

LEVITATION

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As if all this weren't enough, some psychologists say that even on a therapeutic level, TM may not bode well. "People with paranoia or schizophrenia may find that meditation exacerbates those preexisting problems, releasing suppressed conflict that the individual may not be able to address," says Deanne Shapiro, psychiatrist and meditation expert at the University of California at Irvine. "This could cause a further loosening of their grip on reality."

Indeed, in January 1987 a jury awarded Robert Kropinski, a former TM-Sidhi meditator, \$137,890 for psychological damage incurred during MIU's intensive meditation. "I'd have severe memory loss, violent physical shaking, screaming in strange tongues, and suicidal flashes," says Kropinski, who now lives in Philadelphia. "My instructors said I was just unstressing." Two psychiatrists, however, testified that Kropinski would need long-term counseling. (The case has been appealed; a final decision is pending.)

William Goldstein, MIU's legal counsel, says it's important to keep the case in perspective. In today's litigious atmosphere, he wrote in a letter, it's striking how few "Kropinskis" there are. "This is especially significant in light of the hundreds of thousands of responsible citizens who

have learned the TM and TM-Sidhi programs."

Yet six similar lawsuits were settled out of court. And other "Kropinskis" may soon come to light—three lawsuits much like his are pending right now. Ed Kelly, who served as county attorney in Fairfield from 1971 to 1983, says that during that time, he had to involuntarily commit up to 20 MIU students. What surprised him wasn't the number of cases but their behavior. One student insisted he was receiving messages from space. Another kept running naked through the cafeteria. Another thrashed so violently that he had to be put in a strait-jacket for his court appearance.