

Out of the ashes: schizophrenia

[Health & Medicine](#), [Disease](#)



Nowadays, society sees schizophrenia seems like an outdated topic. A topic not many seem to care about. A topic that is not even taboo, because many do not even know about it. However, this topic is affecting so many on a day to day basis. Worldwide, about one percent of people are diagnosed with this mental illness. That is 1.5 million people.

Even worse, sixty percent of everyone that suffers from schizophrenia makes at least one attempt to commit suicide (WebMD). That is 900,000 people. That is three cruise ships filled with people (MentalHealthSchizophrenia). That is one full football stadium. Some may ask themselves, what is schizophrenia? Well according to the National Institute of Mental Illnesses "schizophrenia is a chronic and severe mental disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves." (NIMH). Schizophrenia is caused by genetics, biology and sometimes even viral infections.

Schizophrenia has been misunderstood throughout the years; It is characterized by a shift in perception, disturbed sense of self and psychotic manifestations. A shift in perception can not only affect the patient's emotions, but it can also greatly impact their physical life. Schizophrenics suffer from various shifts in perceptions that makes them change the way they act, not only physically but also mentally. When you suffer from schizophrenia you develop many symptoms.

Meanwhile, many were not discovered until the mid-1990s. However, Schizophrenia was discovered back in 1887 by Doctor Emile Kraepelin. Before Kraepelin however, many believed people with psychotic disorders were possessed. This caused the treatment to be electric shock therapy,

exorcisms, lobotomy and even drilling a hole in the patient's eye socket which left patients with worse mental health than what they started with.

This type of treatment started to be popularized with schizophrenia patients in the middle ages until the late 1880s. Schizophrenia and its treatments are one of the main reasons why society now know mental asylums as dark and scary places. When The Priory of Saint Mary of Bethlehem was founded to try to treat 'mad men'. They believed this illness came from supernatural forces such as demons. By the patients seeing hallucinations and delusions was basically proof of a demonic possession.

They were treated so badly, most of the 'mad men' that attended the mental asylum ended up dying, either by experiments, failed treatments or suicide.

Today Kraepelin was the first to differentiate between what he called dementia praecox and manic depression. According to Psychology Today "The oldest available description of an illness closely resembling schizophrenia can be found in the Ebers papyrus, which dates back to the Egypt of 1550 BC.

And archaeological discoveries of Stone Age skulls with burr holes drilled into them (presumably to release 'evil spirits') have led to speculation that schizophrenia is as old as mankind itself" (Burton, M. D.). The first doctor to coin the term Schizophrenia and notice the patients shift in perception was Swiss psychiatrist, Eugen Bleuler back in 1911. Schizophrenia comes from Greek roots schizo (split) and phrene (mind) as a reference to showing how the patient's brain works.

Schizophrenia brings you to a point where the patient has a disturbed sense of self. This has happened to not only to unknown patients but many well-known people and celebrities have suffered through forgetting who they are and why they are here. This list includes many people, for example, the ex-singer and founder of Pink Floyd. Syd Barrett's real name was Roger Barrett, and he used his real name for much of his life, which started in 1946 and ended in 2006 by pancreatic cancer.

He was an English songwriter, singer and guitarist best known as a founding member and songwriter of the rock band Pink Floyd. Barrett's partnership with the band finished after failure to perform during concerts various times. These were speculated to be caused by delusions and hallucinations, two very common schizophrenia symptoms. He had been the main songwriter which greatly affected how the band worked after his resignation.

Barrett withdrew from the public after that, but released two solo albums in 1970 called "The Madcap Laughs" and "Barrett". Pink Floyd went on to become massively popular and successful, their style evolving towards progressive rock since their songwriter left. Syd/Roger Barrett lived a simple and solitary life, receiving royalty payments from his ex-band. His access to spending money had been controlled by his family (Willis 143).

There has been much speculation about why Barrett ceased to be a member of Pink Floyd, withdrew from the public eye, shunned his own fans, left behind the nickname that he had never himself used or liked. Syd/Roger was diagnosed with the mental illness after an apparent heavy usage of LSD. According to his family and close friends, he did LSD nearly every day for

years. After his resignation of Pink Floyd, he did not just start having atrocious hallucinations daily but also he fell into clinical depression.

This leads to another story of a maybe one of the most famous artists of all time. Vincent Van Gogh. He had an eccentric personality and unstable moods suffered from recurrent psychotic episodes during the last two years of his extraordinary life and committed suicide at the age of thirty-seven by a gunshot. (Blumer) According to PsychiatryOnline.org " One of Van Gogh's psychiatrists recognized the crucial role of alcohol in the manifestation of Van Gogh's major psychiatric symptoms.

By his own confession, Van Gogh required " a glass too much" to numb his inner storms when they became too intense. The artist was not known to become intoxicated and may not have been drinking more than many of his contemporaries, but he was particularly vulnerable to the epileptogenic properties of absinthe, the favourite drink of the French artists of his time" (Blumer).

The well-known part of Schizophrenia is the symptom of psychotic manifestations. According to Healthline.com " Psychosis is characterized by an impaired relationship with reality. And it is a symptom of serious mental disorders. People who are psychotic may have either hallucinations or delusions" (Carey, P. H. D.).

Hallucinations are sensory manifestations, they occur mostly visually or auditory. For example, someone might hear someone yelling when nobody is there. Or maybe they see someone or something that isn't actually there.

These for the patient seem real. They also experience delusions, which is for the person to have a contrary thought to actual evidence. For example, the patient thinking a stranger they just met wants to kill them.

These symptoms are powerful and dangerous. Strangely, these symptoms are the most attacked by society. Many believe these delusions and hallucinations are made up and make up false beliefs about this. Some false ideas are: Schizophrenics have multiple personalities, them being possessed, the patients are faking it and even that it's not an illness.

The first one is made up because as clearly stated before, the symptoms of schizophrenia have nothing to do with that. The illness in which the patient have multiple personalities is a psychiatric phenomenon called DID, which stands for dissociative identity disorder, which involves the patient has multiple personalities which each have their own voice, manners and characteristics. This illness can be seen perfectly in the movie Split (2016) by M. Night Shyamalan.

This is not schizophrenia. Schizophrenics might hear voices but they only have one personality. The second hoax is the possession myth. This myth is mostly believed by Catholics. This myth comes back from middle ages as mentioned before. In conclusion, many schizophrenics are seen ever since the beginning of mental illnesses, many are affected by it and almost all society says about it is fake.

All in all, if you or someone you know is suffering from schizophrenia, please get help immediately and know that no matter your illness " I can do all

things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4: 13). Help is always there and never forget Jesus loves you. Schizophrenia has been underestimated to a point where society only knows it's characterized by a change in view, confused sense of self and psychotic ideals.

Works Cited

- " A Brief History of Schizophrenia." Psychology Today, Sussex Publishers, [www. psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hide-and-seek/201209/brief-history-schizophrenia](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hide-and-seek/201209/brief-history-schizophrenia).
- " Biological Basis of Schizophrenia." Khan Academy, www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/behavior/psychological-disorders/v/biological-basis-of-schizophrenia.
- " Divine Madness – a History of Schizophrenia." History Cooperative, 19 Sept. 2016, [historycooperative. org/divine-madness-a-history-of-schizophrenia/](http://historycooperative.org/divine-madness-a-history-of-schizophrenia/).
- " Famous People with Schizophrenia: 6 Schizophrenic Celebrities." WebMD, WebMD, [www. webmd. com/schizophrenia/ss/slideshow-schizophrenia-famous-names](http://www.webmd.com/schizophrenia/ss/slideshow-schizophrenia-famous-names).
- Marlene, Lili. " Incorrect Pleasures." The Interesting Case of Syd Barrett, 1 Jan. 1970, [incorrectpleasures. blogspot. com.co/2009/11/interesting-case-of-syd-barrett-for. html](http://incorrectpleasures.blogspot.com.co/2009/11/interesting-case-of-syd-barrett-for.html).
- " Psychosis: Symptoms, Causes, and Risk Factors." Healthline, Healthline Media, [www. healthline. com/health/psychosis](http://www.healthline.com/health/psychosis).
- Schiller, Lori, and Amanda Bennett. The Quiet Room: a Journey out of the Torment of Madness. Grand Central Publishing, 2011."

Schizophrenia." Khan Academy, www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/behavior/psychological-disorders/v/schizophrenia.

org/test-prep/mcat/behavior/psychological-disorders/v/schizophrenia.

- " Schizophrenia." Mental Health America, 29 Mar. 2017, <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/conditions/schizophrenia#symptoms>.
- " Schizophrenia." Mental Health America, 29 Mar. 2017, www.mentalhealthamerica.net/conditions/schizophrenia.
- " Schizophrenia." National Institute of Mental Health, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/.
- " Schizophrenia." Psychology Today, Sussex Publishers, www.psychologytoday.com/us/conditions/schizophrenia.
- " Schizophrenia and Suicide." WebMD, WebMD, www.webmd.com/schizophrenia/schizophrenia-and-suicide.
- " Schizophrenia Symptoms, Patterns And Statistics And Patterns." Mental Help Schizophrenia Symptoms Patterns and Statistics and Patterns Comments, <https://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/schizophrenia-symptoms-patterns-and-statistics-and-patterns/>
- " The Illness of Vincent Van Gogh." American Journal of Psychiatry, ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/abs/10.1176/appi.ajp.159.4.519. The History of Schizophrenia, schizophrenia.com/history.htm#. Willis, Tim. Madcap: the Half-Life of Syd Barrett, Pink Floyd's Lost Genius. Short Books, 2002.