

Schizophrenia explained by a schizophrenic scientist

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I am a scientist with the diagnosis of schizophrenia since 2002, and a PhD since 2010. Due to my illness, I have researched schizophrenia for more than a decade and investigated it with testing the results against myself. I have come to a number of accepted, and a number of radically new conclusions:

My understanding of why psychoses happen: All my psychotic breaks happened when political crisis hit, including unemployment and social breakups and deaths (trauma). And then spirit interfered (my voices) to help or harm me, depending on if I had managed well and been right, or wrong and been mean.

Pre-illness: Born six weeks early, probably due to self-starvation of my mother (I guess, the way I know her), child refugee at 12, afterwards dysfunctional family, became a delinquent, bulimic youth, but recovered. Good at school and highly intelligent.

First Episode: 2002, after 9/11, caused by 9/11 trauma, unemployment, social isolation, harsh financial problems and deaths around me (spiritual channeling experience, I did nothing wrong).

Second Episode: 2008, caused by a relationship breakup and migration to the UK and the experience of massive sexual violence (angry spirit voices. I had argued far too aggressively with my partner, I guess.)

Worst Episode: since around 2018, caused by Brexit, political chaos, jobloss, loss of friends (mixed symptoms, I got into a massive argument with my mother about forced pregnancy, even if I am already sterilised. But I also became a better – more spiritual - person otherwise. This resulted in mixed symptoms, angry and nice voices).

What I think helps:

1. Medications help reducing the worst symptoms, but don't take them away completely. They should not be used as the only treatment option. For me personally, I even hear voices (the most common symptom of schizophrenia) on a very high level of two mainstream medications. In addition, these medications have resulted in massive weight gain and physical lethargy, which both are health risks in it-self.
2. Vitamins (orthomolecular medicine according to Abram Hoffer) have some benefits that should be respected: vitamin C protects somewhat against cancer, and I am personal proof that vitamin therapy can be useful, because I managed to become the only living scientist with a PhD and with 6 serious books on world politics published and more than 12 years successful work experience at a British University on a regime of nearly only orthomolecular medicine, combined with 2mg Risperidone

(which is below the normal treatment amount of this mainstream medicine).

3. A healthy lifestyle is key to improve longevity. Patients with schizophrenia have a 10 to 20 years reduced life expectancy. A healthy vegetarian or even vegan diet plus avoidance of drugs and alcohol and avoidance of tobacco (nicotine replacement therapy is the best option if this cannot be achieved) and of course avoidance of drugs can increase the lifespan for about 10 years and hence undo the loss in life expectancy.
4. Avoidance of Isolation. Isolation is a key factor for suicide. People with schizophrenia are 10 times more likely to die from suicide than healthy people. According to Emile Durkheim and my own experience, suicide happens especially in complete isolation. Partnered, married, or well included people have a far better protection against suicide. I can testify to this from my own experience with 2 suicide attempts, which happened both in isolation and single life. Isolation can be countered with fighting the stigma of schizophrenia. This can be done by the patients themselves, with learning to become more loving people. It can also be done by the media and other organizations with anti-stigma campaigns.
5. Avoidance of harsh poverty. Poverty contributes massively to the development of schizophrenia (I know of no case in my relations that were wealthy and became schizophrenic! Most schizophrenics are financially in dire straits) and contributes to the much lower life expectancy, I guess. Most schizophrenics live on benefits and are unemployed, this is extremely common. Some even say most homeless people are schizophrenic. This is a predictor for drug abuse and an unhealthy lifestyle. One simply does not manage to live very healthy when there is no money to afford a gym or nice healthy food. Desperate poverty might also contribute to suicide attempts. This is a very important, completely ignored, point in the literature about schizophrenia. The social economics of schizophrenia mean that patients will die earlier because they are pushed into the isolated, impoverished margins of society. That poverty contributes to earlier death generally is known. If this ever could be countered, we would probably see a massive improvement of our treatment outcomes. At the brief times when I was happily employed and economically lucky, I rarely needed to see a psychiatrist, was able to manage on a very low level of medication, had no suicide attempts, did not smoke nor abuse alcohol, and had a very healthy lifestyle and a very healthy body. My first episode, and my worst (most recent) episode, happened in times of economic and political crisis, and jobloss and social breakup of relationships (9/11 and Brexit, both accompanied by unemployment, and with loss of relationships, 9/11 accompanied with deaths in my close relationships). The common poverty of people with schizophrenia could be countered by special employment support campaigns. This has been achieved for people with autism. People with autism are especially sought for certain jobs and get special treatment. Something similar should be developed for people with schizophrenia.

6. Spirituality/ Love helps becoming a better person and (not allowed in academic talk?) be allowed to ask for God's help and protection. I believe it does work, if you are meaning it seriously. I became an ever more spiritual person over the years, and I would say it served me well: I found an amazing truly loving partner who can and does support me and have achieved recognition in academic circles, especially as a unique case of schizophrenic success, and I managed to write some really deep books about world peace and have made quite a large amount of friends.
7. Music is an incredibly simple, cheap and easily and widely affordable tool to counter the symptoms of schizophrenia. Music can drown out the symptoms (voices that only the patient hears) and can improve mood and concentration.

Biography

Anna Cornelia Beyer is a former child-refugee from Eastern Berlin. She holds a PhD in Politics and is a member of Mensa and Intel. She worked for 12 years at the University of Hull, UK.

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