

WWDC

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editorial

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EDITORIAL #1
Happiness is a Pink Pill

Broadcast of this editorial by WWDC President Ben Strouse began June 22, 1965. We welcome comments.

Doctors have long known that with some patients all you have to do is hand them a prescription and say, "This will make you feel better." Even if the prescription contains only sugar, these patients do feel better. Such is the power of a pill -- any pill.

Now two Johns Hopkins psychiatrists have found it's not even necessary to imply the pill contains medicine.

They handed out bottles of pink capsules to 15 ailing men and women who came to their clinic, telling them to take one three times a day for a week. The patients were told the truth about the pills. They contained only sugar. The doctors explained that a sugar pill is a pill with no medicine in it at all.

A week later 14 of the 15 came back saying "those pills really helped me." Some said they were the most effective medicine they'd ever had. Six of the 14 believed the doctors were giving them a real drug but wanted them to think it was sugar. The other eight believed they were taking sugar pills. Regardless, all 14 were improved.

Only one patient did not improve. She quit taking the capsules when her spoil-sport husband accused her of wasting money on sugar pills.

What does it all mean? Well, if you're tired of tranquilizers, tell your doctor to please pass the sugar.