerate** the discovery of pharmacogenomic biomarkers to help match drug and patient, maximize efficacy, and minimize serious side effects.
9. **Be more transparent** about the fact that many clinical trials are being conducted in developing countries because U.S.-based trials have become too expensive and pose other "disadvantages" (such as a higher placebo response rate and more side effect complaints).
10. **Establish** mutually beneficial partnerships with the National Institutes

To comment on this editorial or other topics of interest, contact Dr. Nasrallah at [henry.nasrallah@currentpsychiatry.com](mailto:henry.nasrallah@currentpsychiatry.com) or visit [CurrentPsychiatry.com](http://CurrentPsychiatry.com) and click on the "Contact Us" link.



of Health and academic research institutes to translate neurobiological discoveries into new and physiology-driven pharmacotherapeutic interventions.

11. **Pool grants with competitors** so that continuing medical education (CME) programs are no longer sponsored by a single company and are designed without real or perceived influence by an industry sponsor.
12. **Better inform the public** about the pharmaceutical industry's positive aspects, such as being the only U.S. industry that: a) develops new medications for disabling psychiatric disorders; b) donates billions of dollars worth of drug samples to indigent or uninsured community patients; and c) provides hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs for scientists, managers, and sales representatives.
13. **Remind the world** that hundreds of disabling and fatal diseases still have no available treatments, and a huge financial investment and years of basic and clinic research are needed to discover the needed treatments for them.

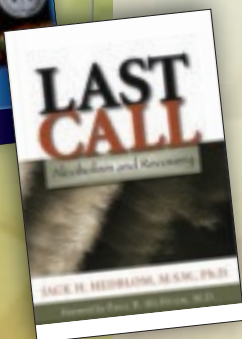
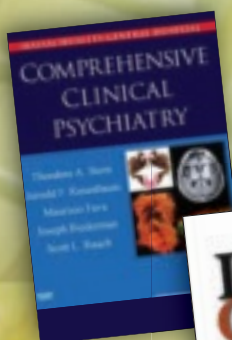
14. **Justify the high cost** of new drugs by demonstrating how profits are ploughed into discovering new drugs (in other words, show convincingly that the pharmaceutical industry works for the public good, not just for shareholders).

15. **Stop buying lunches** for doctors who attend speaker programs, and instead make donations to their designated charities.

I cannot vouch that this fictional account of a pharmaceutical company's New Year's resolutions reflects reality. But if it does, I wonder if such resolutions—like those of almost all of us—would falter soon after the new year starts. . . .



Henry A. Nasrallah, MD  
Editor-in-Chief



# Book Byte

40 categories of  
books available

## This month's featured selections:

- ✓ Massachusetts General Hospital  
Comprehensive Clinical Psychiatry
- ✓ Last Call:  
Alcoholism and Recovery

Visit [CurrentPsychiatry.com](http://CurrentPsychiatry.com) for information or to purchase

**Review a "Book Byte" selection.** Visit Book Byte at [CurrentPsychiatry.com](http://CurrentPsychiatry.com). Click on the "Tell us what you think" link by the book you wish to review