**Discussion Questions for Chapter 9: Mental Health**

Discussion Question #1

Given the fact that social workers are very interested in advocating for the rights of the mentally ill, but deinstitutionalization has sometimes led to greater homelessness and a lack of a support system for clients discharged from inpatient mental health treatment programs, what is the proper stance for social workers to take on the deinstutionalization movement as a whole? Is it possible to have an overall stance, or must it be on a case-by-case basis?

Discussion Question #2

Prescriptions for psychotropic medications have proliferated in America over the last few decades, particularly in the 21st century. What factors do you think are behind the meteoric rise in prescriptions for antidepressants and other psychotropic drugs?

Discussion Question #3

Most prescriptions for psychotropic medications are given out by people’s primary care physicians (family doctors) rather than psychiatrists. What are the reasons for this? Is this good? Bad? Both?

Discussion Question #4

Should parents’ mental health be a consideration in custody cases? If a parent has a significant/severe mental disorder but his/her children are not being neglected or abused, should the system be able to remove those children based on concerns about the potential future danger they may encounter if the parent’s mental state worsens? For example, suppose a single father has a significant cocaine addiction, but to this point, his 4-year-old daughter remains adequately nourished and shows no signs of abuse. The father refuses to go into treatment. Can the state remove his daughter based on concerns about the father’s condition?