

PSYCHOSIS: MYTHS

MYTH #1

Psychiatric disorders are not true medical illnesses like heart disease and diabetes. People who have a mental illness are just "crazy."

MYTH #2

Psychosis is the result of bad parenting.

MYTH #3

Psychosis results from a personality weakness or character flaw, and people who are psychotic could just snap out of it if they tried hard enough.

MYTH #4

People with a psychotic illness are dangerous and violent; it's a sign of psychopathy.

MYTH #5

"I'm being so schizophrenic today" = multiple personality disorder.

MYTH #6

Only people from certain cultures experience psychosis and it isn't that serious.



PSYCHOSIS: FACTS

FACT #1: Brain disorders, like heart disease and diabetes, are legitimate medical illnesses. Research shows there are genetic and biological causes for psychiatric disorders, and they can be treated effectively.

FACT #2: Most experts agree that a genetic susceptibility, combined with other risk factors, leads to psychosis.

FACT #3: Psychosis has nothing to do with being lazy or weak. It results from changes in brain chemistry or brain function. Medication and psychosocial therapies can help people to recover.

FACT #4: Statistics show that the incidence of violence in people with psychosis is not much higher than in the general population. Those suffering from psychosis are more often frightened, confused and despairing than violent. The likelihood of violence is not greater in a youth with psychosis.

FACT #5: Schizophrenia and “multiple personality disorder” (now called Dissociative Identity Disorder) are two distinct and separate mental illnesses. People with schizophrenia may have difficulties with misperceptions and/or distinguishing reality, but it is not related to Dissociative Identity Disorder.

FACT #6: Psychotic disorders are among the top 20 causes of disability worldwide. Psychosis typically emerges between the ages of 12 and 29 years, and may cause significant disruptions in social, educational, occupational functioning and psychosocial development. Psychosis affects people of all cultures, classes, and genders. It is estimated that approximately 3% of people will experience a psychotic episode at least once in their life.