

The Schizophrenia Hope and Resource Hub

Plus: What I Did to Help Me Recover from Schizophrenia

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Welcome to the Schizophrenia Hope and Resource Hub!

I know how helpless you may feel and how scary the unknown is with this illness. I've been there. I would like to offer you a helping hand and a light in the darkness for you from someone who has been through it for a long time and has learned lots of ways that could aid you in your struggles.

It has taken me years to collect what you will read below, and I am very proud of it. I sincerely hope it can help you and can save you years of searching. I also encourage you to do your own searching. You never know what you may find!

I aim to offer you hope to get through the disease or help a loved one get through it, and I give you a collection of tips, tricks, books, websites, YouTubers, TikTokers, and therapies for schizophrenia.

I've kept the writing here relatively short and brief, so there is less to read and you can find the resources more quickly instead of reading for a long time to find what you need.

Here is the link to "My Story of Surviving Schizophrenia" on my Medium.com writing profile:

https://matthewdi.medium.com/my-story-of-surviving-schizophrenia-4b0e63f33610?source=friends_link&sk=c25004ed53f2e64349309e2efc2720e6

Here is the link to my YouTube videos on schizophrenia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBtbQpn24Yc&list=PLLXG5EJxOvnQ97byYMZqZMuA7N-oQKyw7>

Here is the link to watch the film "Recovery Is Possible" about me being the first person with schizophrenia to bicycle across Canada: <https://www.mindaaid.ca/bike-ride-film>

Schizophrenia Resource List:

My favourite book for getting through schizophrenia (or anything difficult essentially), the one I wished I had at the beginning of my recovery, is “The Survivor Personality” by Al Siebert:

<https://www.amazon.com/Survivor-Personality-Stronger-Skillful-at-Handling/dp/0399535926>

How at least one third of people with schizophrenia experience complete remission of symptoms (WHO): <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/schizophrenia>

Avatar therapy can get rid of hallucinations in a matter of weeks. It works fully for some people, partially for some, and not at all for others. Some groups are working on delivering avatar therapy remotely. Avatar therapy links:

Montreal - <https://interventions-avatar.ca/avatar-voix>

Montreal - <https://ciusss-estmtl.gouv.qc.ca/therapie-par-avatar>

British Columbia - <https://psi-fi-lab.med.ubc.ca/research>

UK - <https://www.avatartherapy.co.uk>

UK - <https://www.avatartherapytrial.com/frequently-asked-questions>

Australia -

<https://www.swinburne.edu.au/research/centres-groups-clinics/centre-for-mental-health-and-brain-sciences/voices-clinic>

Australia -

<https://www.swinburne.edu.au/research/centres-groups-clinics/centre-for-mental-health-and-brain-sciences/voices-clinic/amethyst-trial>

Germany - <https://www.digital.psy.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/cpdp/research/avatar-vr.html.en>

Denmark -

<https://www.regionh.dk/e-learning/Digital-undervisning/XR-Extended-Reality/Sider/vr-baseret-avatar-terapi.aspx>

In low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) -

Ethiopia and India - <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.64898/2026.04.21.26348779v1>

Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia -

<https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/projects/avatar-therapy-implementation-and-innovation-testing-delivery-of-/>

Understanding Voices:

<https://understandingvoices.com/working-with-voices/therapies>

Anosognosia and getting people to take medication:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXxytf6kfPM>

<https://leapinstitute.org>

Alternatives to Violence - help for people who are violent:

<https://avp.international/about-us/avp-around-the-world>

Students With Psychosis - student nonprofit: <https://sws.ngo>

British Columbia Schizophrenia Society list of favourite books for schizophrenia:

<https://www.bcscs.org/bcss-book-suggestions>

"Living Well With Schizophrenia" - YouTube channel by Lauren Kennedy:

<https://www.youtube.com/livingwellwithschizophrenia>

"SchizoKitzo" - YouTube channel aimed at spreading awareness about psychotic disorders, specifically schizoaffective disorder: <https://www.youtube.com/@SchizoKitzo>

"Surviving Schizophrenia" YouTube channel by Stephen, who developed childhood-onset schizophrenia: <https://www.youtube.com/@SurvivingSchizophrenia>

TikTokers with schizophrenia:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@xoradmagical>

<https://www.tiktok.com/@schizophrenichippie>

<https://www.tiktok.com/@schizokitzo> (schizoaffective disorder)

Schizophrenia advocate Michelle Hammer: <https://www.michellehammer.com>

Schizophrenia clothing line by Michelle Hammer: <https://www.schizophrenic.nyc>

A podcast by Michelle Hammer and Gabe Howard called “A Bipolar, a Schizophrenic, and a Podcast”:

<https://www.schizophrenic.nyc/bsp>

Schizophrenia advocate Brandon Staglin and One Mind:

<https://onemind.org/team-members/brandon-staglin>

TED Talk by schizophrenia advocate Cecilia McGough:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbagFzcyNiM>

TED Talk by schizophrenia advocate Andrew Dugmore:

https://www.ted.com/talks/andrew_dugmore_recovery_in_schizophrenia_the_value_of_lived_experience

Starting a Schizophrenia Pride Movement - article by schizophrenia advocate Sally Littlefield:

<https://slate.com/technology/2023/03/schizophrenia-pride-movement.html>

"Claiming a Second Chance After Psychosis Triggers Violence" - article by Sally Littlefield:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/a-window-into-psychosis/202501/claiming-a-second-chance-after-psychosis-triggers-violence>

How to support someone with schizophrenia:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLXG5EJxOvnQlnePW84uoT7cI9pVpA5_Q

The onset, course, and outcome for a schizophrenia diagnosis:

<https://www.coloradorecovery.com/understanding-mental-illness/what-is-schizophrenia/the-course-of-schizophrenia>

Dr. Khameer Kidia - “Why are schizophrenia outcomes sometimes better in poor countries without antipsychotics?”: <https://khamkidia.com/book>

CureSZ: <https://curesz.org/survivors>

This is a book on how most people can get rid of chronic pain in a matter of weeks using mindfulness, but even though it's not technically about mental health, I am including it because I wonder if people with mental illness/schizophrenia could use his techniques to lessen their emotional pain, and also because chronic pain can be intertwined with mental illness (I found the book in 2026 after my recovery was over, so I didn't use it myself). It is called “The Way Out” by Alan Gordon:

<https://www.amazon.com/Way-Out-Revolutionary-Scientific-Approach/dp/059308683X>

Video by actor John Turturro about his brother with schizophrenia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LR8255rzhtA>

Videos by actor Ryan Reynolds on psychosis (his father had psychosis caused by Parkinson's):

<https://www.youtube.com/@moretoparkinsons>

Facebook pages (there are many more pages than this on Facebook):

Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance - <https://www.facebook.com/sczaction>

Schizophrenia Society of Canada - <https://www.facebook.com/SchizophreniaSocietyCanada>

British Columbia Schizophrenia Society - <https://www.facebook.com/BCSchizophreniaSociety>

Schizophrenia Awareness - <https://www.facebook.com/causeforsilver>

Schizophrenia: 3 Moms in the Trenches - <https://www.facebook.com/Schizophrenia3Moms>

Facebook groups (there are many more groups than this on Facebook):

Parents of Adult Children with Schizophrenia -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1057657108376368>

Living With Psychosis - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/563200284958201>

Schizophrenia Support Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/schizophreniasupport>

Living with Schizophrenia (LwS) - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/210758373497900>

Families of Schizophrenia Support Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/268866299859344>

Schizoaffective and Beyond: Community, Compassion and Connection -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/schizoaffective>

Schizophrenia Support Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/824735988011178>

Schizophrenia/schizoaffective Support Community -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1182953532500772>

My list of general mental health tips:

These are things I've learned over the decades I've spent learning how to improve my general mental health, including books, articles, websites, video games, films, and a music program:

www.MindAid.ca/mental-health-tips

What I did to help me recover from schizophrenia:

I developed schizophrenia at the age of 22 in 1994. I got on a medication, I went to get counseling, and I learned ways to help me get better.

I noticed a small improvement in my mental health every single week for 27 years, until the age of 49 in 2021, when one day my symptoms just stopped.

At least a third of people with schizophrenia have complete remission of their symptoms globally. I was never guaranteed this, but it is what happened to me. Recovery is possible. Sally Littlefield says this: “A third of people diagnosed with schizophrenia will get over it like a respiratory disease, a third will recover but will have to manage it closely like a severe case of diabetes, and only a third will have the poor outcomes people might expect.”

I still take my medication, try to live a healthy lifestyle, and I feel pretty good these days.

Even though I recovered, you can still have a productive, meaningful life if you don't have complete remission of symptoms. The disease can be difficult in the beginning, but with treatment, the pain can come down to more manageable levels that will allow you to carry on for much longer than you thought.

If you're struggling, I want you to know that your recovery is an amazing accomplishment. I'm proud of you!

What I did:

Took my medication

Got counselling (for the first 6 years or so of my recovery, then my therapist set me free)

After about 6 years into my recovery, I happened to read the statistic that people with treated schizophrenia are no more prone to violence than the rest of the general population, which made me breathe a sigh of relief. About 2% of the general population is violent (this 2% includes many more forms of violence than murder, including kicking, biting, scratching, bar fights, psychological violence, etc). This knowledge greatly helped me. I was never a violent person before or during schizophrenia. I have never thrown a punch in my life and I never played hockey because of the fighting. I despised the few times we had to wrestle in gym class in high school. This did not change with schizophrenia. The majority of people with schizophrenia are not violent. People with schizophrenia are 14 times more likely to be the victims of violence than be arrested as the perpetrator.

Volunteered (gave me a reason to get out of bed)

Got a job (gave me a reason to get out of bed)

Listened to Dr. Daniel Amen's "Brain Warrior's Way Music Program", which uses brain waves (alpha, theta, delta, etc.) to recalibrate your brain for overall brain health. This came out in 2016.

Read books on how to get me better—mentally, physically, socially and financially - also, a doctor said there is a thing called "reader's brain", as the act of reading is very good for your mind

Used reflective rumination (in "What Doesn't Kill Us: The New Psychology of Posttraumatic Growth" by Stephen Joseph, he says this constructive kind of rumination, not a downward-spiral, negative kind of rumination, helps people to organize their thoughts, improve their emotions, and put the past behind them in a way that lets them thrive and grow from their experiences, the old cliché "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger") most days of my recovery, which meant I sat still and thought, like putting pieces of a puzzle together, and tried to feel difficult emotions more and more, little by little—it was a very slow process, but it seemed to work for me—I could feel little breakthroughs of clarity of thought and calming of my emotions each week over my whole recovery

Used the method taught in "Verbal Judo: The Gentle Art of Persuasion" by George Thompson to learn how to deal with people like a police officer—and also read books on how to improve my emotional intelligence and read body language

Read the book "The Survivor Personality" by Al Siebert, one of my all-time favourites

Read "Unbeatable Mind" by Mark Divine and learned Navy SEAL mindset secrets to improve my mental health

Went out in public, to events, restaurants, the mall, the bookstore, the library, in order to socialize—I found getting outside the house helped me to get out of my head

Walked, ran, bicycled, hiked, sprinted (I love sprinting—makes me feel so good!)

Travelled when I could, when I had the money, and the health—for me I enjoy travelling, but maybe you like to do other things—I encourage you to do things you like to do even if you don't feel great while doing them, because they still help build your confidence, and they are something you can look back on years later and say, you know even though I wasn't the best mentally, I still went out and did that

Tried to follow Dr. Daniel Amen's advice of eating dark, leafy greens and cruciferous vegetables (like broccoli), and taking vitamin D, fish oil, and a multivitamin (he also says in his book "Memory Rescue" that some of the healthiest brain scans he sees are of people who have taken ginkgo biloba, but note that it has a blood-thinning component, so read the label. I took this later in my recovery after finding his book)

Drank 2–3 liters of water per day

Watched comedies, laughed, tried to make others laugh - even wrote a joke book

Didn't use or abuse substances

Tried to eat less junk food, but I did eat some—it was a bit of a struggle at times, but I tried

Listened to music and danced, which makes me feel great—as I recovered, I could get more enjoyment out of it

Donated to charities (gave me meaning and purpose in my life)

Helped others, friends in need, and started doing mental health advocacy work. Before I started my advocacy work I spent years reading how to do advocacy work - public speaking, networking, people skills, building a website, how to use social media, fundraising, starting a nonprofit/charity/social business, confidence, leadership, hiring people, and more. Even though I wasn't taking any action during all those years of learning, I was keeping myself busy by reading, and often at the bookstore or library, so it got me out of the house. The old saying "knowing is half the battle" I found to be very true. I learned so much from all those books and articles and podcasts, and when it came time to start using them (it felt like it took forever until my mental health was ready for that!), I was well-versed in how to go about things, even though there is always more to learn.