

Schizophrenia: The Delusions Behind the Existence

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The term schizophrenia means “fragmented mind”. Schizophrenia is a chronic mental disorder that affects the brain and behavior of individuals. The causes of this disorder have remained a debatable topic throughout the history of human civilization, but the most research have suggested that it is caused by the abnormalities in certain brain hormones particularly dopamine. The people affected by it live a very painful life with the delusion that someone might harm them or their loved one, sometimes leading them to attempt suicide.

Symptoms

The positive symptoms like hallucinations and delusions depict how sufferers think after being affected by the disease, whereas the negative symptoms portray the patient’s withdrawal from activities that he used to perform before being diagnosed. The periods of unwellness where the patients show either positive, negative or both symptoms are described as episodes. Schizophrenics may have a range of positive experiences. For example, patients may suffer from a series of religious beliefs or paranoia. Delusions are false beliefs (Lilienfeld, et al., 2017) that are far from reality. Hallucinations can take four forms: visual, auditory, tactile and olfactory. People with schizophrenia lose perception of distance, colors may appear extremely vivid and shapes may be distorted. Auditory hallucinations can be described as the persecutory constant or recurring voices heard by schizophrenics. Sometimes these voices are so commanding that they compel the person to do certain things under pressure, leading the patients to converse or shout at these voices. Color symbolism is the perceived notion of sufferers that different colors convey messages to them, with the messages coming from God, aliens or higher power. Paranoia leads to the person believing that they are under constant threat. Other positive symptoms include: Thought disorder, Thought control and Grandiosity. Apathy can be described as the lack of motivation to do things which were important to person before being diagnosed.

Emotional incongruity, withdrawal from society can be considered as other symptoms. Both negative and positive symptoms lead to disruption in the lives of individuals affected with schizophrenia as well as people around them.

Impact of Schizophrenia¹

People with schizophrenia are less sensitive to positive outcomes and more sensitive to negative outcomes (Culbreth, Westbrook, & Barch). During the initial stages, they do not show frequent episodes, but as the disorder further spreads its symptoms become prominent to people around them. Sometimes, people with schizophrenia wear clothes with particular colors that convey a particular meaning. They become more lethargic and find pleasure in depressing aspects. They perform adversely in school, at work and lack motivation in performing everyday activities. They show frantic episodes of talking to their dead loved one and respond strangely to any positive situation. This behavior seems normal to them as these insane thoughts do not come differently from their normal thoughts. Families are under the state of constant despair. They find it very difficult to understand the strange actions of schizophrenics. It creates a psychological distress amongst the family members and leaves them devastated. Their routines are also affected colossally along with the person diagnosed. Friends and families need to keep a check on the way to behave in front on schizophrenics as sometimes some words can also trigger certain episodes.

Treatment.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (Piskulic, Nelson, Jimenez, & McGorry, 2015) in schizophrenia helps the sufferers to cope with delusions and hallucinations without engaging them. Support Groups is another way that helps one meet with other people having similar disorders and make them feel that they are not alone. Family therapy can be considered as another alternative as research show that the way a person's family behave has a greater impact on the recovery of the patients. If the family is over sensitive or totally hostile, then this may be considered an obstruction in the recovery of sufferers. By far, the combination of medication and therapy can be considered as one of the best way to cope with schizophrenia.

Every individual shows different responses to the medications and therapies, so the prognosis varies for every person. Although all the patients show certain common symptoms, but the recovery rate varies for every person. It depends on many factors such as family support, proper medical care, poverty, stage of the disease etc

Work Cited

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