

Debunking Myths About Schizophrenia

 pathwaysreallife.com/debunking-myths-about-schizophrenia/



Schizophrenia is a serious mental disorder shrouded by an unfair stigma and cultural stereotypes. Although schizophrenia affects less than 1% of the population in the US, ***misrepresentation in movies and TV, along with the sheer amount of false information online, have diluted the facts*** about this chronic mental disorder. For those who don't know any better, hearing the word '*schizophrenia*' brings to mind an incurable condition with the only treatment being an isolated life sentence in a mental institution. This unfounded stigma could not be farther from the truth.

Incomplete and distorted details surrounding schizophrenia online complicate a clear awareness of the disorder and acceptance for those who suffer from it. As feelings of indifference about mental illness are replaced with compassion and inclusion, schizophrenia remains widely misunderstood. Recognizing that individuals who suffer from this illness ***benefit from a combination of treatment options to live healthy lives*** without being committed is important to finally help begin debunking myths about schizophrenia once and for all.

Knowing the difference between truth and fiction is crucial for family and friends of a loved one struggling with schizophrenia. **Pathways Real Life in Utah** understands that ***active family support and acceptance from loved ones will play a vital role in the long-term success of each patient's individualized treatment plan***. Supporting your loved one means knowing the facts about their illness and how proper treatment will influence their daily life. Here are the top 3 myths about schizophrenia and the actual truth:

Myth #1: Everyone with Schizophrenia Suffers from Hallucinations

Mental illness affects each individual differently and depending on the diagnosis type, the symptoms of schizophrenia can vary widely. While psychotic symptoms like hallucinations and delusions are unnerving and frightening, not every schizophrenia patient has them. This mental illness can include feelings of paranoia or hearing voices, but the following **lesser-known symptoms can be just as complicated and debilitating**:

- **Low Motivation**
- **Blunted Emotions**
- **Disorganized Speech**
- **Difficulty Maintaining Attention**
- **Lack of Desire to Form Relationships**
- **Challenge in Performing Cognitive Tasks**

Myth #2: Individuals Diagnosed with Schizophrenia have Multiple Personalities

Having multiple personalities is not a symptom of schizophrenia. This condition is called dissociative identity disorder or DID (formerly referred to as multiple personality disorder). The myth is fueled, partly, from the **Greek origin of the word schizophrenia which translates to 'split mind'**. The explanation of the meaning is simple; 'split mind' refers to an individual's mind that isolates them from other people, essentially 'splitting' them off from the rest of the world. DID sufferers are sometimes described as having a 'split personality'.

Myth #3: Individuals with Schizophrenia are Dangerous

The movie and TV portrayal of individuals with schizophrenia as unpredictable, dangerous and violent. The simple truth is that **the majority of those diagnosed with schizophrenia are nonviolent**. Only twenty-three percent of violent crimes committed by patients with schizophrenia were related directly to their illness. Sadly, because of this myth, people with schizophrenia have a diminished quality of life with greater stress and lower self-esteem from fewer employment opportunities and reduced housing options.

The Reality of Schizophrenia

While there is no known cure, **schizophrenia can be successfully treated with psychosocial therapy, rehabilitation practices and medication**. Many schizophrenia patients have learned to thrive and lead productive and independent lives with treatment. You can help

your loved one fight the stigma of their illness and be free from unfair judgement. **Let it begin with you providing acceptance and understanding** and taking every opportunity to correct or inform others that the myths are just that – widely known, but false.

Contact the Mental Health Advocates at Pathways Real Life in Utah

Our qualified, compassionate team of counselors, doctors and therapists will individualize a treatment plan to **help you and your loved one work together for control of debilitating symptoms to achieve the judgement-free life they deserve**. Reach a live therapist 24/7 at **801-895-3006** to schedule a FREE individual assessment.