

Schizophrenia
symptoms are
classified into three
categories



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“ Schizophrenia has been defined as “ split mind”. It refers not to a multiple personality split but rather to a split from reality that shows itself in disorganized thinking, disturbed perceptions, and inappropriate emotions and actions” (Myers, 2007, p678). Schizophrenia is a disorder of the normal balance of emotion and thinking; is being defined as a collection of severe brain disorders in which the patient sees reality abnormally. In Schizophrenia one or more of the following symptoms are present: hallucinations, delusions, and disordered thinking and behavior. Schizophrenia is a chronic illness that requires treatment for life.

The twist of the movie, “ Beautiful mind”, which occurs about middle through the movie, is that Nash is suffering from a severe form of Schizophrenia, and many the situations and places that he think exist in his life, are only part of his mind. Schizophrenia Symptoms: no one single symptom can determine the diagnosis; most of its symptoms can be applied to other mental illnesses. In men, Schizophrenia symptoms typically begin in the teens or 20s. In women, typically is the 20s or early 30s. It’s unusual for children to be diagnosed with Schizophrenia.

Schizophrenia symptoms are classified into three categories - positive, negative and cognitive.

The positive symptoms are hallucinations, speech disorganized, delusions, inappropriate laughter, and tears. Patients with negative symptoms are usually quite, toneless voices, expressionless faces, and rigid bodies. Most inappropriate behaviors are usually presented by the positive symptoms, and the absences of proper behaviors are the negative symptoms, last

cognitive symptoms are slight and are often discovered with a when neuropsychological tests are administered. Cognitive impairments frequently impede the patient's ability to lead a normal life and earn a living. They cause great emotional distress

Positive symptoms: reveal an excess or distortion of normal functions. These lively, abnormal symptoms may include:

Delusions. Is the most frequent, these are beliefs that are not based in reality and usually entail misunderstanding of perception or incidents.

Hallucinations. These typically involve seeing or hearing people or other things that are not real, while hearing voices is the most common in patients with Schizophrenia, they can be in any of the senses.

Thought disorder. Trouble speaking and organizing thoughts may result in stopping speech midsentence or putting together meaningless words, sometimes known as word salad.

Disorganized behavior. This can be in many different forms, ranging from childlike silliness to random disturbance.

Negative symptoms: is the lack, diminishment or nonexistence of characteristics of normal function. They may appear with or without positive symptoms. They include:

Lack of interest in daily activities

Display of lack emotions

Reduced capability to make arrangement or carry out actions

Neglect of personal hygiene

Social withdrawal

Loss of motivation

Cognitive symptoms: involve troubles with thought processes. These symptoms may be the most disabling in Schizophrenia because they interfere with the ability to perform routine daily tasks. They include:

Problems with making sense of information

Difficulty paying attention

Memory problems

The Schizophrenia symptoms the viewer of the film "A Beautiful Mind" takes account of are hallucinations, both auditory and visual, paranoid ideations, delusional thinking, and a distorted perception of reality, all of which are symptoms that psychologists needs to determine and diagnose Schizophrenia. The movie convincingly uses the visual medium to expose stress and mental illness within one person's mind. The plot substitute auditory hallucinations with visual delusions to describe the story of the paranoid Schizophrenia.

In the film "A Beautiful Mind" Nash experiences some of the positive symptoms. The first scene that showed the positive symptoms of

Schizophrenia is also Nash's first hallucination in his college dorm room at

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Princeton University, when his “ drunken roommate Charles appears”.

Charles acts as a mentor to Nash by making him realize there is more in life than just study and work, that he must live life in a different way. Throughout his life, Nash has been a “ lone wolf”, and Charles pushes Nash to go out, meets new people, makes some friends, and must learn to have “ respect for beer.” It is then, when his mind relaxes, that he is capable to come up with his ultimate goal, create an original idea, and set himself apart from the rest of the students.

Charles, the roommate stay “ in contact” with John throughout his adult life and years later Charles’s niece, a little girl name Marcee, enters Johns mind as another coinciding hallucination. Nash’s second hallucination is a estrange man who he refers to as “ Big Brother”, a. k. a. William Parcher, Nash enters a world of secrecy and imagination when he meets him. While in a visit to the Pentagon, Nash first sees Parcher out of the corner of his eye. Later Parcher approaches Nash about a top secret job in which his lack of personal relationship would be a benefit. Parcher interprets a government secret agent that seeks out Nash’s intelligence in the code- breaking area, something that he supposedly is the best because of a special capability he has when he looks in news papers, magazines or any other written document that he comes in contact with. In addition, this job that he has been given arouses his significance because he becomes part of the government where he’s relied on. At one point in the movie, Nash needs to locate and prevent the explosion of a Russian nuclear bomb. This delusional situation created within his mind, where he is completely unaware of its nonexistence is the best portrayal of this symptom in the movie, so real that is not easy for the

viewer to identify it until later. The hallucination of Parcher is the key factor in Nash's delusional thinking. Nash delusions takes over his life, his hallucinations are all around the job Parcher assigned him regarding the nuclear bomb, supposedly Parcher' places a device inside his arm that allows him to see a code under an ultra-violet light. Also with this implant under his skin Nash gain entrance to a secret location where he is to leave the cracked codes. In reality this top secret place is a vacant, falling down mansion, and the door key- pad that Nash types his entry secret code into doesn't work anymore. Nash's code breaking abilities are partly made possible by his hallucinations. The codes pop out of the paper to him and everything makes sense. Even though the codes are imaginary since there was no secret-code- breaking- project underway, Nash deciphers complex mathematical formulas and in fact modifies a theory that had been accepted in its field. Around the same time he finds the love of his life in the class he teaches, Alicia one of his most brilliant students that he comes to met in a personal level and they fall in love to each other. Even though Nash is living torment with this delusions and hallucinations, he's able to still be a teacher, but he develops a new symptom while in class Nash becomes paranoid, he start seeing a man that is staking him outside of the classroom. At this moment the film projects the full illness Nash is suffering, paranoid Schizophrenia, and until now he is unaware of his illness. But Alicia is already noticing signs and she showed him the documents, closed envelopes, that she picked up from the dilapidated mansion mail box, and for the first time he is confront with his delusions. The evidence made Nash realize that he was hallucinating. When the conspiracy situation goes wrong in Nash's head he

realizes he really needs mental help. He is taken, voluntarily to a psychiatric hospital, and is submitted to a very intense treatment.

The scene on this movie that best explain the negative symptoms of Schizophrenia is the one showing Nash holding his baby son while the he is crying and Nash shows totally no sign of having emotions towards the baby or the situation at all. This is just one example, although a loss of feeling is one of the most preponderate negative symptoms. Nash is discharge from the hospital but he is prescribed with a high dose of medication, and while taking this medication to hold back the symptoms, Nash is shown returning to a normal life by becoming self aware. But the medication impedes completely his mathematical thinking as well as the way he feels and works. Although his illness interferes with his relationship, Nash and Alicia decide to stay together. As the relationship progresses, so does Nash's disease and his delusions.

It is important to mention how the viewer is capable to observe the impact on Nash's activities of daily living the Schizophrenia has. His relationships with family, friends, and colleagues are disrupted by the intrusiveness of the symptoms of his mental illness, mainly because he is perceived as being so smart and the strange behaviors he exhibits are so contrasting with the perceptions that others had of him. His strange behavior seems even more difficult to understand because the onset of his mental illness occurs at a later age than is typical, in Nash's case, the onset occurs in his thirties. For a time, his family, friends, and colleagues attempt to ignore the symptoms and insist upon Nash's normalcy, but it becomes increasingly clear that Nash has a mental illness and needs to be evaluated for Schizophrenia.

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Once he has begun his descent into the world of Schizophrenia and goes deeper into it, Nash has increasing difficulty relating to the people around him. Even before the onset of his mental illness, he admits that he is not a particularly personable individual, and he has always been more comfortable and satisfied with numbers and his work than with people. Nonetheless, he is able, before his illness, to forge several significant relationships, including a romantic relationship that leads to his marriage to Alicia. Over time, however, the increased frequency, intensity, and persistence of his symptoms prove to be incredibly distracting, and even dangerous, putting the people that he loves in unsafe situations. However, characteristic of Schizophrenia, when he is in the pick of a hallucination or other symptom, he finds it impossible to distinguish between real and unreal. This state proves difficult for people, even those who love him deeply, to understand. When he is symptomatic, the powers of the hallucinatory figures that haunt him, especially Parcher, encourage him to harm his loved ones, and it is as if he never knew or cared about them. This condition is especially difficult for his wife, Alicia, who is affected most by Nash's illness and who is in the difficult position of making painful decisions about his treatment for Schizophrenia.

Causes: It's not known, but researchers believe that a combination of genetics and environment factors contributes to development of the disease.

Problems with certain naturally occurring brain chemicals, including the neurotransmitters dopamine and glutamate, also may contribute.

Neuroimaging studies show differences in the brain structure and central nervous system of people with Schizophrenia. While researchers aren't

certain about the significance of these changes, they support evidence that Schizophrenia is a brain disease.

Risk factors:

Having a family history of Schizophrenia

Exposure to viruses, toxins or malnutrition while in the womb, particularly in the first and second trimesters

Stressful life circumstances

Older paternal age

Taking psychoactive drugs during adolescence and young adulthood.

Standardized criteria

According to the revised fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR), to be diagnosed with Schizophrenia, three diagnostic criteria must be met:

Characteristic symptoms: Two or more of the following, each present for much of the time during a one-month period (or less, if symptoms remitted with treatment).

Delusions

Hallucinations

Disorganized speech, which is a manifestation of formal thought disorder

Grossly disorganized behavior (e. g. dressing inappropriately, crying frequently) or catatonic behavior

Negative symptoms - affective flattening (lack or decline in emotional response), alogia (lack or decline in speech), or avolition (lack or decline in motivation)

Social/occupational dysfunction: For a significant portion of the time since the onset of the disturbance, one or more major areas of functioning such as work, interpersonal relations, or self-care, are markedly below the level achieved prior to the onset.

Duration: Continuous signs of the disturbance persist for at least six months. This six-month period must include at least one month of symptoms (or less, if symptoms remitted with treatment).

Schizophrenia cannot be diagnosed if symptoms of mood disorder or pervasive developmental disorder are present, or the symptoms are the direct result of a general medical condition or a substance, such as abuse of a drug or medication.

Subtypes

The DSM-IV-TR contains five sub-classifications of Schizophrenia.

Paranoid type: Where delusions and hallucinations are present but thought disorder, disorganized behavior, and affective flattening are absent.

Disorganized type: Named hebephrenic Schizophrenia in the ICD. Where thought disorder and flat affect are present together.

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Catatonic type: The subject may be almost immobile or exhibit agitated purposeless movement. Symptoms can include catatonic stupor and waxy flexibility.

Undifferentiated type: Psychotic symptoms are present but the criteria for paranoid, disorganized, or catatonic types have not been met.

Residual type: Where positive symptoms are present at a low intensity only.

The ICD-10 defines two additional subtypes.

Post-schizophrenic depression: A depressive episode arising in the aftermath of a schizophrenic illness where some low-level schizophrenic symptoms may still be present.

Simple Schizophrenia: Insidious and progressive development of prominent negative symptoms with no history of psychotic episodes.

Nash is taken to the psychiatric hospital to help him out with his illness. Nash was admitted to the hospital to see a psychiatrist where he was asked to talk about who he sees and what are his complications. During this interview Nash cut his wrist to look for the implant that Parcher implanted and he discovers that it's gone. The psychiatrist Dr. Rosen diagnoses Nash with Schizophrenia, and he receives 10 weeks of Insulin shock therapy, and is prescribed with anti psychotic medications. Upon returning home, the visions are suppressed, but so is every aspect of Nash's beautiful mind. He no longer can think right, feel right, or act right. He stops taking the medication, and loses another battle with his schizophrenia. Instead of going back to the hospital, he tries to battle the hallucinations on his own. He stops taking the
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medication, this is the turning point of the movie, where Nash learns how to really live his life, and therefore, his hallucinations come back again. As a result of not taking the medication has put Nash's family in danger. Alicia asks him to watch their baby at one point and he goes on with his hallucinations saying that Charles was watching the baby. Alicia becomes very frustrated and asks him to get back to the hospital, she calls Dr. Rosen but Nash runs after her and hurts her. As she was running away from the house Parcher asks Nash to "finish her" meaning kill her. The near accident with his wife and child changed the balance of power in his mind. Nash was suddenly faced with the prospect of being permanently committed to an institution. As Alicia tried to flee and report his behavior, Nash stepped in front of her car to prevent her from leaving. At that critical moment, a sudden insight appeared to heal him permanently. He said "She never gets old." Nash had realized that during his hallucinations over the years, Marcee, Charles' niece, had continued to be a little girl. It was a single lightning flash, which illuminated his entire mental landscape. The discovery was partly accidental and partly forced on him by his anxiety to avoid being committed to a hospital. Nash learns that life is more than making a discovery, or solving an equation. There is love and emotion involved; a wife, taking care of your baby, and the everyday joys of life. Instead of focusing on himself, John decides to go back to teaching classes, and shares his amazing knowledge with his students. All this, while ignoring the hallucinations that took over his mind. This is where an amazing inspirational quote is mentioned by Nash:

“ Are the hallucinations...gone?”

“ No, but I’ve gotten used to ignoring them, and as a result, they’ve kind of given up on me. I think that’s sorta what it’s like with dreams and nightmares. We’ve gotta keep feeding them for them to stay alive”

His solution was to treat his “ demons” as though they were real. He thanked Charles for being his best friend over the years, and said a tearful goodbye to Marcee. He told Parcher that he would not speak to him anymore.

Gradually they troubled him less. Nash had to prevent new delusions from entering his mind. He used to humorously check with his students and colleagues whether they too could see his new visitors. He was checking for reality. Negative emotions always distort viewpoints and are accompanied by subtle feelings of discomfort.

Despite the serious illness he had he worked hard and came up with the game theory and received a Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences