

## Concepts and Misconcepts of *Schizophrenia*

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### ABSTRACT

*Schizophrenia* is a chronic, severe and disabling brain disorder affecting about 1% of the world population. People with *Schizophrenia* may hear voices, which other people don't hear. Furthermore, schizophrenic patients believe that others are reading their minds, controlling their thoughts or plotting to harm them. These experiences are terrifying and can cause terror, social withdrawal or extreme aggressiveness. The schizophrenics often make senseless and incoherent conversation. *Schizophrenia* can be diagnosed by the presence of atleast one of the positive symptoms together with any of the negative symptoms. This article covers historical, causes, prevalence, clinical signs and notable victims affected by *Schizophrenia* in different parts of the world.

"I am too terrified to walk out of my own house from the front door. My friends comment that, I just talk a load of rubbish. Sometimes I hear voices, when no one is around. I am confused while taking even minor decisions. I have serious doubts and suspicions; rather I am damn sure that my girl friend is delusional to me and has a secret love affair."

### Psychosis:

The term psychosis is derived from the Greek word "psyche", which means "mind or soul" and "-osis" means "abnormal condition". It is a functional or organic kind of mental derangement marked by severe disturbance of personality involving autistic thinking, loss of contact with reality, delusions, hallucinations, bizarre behaviour, difficulty in social interaction and personal activities of daily living. The primary psychosis covers *Schizophrenia* and delusional disorders, but extreme cases of depression, substance-induced delirium and certain types of dementia also show the features of psychosis. However, some persons have unusual and distinct (unshared) unforgettable experiences at some point in their lives, without any impaired brain structure. Therefore, it has been argued that psychosis is not fundamentally separate from normal consciousness, but rather, is in continuum with normal consciousness. In this view, people who are clinically found to be

psychotic may simply be having particularly intense, passionate or distressing experience

### What is not *Schizophrenia*?:

- A split personality
- A dual/multiple personality
- A developmental disability such as retardation
- All illness that makes people more violent or aggressive.

### Definitions of terms related to psychosis:

#### *Alcoholic psychosis:*

It is a severe mental disorder caused primarily by alcoholism. This pathological condition also covers Korsakoff's psychosis.

#### *Autism:*

Autism has two meanings. The first, historically associated with schizophrenia, refers to the investment of a person's psychic energy in his or her own delusions, which prevents the person from investing in the outside world. The second refers to absence of development of communication with others beginning in infancy. Autism is a severely incapacitating development disorder characterized by three major types of symptoms, which appear during first three years of childhood and continue throughout life. These are known as autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) or pervasive development disorders

### Key words :

*Schizophrenia*,  
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