

Complete Psychological Topics 2

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2 From 15 Years Collection

2.1 Schizophrenia in General

2.1.1 The Truth About Schizophrenia

Major Symptoms

I am mentally ill and have Paranoid Schizophrenia. I hear voices and have paranoia. Schizophrenia has multiple types, but all people with Schizophrenia are most disabled by being stressed out in social situations, which makes it a very lonely disease.

Having Schizophrenia makes every stimulus more intense and primarily affects the part of the brain, that understands abstract thought. Having Schizophrenia means that you have adrenaline surging through your veins constantly, which has very different effects and feels very different, from adrenaline released, over a short period of time.

People with Schizophrenia have trouble distinguishing between fantasy and reality and are usually very literal. People with Schizophrenia are often highly religious and have trouble with anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorders. One of the major symptoms of having Schizophrenia is depression, both because you see what you cannot do now that was so easy to do in the past and you will never recover and also just because of the illness. People with Schizophrenia are no more violent than non-mentally ill people and do not have multiple personality disorder.

Paranoia is a type of delusions that is specific to someone or spirit coming after

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you. Paranoia is like being afraid of something that is totally irrational and knowing that but still fearing it. It is like trying to go to bed after watching a horror movie.

It also keeps on going for months and often comes back in a slightly different form. Meditation would help greatly, but I do not have enough energy to do that, although I do know how. Counseling for this aspect of the illness is not considered effective and although many aspects of Schizophrenia are often religious, they are not spiritual in nature.

Most people with Schizophrenia have trouble reading and can't hold down even a part time job. You cannot access your money directly if you have Schizophrenia, because most people with Schizophrenia will give large sums of money away.

Cause and Treatment

Schizophrenia is genetic, but is brought out by a traumatic experience, which the most common being military service. Men usually get Schizophrenia in their late 20s and women in their late 30s. You cannot be fully diagnosed as having Schizophrenia, until you have symptoms, for at least one year and there is generally a psychotic episode, that proceeds diagnosis.

The primary treatment is almost entirely medication based and although the brain is severely damaged, for those with this illness, it does not affect intelligence levels. The medication has greatly improved over time, but it still works basically by sedating your entire body (the medicine is very closely related to anesthesia). Schizophrenia is the most disabling mental illness and it never goes away. It is much easier to treat bipolar disorder or clinical depression, because they are mood disorders, whereas Schizophrenia is a thought disorder.

Most people go decades, without being diagnosed and have to be forcibly com-

mitted, because they have committed some petty non-violent crime. Most people with Schizophrenia are in various levels of assisted living and continue to relapse into paranoid episodes and keep increasing their brain damage, over the course of their lifetime.

Some of the major side effects of the medicine include being constantly very tired, always very hungry, having large weight gain, and being almost guaranteed to have diabetes and high blood pressure. Many people have trouble finding relief with the newer drugs, which have much lower side effects, and have often self medicated, by taking illegal drugs, before they were diagnosed.

The most common cause for relapse is not taking your medicine, which is very hard for someone with Schizophrenia to do. Besides taking medicine, the treatment involves a low stress life. If you take your medicine, but are under too much stress, you can go into another paranoid episode.

Life with Schizophrenia

Non-disabled veterans (or anyone who served in the military that does not have an honorable discharge) make very little money, live in low income housing, and often become victims of crimes, like scams or cults. They also rely on government services, for almost any service, like medical care. These are some of the things that get cut first, in budget cuts, because it is hard for someone with Schizophrenia to advocate for themselves and many of the mental ill family members have given up on them. The only reason why people with Schizophrenia are not still locked up against their will is because of modern medications and because they found that not hospitalizing the mentally ill saved money.

The hardest part of getting services, if you have Schizophrenia, is filling out long forms and paperwork, waiting months or years for answers, and often being rejected, after all the work. You have to make sure they don't just throw

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away your forms and you usually need a lawyer, because they automatically reject you the first time. After that, there is often not enough services for the people, so you go onto a months or years long waiting list. If you are committed and do not have private insurance, they actually house you in the county jail, even if you have committed no crimes, until you are considered no longer a harm to yourself or others.

The Veteran's Administration

The veterans are much better, but most won't qualify, because there are not just 2 discharges anymore. There is at least honorable, general, other than honorable, dishonorable, and medical discharges. When you leave the military, before your 4 year entitlement is up, no matter what reason, you have a very low chance of getting an honorable discharge. Under "don't ask don't tell" policies, if you left because you were gay, you would not get an honorable discharge. Anybody who gives any services to veterans requires an honorable discharge, for any assistance at all. People in the military, for less than 6 months (in that time they could have easily already finished all their basic and advanced training), there are no records of them, so they cannot possibly get honorable discharges, no matter what their situation.

The VA does pay for my medicines and I can get into the VA mental health nurse practitioners (we don't see doctors, because they are too expensive), as my disability is of that nature, within a month. I have to wait for 3 weeks, if I have a flu or sinus infection and so I have to go to a private hospital, in town, which they refuse to pay, although they are legally required to, to save money. 95% of the people at the veterans clinic are older than my parents, which means they are giving out services others need, to people who are not disabled, but just served in the military a long time ago and want cheap access to health

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care. They are supposed to pay for my dental and eye checks as well, but I haven't been able to set that up. I pay for a private dentist as well.

The Veterans mental health nurse practitioners (who change every 2-3 years and know nothing about me or my case, when I first see them) want to change the medicine every time I go in and assume because I talk fast, I should be on Lithium. I tried Lithium, which gave me no help and introduced serious tremors, which left as soon as I stopped taking the Lithium. They write some notes in a computer program (unless it is down) and ask me years later ask about the previous nurse's notes.

They only have 30 minutes, for each patient, and if you have an emergency, you have to go down to the hospital, an hour away by car, in a tiny city, where very few veterans live (I live in the biggest city for the entire region). I have a PRN that I use 5 pills of a year, at the most, and the only way to get current ones (so they are not expired, when I need them) I have to get 30 pills every month. You cannot give anyone any of this, no matter what the situation and there is no way to recycle them. If I took this medicine that often I: would never be awake and I would be very addicted to it.

I was told to get a C-PAP, which I had to go down, to that far away hospital, that I got transportation from volunteers (from a veteran's charity, not the government VA). I had to stay over night, with a cheap instrument to measure my sleep, which I had to put on myself and no one observed me. I had to sleep in an open room, like I did in the military basic training and when I left early that morning I was locked out of the building I was sleeping in and almost could not exit the court yard. I can breathe easily through the face mask, because it reminds me of the gas masks in the military, but now they refuse to change the pressure in the mask, so that I can breathe in it, for more than an hour, after I

fall asleep. This hospital is huge, with many buildings, and stuffed with elderly veterans, but only a few doctors.

My Situation is Ideal

My situation is very unique and has turned out as ideal as is possible with this mental illness. I never committed a crime or took illegal drugs, I have an honorable discharge from the military, so I get veterans benefits, I accepted I needed help from the very beginning, I have always stayed on my medication, I have great family support and I also have support by being a born-again Christian. I can read at length, although it is still hard to concentrate, I live almost completely independently, I have enough constructive things to do to take up my time, and I feel like I am making a difference in at least a few lives via my website. I was first diagnosed with Schizophrenia back in December of 1999 and have not have any relapses since then.

2.1.2 What its like to have Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a wide ranging disorder like cancer and there are many different kinds. Schizophrenia is the most serious and debilitating mental illness by far. It affects about 1% of the population - the same in every place and culture. It is a thought disorder, not a mood disorder.

Having Schizophrenia means you constantly have adrenaline running through you and all your senses are amplified, so that everything feel more intense, literally and physically, not just emotionally. It does not affect intelligence, one way or the other and Schizophrenia is very different from Multiple Personality Disorder. Schizophrenia is not a special gift nor does it make you more spiritual:

it is just a disability.

Schizophrenia is caused, by a combination of a genetic tendency towards the illness, plus a stressful event, that brings out the illness. The most common stressful event is military service. This stressful event generally happens during the 20s for men and the 30s for women. It is common, to go years, without first diagnosis and people with Schizophrenia usually end up, in a psychiatric hospital, every few years. After each paranoid episode, there is more and more brain damage and the person recovers less and less, each time.

All people, with Schizophrenia, have delusions, but only one type has the paranoia and the auditory hallucinations/hearing voices (it is very rare to have visual hallucinations). Paranoia is a specific category of delusion, that includes believing people are "coming after you". I have Paranoid Schizophrenia, which is both the most serious and debilitating kind of Schizophrenia and the most treatable and responsive to medication. About 1/3 of people with Schizophrenia stare at the wall all day, 1/3 live in assisted living like a group home, and 1/3 are mostly living on their own.

I am one of the highest functioning people with Schizophrenia. I am also unusual in every other way especially that my mind works very fast/I talk fast, I have studied many years, and seem to know more about Schizophrenia than most the doctors, so that the doctors often think I am manic. It is common to get misdiagnosed, because of the lack of training about mental illness, in the service providers, their low pay, and how little time they have. Most doctors only have 20 minutes, for each appointment and many people only can see a mental health nurse practitioner, who is not qualified to diagnose.

Schizophrenia's main and most effective treatment is medication. Counseling can be a useful secondary treatment, but a person with Schizophrenia can not

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overcome their paranoia, through learning to think rationally. The medication is a derivative of anesthesia and it basically numbs your body. It is only supposed to affect your mind, but, like all the psychiatric medicines, it affects the whole body. Most people with Schizophrenia gain about 80 lb., within a few months, after getting on the medication, because the medicine numbs the nerves, in the stomach, so you never feel full, no matter how much you eat.

It takes a psychiatrist to diagnose and prescribe medicine for mental illness, because a psychiatrist is a medical doctor, as well as having a Ph.D., in psychology. Most psychiatrists are not trained in mental illnesses though - it is a speciality. A psychologist has between a one year certificate and a Ph.D. in psychology, but has no medical degree and cannot diagnose mental illness, nor can they prescribe medicine.

The newer medicines have less and less serious side effects, but they do not always work on everyone. Most people with Schizophrenia keep going off their medicine, because they think they no longer need it, because it works so well. When you are feeling well, keep taking all the medicines you are on. You are happy, because you are on the right medicines. If you stop taking them, you will revert back, to a worse state, and likely will never get as balanced, as you once were.

The major issues, that a person faces, who has Schizophrenia deals with, on a daily basis, include isolation, lack of energy, and poverty. The most difficult issues to deal with include depression and isolation. Paranoia is not as bad as depression, unless it is really flared up. Any tiny bit of depression is many times more painful and harder to deal with (especially physically, in the head and the intestines), than a much more severe amount of paranoia. Paranoia is like terror and is almost impossible to break, until it "leaves on its own".

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Isolation is caused, by a lack of trust, in relationships, and a very severe sense of anxiety, about being around other people. There are some surprising similarities between Schizophrenia and anxiety disorders, except that Schizophrenia is many times more severe. You often hear about people doing evil things and that these people are diagnosed with Schizophrenia, but actually people with Schizophrenia withdraw from society and are usually the victims of crimes. People with Schizophrenia are no more likely to be violent, than anyone else.

Part of the treatment for Schizophrenia is keeping your life low stress, as stress will work against the medicine, so most people with Schizophrenia don't work. Most people with Schizophrenia cannot work and live off state disability pensions, which are only barely enough, when in combination with low income housing and getting complete assistance, for everything else, like food and medicine. Most people, with Schizophrenia, are single, but live in various levels of assisted living.

The area of the brain, that is most damaged, by Schizophrenia, is the part of the brain, that deals with abstract ideas and social conventions. I had to re-learn how to interact with other people, over many years. People with Schizophrenia are very often extremely literal. Paranoia causes some of the most serious problems, that adversely affect relating to other people, for someone with (Paranoid) Schizophrenia.

Hearing voices can be wide ranging, from having an impression of someone or thing communicating to you, to an audible voice, that sounds like a real voice. Sometimes the voices are good and sometimes they are bad. Some people have voices tell them to do things. The voices tend to be mostly religious in nature. People with Schizophrenia can be very religious, in nature, with an emphasis, on rituals, serving as the basis of their obsessive compulsive disorders.

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People with mental illnesses are born that way and the People with Disabilities Act applies to them, but there is very little funding for and little awareness of mental illness. The only reason why they no longer "lock up" people with major mental illnesses is because it saves the government money. People with mental illnesses need the same level of support, that people with developmental disabilities need, but just for different things.

People with mental illnesses rely heavily on state funded programs and are dependent on unmotivated and prejudiced staff (because they are underpaid). When you vote for a cut in taxes, these people are some of the very first to feel the cut. Most of their families have rejected them and they have a hard time making friends or even just communicating, so they have no other means of help. They can easily end up being homeless and it then gets much harder to stay on their medicine.

People with Schizophrenia can be and usually are very rational, in most areas of their lives. There are generally only one or two major delusions, in the person's life at one time. When you hear about people with Schizophrenia going through all these complex preparations and plans, to act out their delusions, they must be rational, in most areas.

I am fairly rational, considering my mental illness (largely because of my long study of philosophy and a desire to counter my tendency for paranoia), but I can see and experience both the delusion and the reality at the same time. Schizophrenia is a split between reality and fantasy and the medicine helps you better distinguish between the two.

2.2 Schizophrenia Symptoms and Issues

2.2.1 It is Hard poem

The Poem

It is hard to fall asleep

When your head is full of fear

It is hard to stay up all day

When you are always exhausted

It is hard to exercise

When you have so little energy

It is hard to eat healthy

When you are always hungry

It is hard to have a todo list

When it stresses you out

It is hard to get inspired

When you cannot open your eyes

It is hard to create

When your hands won't stop shaking

It is hard to design websites

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When all the code looks the same

It is hard to stop washing your hands

When you cannot remember if you already have

It is hard to have relationships

When you trust no one

It is hard to carry a conversation

When you cannot concentrate

It is hard to listen to advice

When you think others are trying to control you

It is hard to go out with others

When you get tired very fast

It is hard to be part of a group

When you cannot consistently go to meetings

It is hard to get around

When you cannot focus enough to drive

It is hard to be positive

When you are filled with delusions

It is hard to be happy

When you know your illness will never end

An Explanation

My latest poem was meant to be very simple way of explaining some of what it is like to have Schizophrenia. I was inspired by a movie I just saw the same day and was thinking about writing something and I thought about writing about Zen and spiritual things. But, along the way, and in order to offer something more useful, I started to think about doing a poem about mental illness. (I always try to prioritize writing on this topic, as it is more practical and can have a more immediate help, than some of my more theoretical writings. Although, it is much harder to write about myself than about history or religion.)

Yes, I have not exaggerated and yes I am on my medicine and have been for many many years. The thing with medicine is that it never takes away all the symptoms. I deal with a number of these symptoms every day, although I was able to get my hands to stop shaking recently, by changing the medicine I take. Many people fear and understand crisis, but (as I heard quoted one from someone famous, maybe Anton Chekov) is that anyone can survive a crisis, but it is the day to day living that wears you out.

The thing that bothers me most about Schizophrenia is that many people around me, that I deal with, on a day to day basis, think I have an easy life and they are jealous. I want people to know that I work very hard everyday doing very difficult work that is very useful, to a small group of people throughout the world, all of which I will likely ever meet. If I did not do it, no one else would and I can not afford to pay for someone to do it for me. I would love to work a regular job more than almost anything else, but I am just not able to deal with some of the aspects of work, that seem so simple to others.

I have still not yet understood why people have to suffer, many much greater

than myself. I was lucky that I never had to serve in combat nor have I suffered from severe burns. I was never captured nor did I even had to go through torture training. Good Christian soldiers, throughout history, have suffered greatly, captured and tortured for years on end and they cried out to God and He did not save them.

All I can say is that to understand the reasons God works the way He does, is to be aware, first of all, that the spiritual world works entirely different, than the physical one. You should be much more afraid of other people than of spiritual things, especially if you are Christian and don't mess around with things you know you shouldn't. The reason for suffering is a mystery and I do not know any explanation, that will seem sufficient for anyone, who has truly suffered.

We need to approach God with faith, because we can never understand God, on His level and we likely will never see why things were allowed to happen the way they were. I try to be very careful, with how I live my life, so as to avoid unnecessary suffering. If you want to prevent suffering in the world, do not suffer unnecessarily, yourself. There are ways to make a big difference in the world, but not risk your health and safety.

The only thing I can imagine, that God would do, that would make it somewhat acceptable, for the suffering, that has occurred would be for God to undo all suffering, so that it never happened, after we go to Heaven and Jesus Christ comes back in the flesh.

2.2.2 Amplification in Experiencing Schizophrenia

One of the most frustrating and disabling parts of having Schizophrenia is that

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everything I experience is intensified. This is not the same as intensified feelings, like in Bipolar Disorder. Everything I sense in the form of hearing, seeing, touching, and smelling is 10 times as strong. It is much harder for me to deal with things that are repetitious or things that are annoying.

When the cleaning service moves things around, so I can't find them, it drives me nuts. To me, this is more than just a mistake or carelessness. It comes across to me as a lack of respect and that I am being scammed. I feel that they are deliberately trying to make my life miserable. Doing things wrong once feels like they are doing it wrong 10 times.

I don't have the patience I once used to have. I have trouble waiting or dealing with people being rude and thoughtless, in my daily interactions, in places like stores. The worst part, is that people really go out of their way to help others, that are physically disabled or developmentally disabled, but I don't get any help. People are jealous that I don't have to work a job. They think nothing is wrong with me and do not realize that working a dead end job, instead of having Schizophrenia, is a much better and happier life.

Part of this is just my personality; I am a highly sensitive person. To me and people like me, the emotional world is much more real than the physical one. Like people who suffer from depression, that is based on chemical imbalance in the brain, I get depressed, even when my circumstances are good and I am sometimes happy, when something really bad happens. Really small problems will really bother me and real big ones I can often times easily accept.

When people see someone acting what they think is irrational, from their perception of what they see of you, they think acting irrational is being lazy and undisciplined and that people can overcome this easily. With Schizophrenia, the rational part of my brain is destroyed or seriously damaged. The reason why

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people with Schizophrenia have a hard time being in groups, doing daily routines to keep themselves and their houses clean, and are often lonely and targets of scams and violence is because they no longer have the ability to deal with society, as they no longer have the ability to engage in abstract thought.

People are often afraid of people with Schizophrenia, but like small insects, they are more afraid of you, than you are of them. The hardest part of Schizophrenia is verbalizing your pain. Most people with Schizophrenia cannot even read, due to the destruction to their brain. Without the rational social part of the brain functioning correctly, a person falls back on the fight or flight response. There are no filters to understanding the reasons why people act a certain way. The only thing you perceive is an intensified sensory feeling.

Making decisions is one of the most stressful and draining activity for someone with Schizophrenia. When I got to the store, everything has so many ridiculous and confusing options. Many ways of packaging, placing of things, and descriptions are intentionally misleading. Many times the quality of the food is highly variable, even for the same brand and product. Some of my tastes are for less intense foods and my medicine causes foods to taste very differently. Whether I can eat many foods heavily depends on exactly how they are made and what exact ingredients they use. There are some types of barbecue sauce I love and others make me want to vomit.

I also have strong mentions associated with certain foods; if I was really depressed last time I ate a certain food, it will then trigger depression, if I eat it again. I also find the smell of foods much more intense and so I often times avoid food I otherwise would like due to the strong smells, like the prepared food in grocery stores or in restaurants, especially when smells conflict.

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I have constantly struggled so much with rudeness, incompetence and laziness by people running buses, stores and other services I use daily that if I find one that works reasonably well, I keep returning to that one place. I now often expect everything to be broken and people constantly arguing about things, so that they can be lazier, so that I have given up trying to reason with people. It seems that most people I run into are very angry and lazy. It really seems to be that the only thing people are afraid of is doing their jobs properly and that people today are experts in arguing.

Computers are some of the most stressful things I can deal with. The most frustrating thing for me in computers is when something doesn't work like it is described. I hate troubleshooting. I enjoy computers, when I can just deal with them the way they are supposed to work, but when they fail, it drives me nuts. It seems that most programs are very specific, in how they are tested, so if you do not use them the exact way they predicted you would that they have all sort of errors and incompatibilities.

I have given up even trying to report bugs, as programmers seem to be so full of themselves, that they cannot accept the fact that their programs have errors in them. I run into so many problems that I now am trying to use as few pieces of software as possible, so that there are fewer things that can go wrong. The really frustrating thing about software is that it works 95% of the time. This is just often enough, to expect that it will always work, but problematic enough to drive a person crazy. This may sound unreasonable, but a website down 5% of the time would be down weeks of the year and English that is only 95% accurate is unreadable.

2.2.3 The Illness that Never Ends poem

Many years have passed
Since my visit to the hospital
I have not come back again
And each day gets better
But some things never get better
And I fight these issues daily
The terror is always there
Under the surface
And I struggle to keep taking my medicine
But I have kept up with each dose
I work hard to keep my work load low
But also keep myself busy
And feeling progress in my work
The hardest things are the depression
As anyone who has had a chronic condition
Can confirm in their own experience
It is easy to understand when someone loses a leg
How their life will change
But when you lose your mind

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You battle most your issues alone
And even though it would seem easy
For you to reach out for help
It is not so easy for me
I don't know if it is the illness or not
But I have a huge amount of energy
Deep within my heart
That is one of the things
That has kept me pushing forward
The medicine basically makes you tired all the time
You sleep longer than ever before
The hardest part of being part of a group
When you have Schizophrenia
Is that you feel so tired
That you don't have the energy to get out
I am always afraid I will fall asleep
Out in the mall, movie theater, or bus
I have had to fight to stay awake
And I have had suffered physical pain
If I went out after taking my medicine
After the wrong amount of time

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Depression, terror, and loneliness

Hurt me physically as well

My intestines and my head hurt

There is only so much medicine you can take

I had to cut back recently

As I could not write, hold a glass with one hand, or keep my eyelid from twitching

The hardest part was that I kept poking myself in the eye

Many times I have associated physical pain

In response to paranoid thoughts

Sometimes I feel happy

And my organs feel like they have been massaged

That happens more and more

As time goes on

I see the time of my youth

As being a kind of renaissance time for myself

I thought I would be a world leader

Although I have greatly helped a few people now

Things are just harder now

That weren't a problem when I was young

Meeting people works great

And people often are impressed at my accomplishments

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And surprisingly understanding of my condition
But I am only able to return a few times
Sometimes being around people it is too intense
And I do not get enough positive feedback
That makes me discouraged
I really want to go to church
But I either get mad or scared
I cannot accept the conservative politics of the Evangelicals
Or the acceptance of new age doctrine by the mainstream Protestants
I am much closer to my family
Than before I was mentally ill
I would have thought that my sister and I
Would be in a big city, far from home, shortly after college
But we are all here many years later
I have never gone very far, except in the military
One of the things that really bothered me for along time
Was that i never completed my military service or college
Now I have written so many books, that I think that is better
Even than a PhD.
But that was how my philosophical journey started
I may have never got to writing books, if that had not happened

2.3 Veterans Administration

2.3.1 The Military Way, Chemical Weapons, and Terrorism

Misconceptions about Military and World History

For people who have never served in the military and who base their understanding of warfare on World War II or even Vietnam do not understand how contemporary wars are fought. In World War II they did what is called carpet bombing where they would find a target within a few miles and then bomb everything within that area and around it for many miles.

One of the big strategies during World War II was to destroy Germany's manufacturing basis. Also, most modern technologies and techniques used in warfare are derived from the much more advanced technologies developed by the German during World War II. One of the reason why the US won the Cold War is that they let the Soviets have more of Eastern Europe in exchange for the US getting more German scientists after World War II.

If you study the history of European warfare, warfare tactics change over time, according to the technologies available, at the time. During World War II, we needed millions of troops, because that is what was required, to make use of the technology available, during that era. Today, warfare is much higher tech and we need specialists, who are professional soldiers or even mercenaries, but the number of troops needed is much smaller.

Also, most of the current US military is what are called contractors, which are mercenary corporations, so there are many times more troops involved in a

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military operation, that the media never counts in. It is like a shadow army, whereas the real army is just the tip of the iceberg. The list of Americans, that have security clearances, that the government recently lost, contained names of 22 million people.

During this war on terror we are fighting an entirely different war with entirely different technology with entirely different objectives, tactics, and political situation. Bombing infrastructure in the Middle East and Central Asia does basically nothing as the infrastructure that we have now in America is not present in this region. We can't bomb them back to the medieval era, because they are already there.

There is nothing of any value in the Middle East now except oil. Throughout most of history, the Middle East economy was based on trade. In ancient times it was very fertile, but, due to minor weather changes, during the late medieval and early modern era, much of this land has lost its fertility. Today, there is also very little money in food production or any other commodity.

The Ottomans Turks took over the Byzantine empire and cut off trade with the west, shortly before Columbus sailed to America, which caused Portugal (the first world power) to figure out how to navigate around Africa and the Dutch to figure out how to navigate over the open ocean. This was the basis for the European colonies and colonial domination.

After the Industrial Revolution, like today, the trade items of greatest value were the ones with the most advanced technology. Coal and iron were the main ingredients necessary, for the Industrial Revolution, whose big cash products were trains, ships, bridges and guns. So the nations with the most coal and iron became the dominant military and economic powers. This included America, England, France, and Germany (which was a brand new country at the time).

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If oil was not found in the Middle East, in the last few hundred years, the Middle East would be very poor now. By then the Suez canal was created and so Egypt was important for trade, but most of the Middle East had little to offer.

Misconceptions about Contemporary Warfare

One of the big problems with the way we are fighting in the Middle East is that we are fighting a war with very high technology. That would work well in the United States or Europe, where we have extensive infrastructure and advanced electronics, that are the basis for a very fragile world economy. Without a high tech infrastructure, our high tech weapons are of little use.

We also have spent huge amounts of money trying to do the almost impossible task of destroying the leaders of a country and then putting in groups that cannot hold power when we leave. The terrorists are fighting a very low tech war, that is very cheap and easy to carry out, which is effective against high tech societies.

To do what we need to do to win the war in the Middle East we need to be more brutal than ISIS or Saudi Arabia. The result of this action would mean we would lose access to most of the world's reserve oil and the one group that is keeping the price of oil low enough, for the world economy to keep going. Without access to cheap, plentiful oil, the entire world goes back to the stone age.

We are not in danger of being invaded, because even China and Russia do not have the resources, to even maintain a navy, that could deploy to other parts of the world, while the US Navy completely controls all the world's oceans. Russia and China are deceiving us into thinking they have advanced weapons or can compete with us militarily or economically, when they cannot. They have very obsolete militaries that are designed and used for internal suppression of revolts. This is what Americans would call police.

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Russia has a very long hostile border, that is has never been able to defend the entirety of it, at one time. Russia has tried to maintain the situation, in the former Soviet republics, the same as they did in Eastern Europe, during the Cold War, but the US intelligence community has successfully blocked that. Russia cannot even invade the Ukraine (which has basically no military) either due to lack of resources or fear of US retaliation.

The Chinese are making so little money on trade, that they just have enough to keep the economy going and there is no real lasting wealth being created in China. While 15% of their people on their East Coast have the equivalent money of Europeans (not Americans), their army is focused on keeping their inland mountainous regions, where most of their mineral wealth (coal and rare earth minerals) is stable, so that China does not split into several countries. This area is dominated by poor, foreign Islamic peoples, who are losing their sustenance level incomes from farming, due to environmental degradation.

China and Russia will also be hit terribly by global warming, starting in the next 10 years. The Chinese are already running low on water and all their potential sources of water are controlled by other hostile countries, which they have no water treaties with. China cannot even grow its own food, as only 10% of its land is arable. China and Russia have always been hostile to each other, Siberia is just North of China, and the Russians only have so many bullets.

China and Russia (independently) definitely will work to lower the status of America overseas in less overt ways like hacking into our computers, promoting Islamic Fundamentalism, and other information/psychological warfare tactics. The big driver of radical Islam comes from the official policy and political strategy of Saudi Arabia, who runs their country on the same ideology and uses the same tactics as ISIS.

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ISIS is of little concern in Syria, as there is little to no oil there and nothing else of any value, but if ISIS crosses Jordan into Saudi Arabia, we will have a serious problem, as the Saudis share the same ideology, but the Saudi royal family would no longer be able to control their country, in that situation. None of the 9/11 hijackers came from Iraq; all of them came from Saudi Arabia or Yemen.

Currently the Iranians are doing a good job of holding back ISIS, as well as the Kurds in Iraq and I am sure the US special forces are involved as well. ISIS is a very small group, but is very effective because of its PR tactics and that its soldiers are former Iraqi special forces, that served under Saddam Hussein, but now cross trained in terrorist tactics. Regular US troops deployed in Syria would be massacred.

The Military Way

The military was a really stressful situation for me, for an umber of reasons. The military seems to embody all the negatives of a large bureaucratic organization like a large company and at the same time it treats its people like they are on parole from prison.

My experience in the military was uniquely painful, because of my being a highly sensitive person and having a pre-disposed genetic tendency towards Schizophrenia. While what I have experienced is accurate and common, the vast majority of people who serve in the military come out without severe psychological trauma.

The military's failure with me was not realizing (even after I told them) that I was exhibiting the psychological symptoms of a person who should never have joined the military in the first place. I would be useless in combat (especially because I could not hit any of the targets even though I could see them well).

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The US military place extreme emphasis on what they call discipline, which basically means doing exactly what you are told immediately without question. Everybody does everything the same way. You study the same skills you did during basic training, throughout your entire enlistment in the army, so that your actions become instinct. This is how we win wars.

Both the Roman and Alexander the Greats armies were so effective more because of their training and being able to work together quickly and uniformly than because of their weapons or other technology. The Europeans finally beat Asian armies once warfare technologies favored closely coordinated action amongst large groups of soldiers over individual bravery.

We were never taught hand to hand combat in the Army, because the drill sergeants said that if it came down to that that we would lose the war. If the military was mostly interested in recruiting people with good aim and trained in firing weapons well they would recruit from street gangs and white supremacist groups.

An M-16, despite its continual need for maintenance and the ease at which it jams and becomes useless, its great strengths are that it is very accurate and very easy to learn to shoot accurately with, in a very short amount of time. The military taught us to conserve our ammunition, in what the military calls one shot, one kill.

Another basic strategy of the Army, from their experience in at least one war (I think it was especially true in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II) was that every soldier was an infantry soldier first and foremost and the speciality that you sign up for is a secondary, less fundamentally important skill. In this battle, they needed more soldiers than the ones that were technically infantry, so everyone fought in, even the chaplains and the veterinarians, and this was

essential to our victory in that battle.

The military has its own culture, because recruits come from different cultures and so they learn a common, different culture which once they adjust to they can depend upon it working the same way at any US base in the world. This is the third important aspect of training besides the physical and mental and the one which I never adjusted to.

I am an unusual person, in that I was willing to bend, so that nobody felt the need to try to break me. Even though I did whatever I was told, without question or hesitation, every time, always gave 150% and passed all the physical and mental tests, I always was who I was and never thought to change that. I never changed the way I thought, so I never really fully psychologically adjusted to the military way of life.

My Military Training

The military also really never trains you. The military loves using trial by fire for almost any type of training. Training usually consists of throwing you into scary situation and seeing how you react under pressure and putting you through as much pain as a person can possibly take.

If you are not an officer, they treat you like a piece of meat and you have to do whatever they say no matter how demeaning or scary it is without question and without hesitation. The military does not tolerate any less than 150% always, no matter what the circumstances. Luckily, I never had torture training.

In the military, in your first few weeks of training they have you listen to videos about a bunch of different rules and procedures for everything from environmental ethics to STD protection. They had us fill out many forms. In the military, you do not fill out a form as it is before you are told how to fill out the form. For instance, you cross out the name field and enter your social security

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number and you leave most of it blank. I had the exact same form with the same font for my discharge paper that my grandfather had 50 years before.

They then tell us to drink a whole bunch of water and then they make us sit still and listen to these videos. They won't ever let you take notes, because they think that if you do so you are only doing it to goof around. Then they give all 60 of us 1 minute, to go to the bathroom, an hour later.

We usually only had 2 minutes to eat our entire meal and we had to yell out our complete name and social security number, before we were able to get food. They have soda pop and ice cream, but, if you take it, they punish the whole platoon later. When they turned the lights on at 4:30 am, you must get up that split second and do intense physical exercise for several hours, before you get to eat anything.

When I go to the Veterans, it brings back the feelings I had during the military because the veterans are another kind of irrational bureaucracy. In the VA, like the Army, every thing is screwed up and although you are powerless to control your own fate, you need to be proactive about spotting when they screw things up, so you do not suffer more, as a result. One of the hardest things to do for me is to fill our forms, because I am very literal and the forms ask questions in such a way that I do not know how to answer them.

The Veterans make every attempt to use their services as slow, complicated, undocumented, confusing, unpredictable, obsolete, inaccessible, inadequate, and unqualified, in an attempt to get you to give up, so they can save money by not providing the services they are legally required too. The VA "only" has a budget of 300 billion dollars a year.

It takes acts of congress to get them to do anything. We call them on the phone and they are busy and we go down to the clinic and they are busy on the

phone. It is now 2016 and we can barely order medicine online for only the last year or two. They still won't use email for anything. They often send a letter reminding me of an appointment after the appointment has already occurred. Where does the money go? We could give them 3 times the budget, if we bought 6 less F-22 stealth fighter aircraft.

Gas Chamber

One of the things that really downright terrified me was the gas chamber. The military does not use mustard gas, but rather tear, gas in a small room, with 50 people. They have good reason to do this, because it motivates soldiers to put on their mask, as quickly as possible, and it is a good way to detect if your protective mask is working properly. Most people dread this, but my experience was more severe for several reasons.

The first reason was that I can barely breathe under heavy smoke, like in a sauna. I wrote that I had allergies and hay fever, on my medical entrance forms, but my recruiter ripped them up and said to fill it out again without saying that. This is why you cannot enter the Army, if you have asthma.

Second, I have very sensitive skin and eyes. Third of all, we were the last platoon to enter the gas chamber and they added a stick of the tear gas every time a new group came in and we were the last, so we got a higher concentration.

You come in with your mask sealed up on your head and only your hands are bare. Your hands feel like they are on fire and someone's mask doesn't work and they start freaking out. Then you are told to take off your mask.

You are then in there for about 5 minutes, which feels more like a couple hours. You can't get out because there are only 2 entrances and a big drill sergeant was blocking either end. I felt like I was in hell and drowning in fire. Ironically,

the drill sergeants with you inside did not take off their masks or complete chemical suits.

I was about to be let out and I asked if I could get out and then I was thrown to the back of the line for one or both of two reasons: they thought I wasn't opening my eyes wide enough as I have narrow almond shaped eyes and I had written in a letter to my parents regarding an incident between another drill sergeant and a young soldier. I criticized the drill sergeant, in the personal letter, which I found out later they read both for laughs and to monitor what was going on.

You are forced to do this, at least once a year, in the army and later in the open air, at what they called FTX, at the end of basic training. The commanding officer or first sergeant told us afterwards that if we didn't do properly at the rifle qualification range that we would be sent back to the gas chamber. I told my drill sergeant that I should leave the military, because I got too scared in the gas chamber, but the military likes fear, because it motivates people. They said I wouldn't have to deal with this in the rest of my military service in computers, which was not true.

Chemical Weapons

I had asked my recruiter, who claimed he was a US Army Ranger, and served in the first Persian Gulf war, about what the training was for what the Army calls NBC, which is basically the same as weapons of mass destruction. It stands for Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical weapons. Chemical weapons are basically either nerve agents or blistering agents that either burn your eyes and lungs or destroy your nervous system, which are very similar to insecticides. The blister agents like mustard gas are generally not fatal, just very painful.

They were invented in World War I, because the only way to escape machine gun fire is to dig trenches and they had long stalemates during world war I and

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so to force the soldier out of the trenches, they released mustard gas (because the gas was heavier than air) and then kill them with machine gun fire. A fox hole is like a portable trench.

The recruiter said that we do not have to worry about this, because no one uses them because there are international treaties every country has signed that state they will never use them. The problem with this explanation is that all the countries we will have any chance of fighting either never signed the treaty or were never had any intention of honoring it. Almost every country in the Middle East and Russia has huge stockpiles of these chemical weapons and have used them in a number of recent wars.

When the first troops went in, during both Iraqi wars, they were wearing what is called MOPP4 gear which means they wore chemical suits, gloves, boots, and masks. You don't usually wear these as the suits only last 6 hours and the masks 18 hours without new filters/canisters for the mask and fresh pants.

There are four problems with the suit. The suits are rubber and so make you very hot, fighting in a desert, which is one of the most common types of environments, in which many of our recent wars have been fought. There is no way to cool yourself off, without drinking a lot of water (which is very difficult to do, with the suit on) but if you need to go the bathroom, there is no way to even pee, without exposing your private parts, to chemical burns. It is also much harder to shoot accurately, while in this rubber suit.

In both these Persian Gulf wars, the invading American troops wore these suits, because they felt there was a high chance of the US Army being exposed to these chemical weapons. Therefore, the recruiter would have remembered this very vividly, which was only 4 years prior. He lied. After the gas chamber, I finally realized what the military was like, but could not get out, at that time.

Military Lies

I found out, over time, that almost every benefit you are claimed you get were all not going to happen, for various reasons, which were designed to be that way, because of the policies the military decided on, even though it would cost very little money.

The military is a worse job then being a janitor or fast food worker, because you get very little money, none of the benefits they claim, and you never really have time of. The military is extremely hard on you physically, once you get out of training, almost every job is on the front lines (even dental or chaplain), and you are exposed to toxic chemical, in almost every field you can get a job, in the army.

You do mostly janitorial work, even with the most advanced jobs available, and many of these jobs have no civilian equivalency. You have no rights and are subject to extremely brutal punishments for minor infractions (plus you get all the civilian penalties, in addition), you cannot leave under any circumstances and are almost guaranteed to be called back, whenever there is a war. It is very difficult to get an honorable discharge, because there are several other types of discharges, between honorable and dishonorable and only honorable discharges get any government benefits.

Solutions to Army Problems and Terrorism

The things the army needs to do to make the soldiers lives more bearable is to at least double the pay for non-officers, provide enough firepower and ammunitions to protect soldier, going out of range of the main army, with few people, all alone, be reasonable about punishments, let the soldiers leave after their tour is up and do not call them back, and offer a transition service to get them adjusted back to life among civilians.

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If we need to take part in a major war, we need to draft every American and everyone who votes for the war can show up the next day at Basic Training as enlisted soldiers. This will cut down on the federal budget, because wars will be much more rare, when congressmen and senators have to serve on the front lines. None of the wars for the last 50 years, that we fought in, made life better, for anyone, in any part of the world.

Being a superpower, with huge amounts of natural resources, oceans away from any enemies, some of the lowest population densities, and armed to the teeth should not be afraid of terrorists, that kill less people then toddlers do with guns. If we are so afraid of death, we should look to eating more healthy and driving more safely - that would be rational. The use of terrorism will continue, because our response to it is what weakens us.

If the terrorists could get nuclear weapons, they would have done so by now. We totally destroyed Al Queda, but now have bred ISIS. In the process, we turned our country into a police state, that we fought World War II and the Cold War, to prevent, as well as destroyed our economy, trying to destroy an idea.

Terrorism is a last ditch resort, for an enemy, that cannot hurt you, in any direct way. It is more effective, for the amount of money it takes, because warfare is only hard because they are shooting back at you. Attacking a soft target, like children, requires little effort, because they cannot defend themselves. The very same reason why we say terrorism is unfair and how much we vow to destroy terrorists is the exact reason why our enemies will continue to us terrorism to bankrupt us.

Many empires throughout history have spent too much money on wars and destroyed themselves, in the process. Any country with enough money can afford

the greatest weapons and army, because the highest tech weapons make other weapons obsolete, but also cost exponentially more. Empires usually fail from within, not due to an external enemy. Terrorism is psychological warfare and only works if it cripples your economy and changes your way of life.

How the US Army Should Change Training

On the flip side, Army training is way too easy to prepare a person for battle. Running 2 miles and doing 50 push-ups does not get a soldier into good enough shape to survive in combat. I thought that Army training would be more difficult, but I obviously did not rise to the occasion - I should have failed out and I realized this and communicated this to my Drill Sergeant, at the time.

Watching a TV documentary show one time about the Russian special forces, one of the Spetsnaz soldiers said that in combat you do not rise to the occasion, but rather sink to your lowest level of training. Russian regular army recruits are beat to an inch of their lives, in training, and maybe this is better, in the long run.

One of the hardest things to do physically is what the Army calls get up and get down. You stand up and then get down in push-up position and then get back up again as fast as you can. This is the kind of training that the Army should focus on for physical fitness levels needed in combat.

In another documentary, I learned that American Army Special Forces training teaches recruits how to deal with lose-lose situations. Marines, in my advanced training, said that war was 80% boredom and 20% terror. In warfare, there are not any good solutions - there are only bad and worse decisions. No one really wins wars, unless one group destroys the other economically, after the war, to improve their economy. Unless you want to deal with occupying the land and the people, starting a war is pointless.

Our drill sergeants explained in detail why they most of the things they did, that we didn't like. Basic Training could be done in a community college settings, but the point of basic training and especially Drill Sergeants yelling at you is designed to see how you respond to what they call combat stress. Basic Training is designed to be more about mental than physical training and is a kind of psychological test, to see if you can mentally survive in combat.

The skills we learned in basic training are called combat survival skills and mean exactly that. I remember one soldier taking a test where you plug in a phone and then switch it on and she failed the test, even though she was a college graduate in accounting and was very bright. People that do good in the military usually do worse in real life and vice versa, because the army is good at motivating people but some people break down under high stress situations, where others thrive in them. Any Army Training isn't intellectually difficult, as many skills are on elementary school level intellectual levels, but doing something under stress is an entirely different skill.

2.3.2 Veteran's Story

Definition of Word Veteran

Most people know, that the same word can have more than one meaning, and the meaning is different in a different context, even if spelled and pronounced the same, at least in modern English. What many people don't know is that many words we use, in a common speech have very different meanings, in another domain.

The abbreviation ED means erectile dysfunction, in medical usage, but means emotionally disturbed, in education. Computer terms are often used, for similar metaphors as in common usage, like the words file or file folder. A file outside

computers usually means a file folder and, outside computers, we refer to a file as a document.

The same situation occurs in the terminology, in the military, as opposed to common usage. When referring to veterans, in common usage, this term was often used to mean people, who served in a war, in the past. In the modern US military and government, veteran means something slightly different.

Many people do not know that the Veterans Administration is NOT part of the Department of Defense or the military. The Veterans Affairs its own cabinet level department, with its own secretary. A veteran, in the U.S. military and government, does not mean someone, in the military, that has served a tour or served during a war.

A veteran is a civilian, who once served, in any branch of the military, in peace or war. Once you leave the military, with a discharge, you are no longer part of the military: you are then a veteran. The Veterans Administration has no power over anyone, veterans or others, unless you work for them. The VA is there to provide services, for eligible veterans.

Veterans Administration

The Veterans Administration gets 300 billion dollars a year and their main objective is to make it so long and difficult, to get through their bureaucracy, that veterans just give up, and they do all this, to save a few bucks. Recently, the VA got in trouble, for not treating someone in time and they died, as a result. The government looked into and saw that the VA was lying, in its records, about how long the wait to get seen was.

The VA managers response was that they all immediately quit and so the Veterans are even farther behind, because now the doctors and other staff have to rotate the position of manager, amongst themselves, in addition to their normal

duties. One big mistake of the Veterans is that they have, unlike the U.S. Military, off base, created their own parallel medical system.

Veterans Pension

I am 100% disabled veteran and get a full pension, but one of the conditions is that I have to let someone else manage my income. My mom volunteered and they agreed, but refused to pay her for it. We had an accountant do the actual bill paying. The veterans have a paranoia, that people like me will be cheated, by our families, so they harassed my mom so much about it, that she finally had to stop doing it.

The Veterans then assigned me someone we never heard of, from a small town, hours away and we don't even know her address. I have to pay out of my pension double what the accountant charged, for doing less. My mom had to give access to all my accounts and had to give all my savings bonds to this unknown person with no way to verify this was even the right person. We never saw this person before and I might see her once a year, at the most. We still don't even even know her address.

The first few months, she didn't pay the electrical bill and, if I did not see the flyer on my door, they would have cut off my heat and electricity, in the middle of the winter. This cannot be good for my credit score. She had trouble opening a PDF attachment, sent my ID across email unencrypted, and was using free wifi, to do my banking, before I thought to tell her not to.

To make sure the bill gets paid, I had to get her to set up all my bills, to auto pay. I don't get any of my bills, so I am unsure if they are charging for services I don't want to pay for. If I ever have problems, with my cell phone or cable, I have to get half the informative from her. I never know whose address or phone number is on file. This lady also pays everything via E-checks, which are obso-

lete, unsecured, and widely unsupported.

Veterans Administration Hospitals and Clinics

I am in the largest city, for over a hundred miles and a regional center, for medicine, in many areas, especially eye surgery. They are so big, wealthy, and diversified that they not only serve as a hospital, they have dozens of giant buildings, for different specialties, on their campus. They are so big and important, that they even teach medicine, to people becoming nurses, in the community.

One of the big draws to my city, from other parts of Oregon, besides the colleges in town, is that we are a regional center for medicine. The problem with the Veterans Administration hospital, for the area, is that they located it, in a tiny town, hours away from my city. There is transportation there, by a bus, but it is not operated by the VA, but by a Veteran's charity. They will take you to this Veteran's hospital, but you have to get an early morning appointment and you have to schedule it months in advance.

To make sure you don't miss the bus back, you have to hurry over to the Veteran's charity office, right after your appointment and wait for several hours there. If you miss the bus back, you have to stay overnight there, until you can get a ride back and you might have to wait several days, to get an opening.

The place they have you stay in, if you stay overnight, is right next to the place where the mentally ill are committed, to the psychiatric ward. You have to share the room, with other people, and there is no place set up for securing valuables.

I left that area early in the morning, I was then locked out, and could not get back in. I was almost stuck, in a courtyard, for hours, in the early morning, except that luckily for me, one person had accidentally left open the courtyard

gate, which was hard to find in the dark.

There is a veterans clinic, in my town, but not a hospital. This clinic is only open business days and during regular business hours. They shut down after 5pm and are not open on the weekends or federal holidays. Ironically, they are also closed on Veteran's Day and Memorial Day.

If I need a to get to the hospital, or to the doctor, within 3 weeks, even to the clinic, I have to travel by car, for several hours, to get there. You have to call in and the nurse, who has to call you back later, that day or the next day then determines how quickly you get in, or if you even get in at all, for that problem.

If you want to get the veterans, to pay, for your doctor visit, if you have to get in another hospital, because you need to get to see a doctor, in less than in 3 weeks, you have to get pre-authorization from the nurse. The nurse is only available during office hours and often takes a day or two, to call back and give you an answer.

My Experiences with VA Medical System

If you do not get approved, before your doctor's visit, they refuse to pay the visit, even though they are legally responsible, for all my medical bills, regardless of source. We called before hand a few times and never got authorized, so we finally give up. If I get an infection now or anything that needs treatment, in under 3 weeks, I have to now go to the urgent care and pay the entire bill myself, without any insurance.

They only have dental visit appointments available every few years, so I go to a private dentist and pay 100% myself, with no insure, even though I am legally guaranteed dental care, by the Veterans. One time, we asked for a dentist, which was in a hospital, a few hours away, they told us to see our own dentist and refused to pay for it.

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At one point, we had to go to our US Congressman, for our district, to get an antidepressant, when I was in crisis. We ended up going all the way to the emergency room, hours away and they still would not prescribe an antidepressant for me. I still had to wait 3 weeks, to get in.

I have had sinus and other infections, so I was forced to use a local private urgent care, to get seen, before the infection killed me. I had to pay 100% myself, even though I am legally entitled, to get my entire health care provided, for free, by the VA.

The Veterans hospital is a huge facility, with many buildings, but they only seem to use one and there are hundreds of people and only a couple doctors, in the entire building. They have no problem spending huge amounts of money building things veterans will never use, but are too cheap to hire an adequate number of doctors.

When you see the doctor, in the Veterans, it is really a nurse practitioner, not a real doctor. If I have any medical attention, that needs to be treated, within a month, I have to go the local private hospital emergency room, or urgent care. I then have to pay for everything, out of pocket and get no insurance, to cover it. I pay all of the bill solely by myself.

My First Surgery

I recently had my first surgery. It was to pull out a spherical piece of tissue, much like a rubber ball, in consistency. It grew to 2cm in size, just below my left knee socket. I had to use the Veterans Administration medical system. The knee is doing better than before, after just 2 weeks.

The bad side is that it took 6 months, to get the surgery. I also got a 4 different diagnoses, from 2 doctors and 2 nurse practitioners, along the way. I had to go to 4 different locations, sometimes hours away, for each one, and this was

dragged, out over 6 months.

If I had cancer, I could have been dead, by then, and the tumor could have grown or shrunk, to an entirely different size. After they got the MRI, 1 doctor and 1 nurse practitioner misread the MRI, as they did not bother to pan through the entire 3d space. Luckily, there was an orthopedic surgeon there, the last day they were diagnosing the problem, or else the Veterans would have never found the lump.

Also, even the hospital, hours away, didn't have the ability, to perform even basic surgeries, so we had to travel even farther, in the opposite direction, outside my regional VA system, to get the surgery. The ER doctor, at this farther away VA hospital, had a hard time understanding me and had a thick accent from India. He had no records of all my medicines and didn't bother to write down all of them.

VA Medical Software

When I go into the office, for an appointment, they want me to use a computer, to log in, although there is a person, that does the same thing. The computer asks 20-30 different screens of directions and keeps asking for my date of birth and if my address has changed. I find this very stressful.

When I call, on the phone, they give what appears to be an answering machine message. If you know to wait past all the long winded message, including repeating over and over suicide hotline numbers and telling to call 911, if it is an emergency, you can possibly reach an actual person.

The medical software they use only runs on Windows XP and logs the doctor or nurse out every 15 minutes. At the farther away hospital, the doctor had to log on to a text only terminal and kept getting reminded, to check his mail, 5 times, while he attempted to set up an appointment. When I go to the nurse

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practitioner, for a number of years, half the time the medical software was not working, so they didn't record any information.

The doctor or nurse randomly records things I say when, at the VA mental health nurse practitioner. The nurse then scans through, to random times, to things a previous nurse practitioner wrote down years ago. I get a new nurse practitioner every few years and they know nothing about my case.

VA Diagnostic Practices

They often think I am manic, because I talk fast (because I think fast), so they keep on asking to put me on Lithium. I finally did so and was on it for several months and noticed no difference, except my coordination became so bad, that I kept poking myself in the eye.

When your major symptoms are paranoia and depression, this only fits Paranoid Schizophrenia, not Bipolar or Schizoaffective Disorders. Also, everyone actually qualified to diagnose me have all agreed, that I have Paranoid Schizophrenia, and not any other disorder. All of these doctors (psychiatrists) are absolutely sure of it. That is also my official diagnosis, for my veterans pension.

The reoccurring underline problem is that these nurse practitioners and doctors have very little understanding of mental illness. Oftentimes, I am scared, by the fact, that I may know more about mental illness, than them. The only thing they do, to help, is reorder my medicines. If I did not know as much about Schizophrenia, as I do, I would not know how to cope with the illness, on an even basic level.

The nurses constantly want to change my medicines. If you get on the wrong anti-depressant, you can suffer terribly, for weeks or months, to find the right one and right amount. Medicines also have some extreme side effects.

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Most anti-psychotic medicines make you very tired, make you never feel full (no matter how much you eat). They also almost directly cause diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. One side effect I had, when changing my anti-psychotic, was that I lost control of my bowels. This was not fun to clean up. It was literally a mess.

VA Medicine Prescriptions and Pharmacy

The medicine is all screwed up. Even the regional center, although technically having a pharmacy, stocks no medicine and you cannot get your prescription filled from them. Some medicines I have a huge backlog of and others I get barely enough. They have no way of getting auto renewal, of long term medications. I have to manually renew them, each month.

Recently, they moved this from calling a phone number, to the website, as this was mandated, by legislation. When I first signed up, I was told I can do it at home, by myself. I had to fill out my name, social security number, and date of birth. The computer said one of these in incorrect, but I could sign up for a non-pro account. I found out later this account level would not allow me, to order my medicine or provide any functionality, that was actually needed. I had to go to the Veterans office, to get authorized or approved.

At one point, when I had to go to the office, because I got an answering machine, when I called, to reorder my medicine. This is necessary, because I can only refill my medicine, for a few months, and then it needs to be reordered and it cannot be reordered, by myself or online.

I went in there and asked the secretary there, who was on the phone, with someone else. He said that he saw me on "secure messaging". I said that I never messaged him, as I never used instant messaging. I finally figured out that "secure messaging" meant filling out an order form online. No one else uses these

terms this way, in the entire computer industry.

One of medicines I take for PRN is a variant of Valium, which I use less than 5 times a year. It knocks me out 45 minutes, after taking it, and it can be very addictive. The Veterans order 30 of these every month and, if I took them that often, I would both never wake up and be addicted to the medicine I still don't know what to do, with all these bottles, filled with medication, I won't ever use.

I don't stop ordering it, because if I need the medicine, for an emergency, they won't let me take it if it is expired and I have to wait 3 weeks to get in and get it reordered. I still need it, but would prefer to be subscribed 30 a year, which would be plenty. The big reason for this medicine is that there is no quick acting anti-depressant. If I am in crisis and suffering severe depression I can at least get some sleep with this PRN.

Psychiatric Treatment and Discrimination of the Mentally Ill

If you ever say you are severely depressed, they put you in kind of jail cell and make you wait a while. They then evaluate whether or not they are going force lock you up. As long as you talk really slowly and say the right things, you will get out in couple hours.

But there is no fast acting anti-depressant. If you go in for treatment of depression, the doctors response is to lock you up, against your will. I don't know why the hospitals think this will improve my depression, anymore than putting a prisoner, in solitary confinement, will improve his depression.

It comes down to avoiding lawsuits and treating the mentally ill, as the problem, to others safety. People assume the mentally ill commit violent crimes when, in reality, they are most likely the victims of violent crimes. Everybody with a different gender or skin color is legally protected, by law, from discrimi-

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nation, but nobody mentally ill is protected. People are worried about being prejudiced, because of skin color, but go out of their way to target and lock people up, who have another kind of genetic difference.

If a person developmentally disabled does obnoxious things, that is a normal response, for that condition, everybody goes out of their way, to help out and lift them up, and encourage them. If someone mentally ill does something normal for someone to do, with that condition, they make them a scapegoat, make laws targeting their safety, make lists of them, hunt them down, and lock them up.

This targeting and scapegoating of the mentally ill is done by both present day liberal and conservative nationalist ideologues in American businesses, media, and government agencies. They are looking to unite the country, by creating a common enemy. This is done for the same kind of baseless and ignorant reasons the Nazis persecuted Jewish people, during World War II.

The mentally ill are targeted, because they are a convenient, politically correct, and weak constituency. The mentally ill have little ability to articulate their perspective or build enough money or bring together a large and powerful enough base, to resist these knee jerk reactionary policies. These policies are based on no more than fear and ignorance, which is not tolerated by other analogous groups.

Local Treatment of Mentally Ill

The problem with our perception by the public is that it is much easier for someone who is blind, transgender, or developmentally disabled and their families, to advocate for their communities.

Our local government lumps together people with disabilities, along with LGBTQ, and people of color, into one group and this group is there to represent people, from all those different areas. The committee was lead by a person,

whose qualification was that she was gay, and almost every member of the committee was blind.

I heard about this committee, I visited one of their sessions, and could have possibly gotten on it, but the main thing I wanted changed was to increase bus service times and routes, which they had no control over. I also find it stressful having to go to the same meeting, even once a month.

So the local government is spending a huge amount of money, installing electronic talking street crossing guides. Nothing is being done for the mentally ill.

One of the big, supposed advocacy groups, for the mentally ill and homeless, that oversees low income housing, in our community, won't let anyone, who has been a recipient of their services ever work, or even volunteer for them. They won't even allow the mentally to scrub their toilets for them.

I was not even allowed to volunteer for them, after I used there services, which made me feel worthless and like a piece of trash, that they wanted to get rid of. They obviously don't care about anyone, but themselves, which is ironic, since they are a charity group. This group also takes private and government money and the community is not aware of these policies. The community would be shocked, if they heard of these policies.

2.3.3 Surgery Process

This last July, I was getting out of the shower, I straightened my leg and it felt like it popped and was painful. I waited a few days and it did not get better. I then went to a local urgent care, as I cannot get into the Veterans clinic, in less than 3 weeks. The doctor, at the urgent care, gave me some exercises to do and I set up an appointment with the Veterans.

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At the Veterans, they set me up, for an appointment, with a specialist, in orthopedics and told me to take Alieve, for 2 weeks. I went to the specialist, which was a few hours away, at the Veterans hospital. He was a former surgeon and had somewhere between 20 and 30 years of experience doing surgeries and was only at the veterans hospital 2 days a week, as he was retired. He even knew most of the orthopedic surgeons, in the state, by their first names. They took an x-ray of the knee and he moved my leg around, to see what was limiting my movement. He said I had a torn meniscus.

We then scheduled an MRI, for a few weeks later. He claimed I would only be in the machine, up to my waist and it would only take a few minutes. He said that it would be pretty open, because they have to make it big, because people today are so fat.

I ended up being in the machine, up to my neck and was in there for 30-60 minutes. There was no opening. After the doctor/surgeon got the results of the MRI, he said that it confirmed what he thought. He was sure I needed surgery.

A few months later, we went in the other direction, a few hours away, to a different Veterans hospital, as that Veterans hospital in my region could not even perform basic surgeries. A nurse practitioner looked at the MRI and said I didn't need surgery and that my knee just became stiff, because of a lack of exercise. The surgeon was there, at the time (completely different person than before), so the nurse practitioner then asked, for a second opinion, from him.

The surgeon panned through the entire knee, as the nurse practitioner only looked at the top part and we saw a big white ball, that obviously shouldn't be there, right under the knee socket. The surgeon said I did need surgery, but I did not have a torn meniscus. He said I had a growth, like a rubber ball, below my knee and needed to have it removed, to get full movement of my knee and

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avoid getting tendinitis, for the rest of my life. He said they have done surgeries for this before and, while they had no idea what caused this, less than one percent of patients had it grow back, after surgery. He was almost positive it was not cancerous, either.

We scheduled the pre-op, for a few weeks later. The pre-op is when you tell the nurse and doctors all the medicines you take and any relevant issues you have, that the surgeon and/or anesthesiologist need to know. You also get directions, for what to do before and after surgery. One of my main issues was that I was and am on anti-psychotics, which are very similar to old anesthesia. They said the anesthesia works different now and that would not be a problem. I also told them I had restless leg syndrome, so they needed to tie my knee down. I had bad acid reflux, so they should keep my head raised. Finally, I am very sensitive to chemicals, so I asked them to avoid using cleaners, around me while, I am out. These other issues they told me to tell the surgeon and anesthesiologist, just before the surgery.

When I came back for the surgery, I stayed, at a hotel, overnight, with my parents, because we were hours away, the surgery was scheduled for the morning, and I had to have someone else pick me up and drive me back. The veterans offered to pay for my hotel, but they would not pay for my parents. The room they set up was going to have 3 people, but only 2 beds.

One of the hardest things you have to do, before surgery is that you cannot drink, eat, or take any medicines, after midnight, the night before. I woke up, a few hours after midnight, due to acid reflux and could not take any anti-acid. Because of this, I went to the emergency room, to see what they could do.

They gave me some liquid antacid, that I could only gargle and could not swallow and gave me a peppermint flavored sponge, to help keep me mouth more

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moist. One of the things I thought to do, which helped, a little, was to continue to rinse out my mouth with water and then spit it out. The reason why you cannot eat or drink has to do with the anesthesia. You can suffocate, under anesthesia, if you have eaten or drunk the night before.

Later that morning, they put me in a room, with many other patients, took away all my clothes and belongings, and made me put on a very thin gown, with the entire back open. They then put in the IV, in the upper part of my hand, just above my thumb and it hurt somewhat. If you have to go to the bathroom, then, be sure you remember, to carry your IV bag, so you don't rip it out. The good part about the IV is no matter what they put into you later on, they never again inject you with a needle.

I then saw the anesthesiologist and the surgeon and explained the situations, that they should be aware. The anesthesiologist said the anesthesia totally paralyzes you and you have no memory or awareness of the surgery, during or afterwards. They wheel you into a different room, with about 5 doctors and nurses.

They put a rubber mask on you have to breathe through it, a little bit. The smell is terrible, but the mask was not hard, to breathe through, for me, because it reminded me of the gas masks you use in the military, so it made me feel safe. Then, just before you lose consciousness, it feels like they are smothering you.

The next thing you know is that you are wheeled into a new room. You are quite drowsy, but there is no pain and the surgery is finished. I came out of the anesthesia very fast. It usually takes a number of hours, to fully regain consciousness. They then put you in a wheel chair and give you a special kind of icepack. You can eat and drink all you want, shortly after you fully come out of the

anesthesia.

At this point, the biggest concerns are keeping your knee from swelling and keeping it from getting infected. I worried about breaking open the staples, by moving the knee too much, but the surgeon said that is not a problem, because the staples were not holding anything in and there was no pressure on them.

Later that evening, when I got home, the knee started hurting a huge amount. That first day, even with the Oxycontin, it felt like someone took a crow bar and was smashing my knee, as hard as they could, with it. For the next few days, it was quite painful, even with the Oxycontin. Another thing, to keep the pain down, make sure you ice the knee, all the time. It was very hard to get my knee comfortable, while sleeping. The first few days you cannot get water on the knee, or take a shower.

If you are using a wheel chair, you need a huge amount of space, to turn around in, and your arms will get really tired, really fast. Try to avoid bending your knee too much, or straightening it too much, as it is very painful. Use a walker and stop using the wheelchair, as soon as possible. The problem, with using the wheel chair, is that getting on or off it, you have to turn, at an angle and this can easily cause a lot of pain. Also, when in the wheelchair, avoid bumping your foot into anything, as this makes the knee hurt a lot.

I had the surgery, on December 15th, and, by a week later, I could walk with a walker. By Christmas Day, I could walk with just a cane. Within 2 weeks, I could walk 2 miles, on it. After Christmas, I stopped taking the Oxycontin or any other pain medicine. At that point, the main problem was that my knee had lost muscle, after not using it for 6 months, and so I needed, to use the cane, for a while.

A week after surgery, they pull out the staples, which doesn't hurt at all. Then

they clean the area, with antiseptic, which feels like cleaning the gravel, out of a wound, where you skinned your knee. Then they put on strips of tape, which you take off, I think, a week later.

By the 3rd week, my incision was turning light purple and fading to just a scar. After 3 weeks, I can now walk better, than I could, before the surgery. After 2 weeks, I got almost complete range of motion restored, on my knee. I am going to have to do physical therapy, to get the rest of the range of motion back.

2.4 Growing Up

2.4.1 Insights from Childhood

I was Odd

One of the reasons I did so well, after developing Schizophrenia, was that my childhood was happy and healthy. It was also an odd childhood, because I was odd: I read encyclopedias and maps in middle and high school; I was in 3 sports in high school, but was terrible at all of them; I was involved in 12 extracurricular activities at one time; and I started my own club.

Normal Childhood

But everything my parents did for me was done very well and helped me be balanced and stable: they made sure I participated in Boy and Cub Scouting, sports (I did Cross Country, Track and Field, and Cheerleading), learned how to do catering, and was in advanced classes in school. The one thing, that still bothers me, of what my parents did to me, as a kid, was that they spanked me.

Social Values

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My family is several generations behind in terms of social values. When I grew up, my parents required us to address them, as Sir and Mam. My parents required us, to do what they told us immediately and without question. We had to do chores, like weeding the garden, and cleaning the house, especially in the summer. We were also expected to work hard. We could only watch TV after we finished our homework. One of the worse things you could do was lie. We were always spanked for that. The spankings were especially painful, as my dad used a special kind of wood, that he made for a living, that was as strong as steel.

Parenting Style

One of the things my parents did, that was really wise, was to gradually let us have more and more freedom, as we got older. Too many parents and the legal system these days expect kids to grow up, in a day, as they cannot get in trouble at all, and then when they have a birthday and then nothing is tolerated. What is allowed in schools verses what is allowed in schools verses what is allowed at a typical job are night and day.

Religion

One of my parents strengths and the greatest gift they gave me was a love of God, scripture, and theology. Both my parents went to a Christian college, where they met, and so knew the Bible very well. My parents faith was one of the few things they had in common as they had opposite personalities. I grew up in a really interesting church, which we went to every Sunday, that was very much a paradoxical, as half the church was Evangelical and the other half was Mainline Protestant.

Education

My parents encouraged me, to read as much, as possible, and develop a love of

learning. We were expected, to get at least Bs, in every subject (and they considered this lenient). I was very good, at writing papers and tests, but I rarely did homework. I thought of much of school as indoctrination and had little interest in studying what we learned in school. But, just like I understood that God and the Bible are not the same as the local church, I realized that learning and school were not necessarily related.

Community Service

Another thing I learned growing up was a duty and a desire to give back to others, as I was treated well and was gifted in numerous areas. The source of this example was mostly Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. I later staffed at several summer camps and became an Eagle Scout (the highest rank/award in Boy Scouts). In Boy Scouts, you do not advance in rank, if you do not do community service and becoming an Eagle Scout involves planning and leading a large service project.

Personality

When I was in Middle School and High School, I was fairly immature and silly, but after a week in Basic Training, I was dead serious about everything I did, until very recently. I didn't put this together, until recently, but I now know, that my silliness was my way of coping with an anger problem. In school, I was very friendly and out going, but later became more sensitive and emotional, after the military. My family on both sides have a public and private self, where we tend to be easy going in public, but in private we are high strung.

2.4.2 Self Improvement

This may sound funny and hard to understand, for people who know me, but self

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improvement stresses me out. I do try to improve myself, but whenever I decide to work on learning something, that I am bad at, I get discouraged very easily. One of the big motivations for the activities I got involved with in High School and one of the major reasons why I joined the military was to improve my abilities in activities, that I did not do well at. These experiences were some of the things that emphasized the importance of humility for me: failure.

The list of my activities in Middle School and High School was a list of things I have little ability in: Boy Scouts (summer camp counselor and finally Eagle Scout), long distance running (cross country and track), cheerleading, speech and debate, peer counseling, French, viola and trombone (in Middle School), and shop (in Middle School). Even one of my favorite classes, English literature, was not exactly an optimal topic for me, as I did not like Shakespeare and did not want to learn about Greek mythology, as it was, from my point of view, basically demonology.

One of the things that made me so bad at these activities was that I was involved in way too many things at once. My junior year of high school, I was involved in 12 extracurricular activities, at once. I was a terribly irresponsible student, as I rarely did homework, partly because I was so tired, after Cross Country or Track practice. I was constantly late to classes, as well. I had been late so many times, I had to stop out of Track my senior year and do Saturday schools, to make up for my late arrivals. I also missed about 10 days each semester, due to extracurricular activities.

One of the major reasons why I joined the military and went enlisted was that my parents could not afford to pay for my college tuition. My dad made about the same I do now, adjusted for inflation, but had to support 2 kids and a wife. He worked in the mill for 12 years, and, when I was going to Middle School,

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went back to school, to become a teacher and later became a school administrator. One of the things that really impresses me about my dad is that he constantly improves himself. He has made himself a much better person and put huge effort into mastering not only his job but improving his understanding of me and just general self improvement.

The other major the reason why I joined the military and went enlisted was that my grades were not high enough, to get any scholarships. ROTC is a program in the military, where you train to be an officer, while your are going to college and the military pays for your college tuition, and then you serve a certain number of years in the military, after college, as an officer - I think it was 6 or 8 years. I needed a higher GPA, than I had in high school, to get into this program. There is another kind of ROTC, which you get less money for, but you can do after you start going to college, that has much lower requirements - I had a friend that became an officer that way.

I did the same in college: I majored in business administration, with a minor in Chinese. Later, I found out I could not learn Chinese fast enough, to pass the class and I both hated business classes and was terrible at them. I had to take accounting (the basic book keeping required class for business majors) 5 times, to pass it. I ended up finding out I liked and was good at philosophy, as I took Chinese Literature, because I was studying Chinese and I used it for my business breadth requirement.

I had not passed so many classes, that I had to take some in the summer, and some of the few, that were still available were an Existentialism class and a class about Ecofeminism. Later, I switched my major to journalism, but could not figure out the grammar class. Just before I was supposed to take a grammar test, for Journalism, I had my psychotic episode and ended up, voluntarily,

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in the psych ward, of a local private hospital. I was then diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia.

I decided, after that, to focus on things I was good at and that is why I pursued learning about the humanities, which was my favorite class in high school and included my favorite activity in high school: Model United Nations. I was always interested in religion and history, as many of the books I read were non-fiction and I even the fiction I did read was often historical novels.

I always was very religious, partly because of my parents, but also because of my personality and spiritual sensitivity. I always enjoyed crafts, like we did in Cub Scouts, which is likely why I enjoy web design. I was also good at writing, as I won the first prize in my state for a Peace Essay Contest in high school and usually got As in my advanced literature classes.

When I have tried learning something I was bad at, since then, I have always failed and gave it up, after being really stressed out and later felt bad about it. I tried going back to college (local community college, local university, local Christian liberal arts college, and local Bible college), learning another language (Chinese and programming languages including C++, Perl, and Javascript), and I tried learning to play the guitar. I have read a number of self help books, to understand how I think better and improve my ability, to communicate, to others. I also read more books about ideas I strongly disagreed with.

I tried many activities, to meet others, like Church young adult groups, volunteering (as technical support for an ISP, web design for non-profits, and a local music venue) a writing group in town, speech club, and other things like that. One of the things that really stresses me out is having to do things repeatedly, over and over again. Some other major things that stresses me out is having to finish something, by a certain time or having to do work, on the same thing, ev-

ery day.

2.4.3 Sources of Obsession with Humility

Let me begin by saying that I realize the following is not completely rational, nor is there a clear chain of cause and effect. The following is written from an emotional perspective. Much of my written work is about humility, but it has been tough to trace down where the obsession started with me. One important thing to remember first is that humility is associated with failure and submission (also in Taoism, Sufism, and Christianity). Jesus Christ was the only truly humble person and the most understandable aspect of God (although also fully God, in His own right).

I obviously was obsessed, with humility, after my experiences, in the military, from the very beginning of training. After going through basic training, I had absolutely no interest, in ever being a leader, of anything or anyone. I understood, from then on, the importance of unions and the labor movement. I would never vote conservative again.

But this all started, before then, because I had no interest, in joining the Marines, because I could not stand their arrogance (and I didn't think I could make it through their training). The Army appealed to me most, as I saw it as the everyman's branch, of the military services. The key to me understanding where this started was to first think of anyone, who made me extremely repulsed, because of their arrogance.

But, I could not find any, in middle school or high school, and I also enjoyed high school quite a bit, so I instead started looking, for internal reasons. I remember

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a key realization, while in the military, about how I constantly chose endeavors, that improved myself and I constantly ran into failure, so I decided, in the future, to focus only on things I was good at. I now still take on challenging projects, but they are in areas where I am good enough - they are difficult, but still achievable by me.

I saw high school and specifically clubs, as I way to improve myself, so that I could get an edge, in getting into college and then the workforce. I remember my absolute failure at speech, cross country and track, French, and to a large extent Boy Scouting (although I did eventually become an Eagle Scout and staffed at several summer camps). One of the reasons, for my failures, was that I was doing too many activities and did not spend enough time, on some of them, to do better than I did.

I was actually good, at several things including: writing, politics, and international relations (I actually started my own political club and I won the first place, in state, for a national peace essay contest, and was one of the youngest ones, to do so, in the nation, that year). In one of my first research projects, was when I first studied philosophy and my favorite class, in high school, was a humanities class. I found out much later on, that I was good at acting too, but I did not get the first part I tried for, so I did not continue that.

The failure was not lifelong and it happened, again, after I was unable to complete my military enlistment and my bachelor's degree. This was what drew me to Taoism, which I first discovered in my Chinese Literature. This was also when I first found out, that I liked Asian philosophy and religion.

I took Chinese literature, because I was trying to learn Chinese, at the time, (which didn't work well for me, as I could not learn the vocabulary fast enough) and also needed a breadth requirement, for my business major (and literature

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was one of my favorite subjects in high school). I was actually pretty good at economics, but I had a real tough time with basic accounting/book keeping, although I did better at the managerial aspects of accounting.

I also started to learn about web design and Linux, about this time. I hated business, but I believed I could get a good job, with a BA in Business Management. Later on, I switched to Journalism. Shortly after this, I was first diagnosed, with Schizophrenia, and ended up, in the psychiatric ward, of a local private hospital, voluntarily. I have not been to a psychiatric hospital, since then and have lived, with less and less help, and for a number of years, with very little assistance. My parents don't even live, in the same city, as I do.

My outlook on life would have been much different, if I decided not to go, into the military enlisted (non-Officer), or had decided not, to go into the military, at all. One of the motivations, for going into the military, was to pay for college and even though I was only in the military, for 13-1/2 months, I actually earned enough for college, so that I have never been in debt. If I had not been approved, as a disabled veteran, with a 100% service connected disability with a 100% pension, until a few months later (from June 2001), I would have been forced to re-enlist in the military (following the terrorist attacks on September 1st, 2001) and would likely still be in the military now.

One of the big factors, in making my time, in college, not much fun had to do with my constant allergy caused pink eye, which I had since the end of basic training, in the military. 10% of my veteran's disability still comes from that. Most of the pain was lifted, after getting on my first ant-psychotic, for a couple week, after I was first diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia (many times allergies are affected greatly by stress).

2.5 My Recent Past

2.5.1 The Beginning of the Website, the Studies, and the Books

When I started my website back in July of 1998, my objective was to share poetry with my uncle and the world. I was back from the military, for about a year and I felt I had failed, because I did not complete my tour of duty. I did get an honorable discharge, even though my first sergeant didn't want me to, because I had no disciplinary action made against me. I didn't even have a very minor one, which most soldiers get, by that point.

At the same time, I was going to school, at the University of Oregon, as a Business Major, which I thoroughly hated (because it was a practical degree). I had to take accounting 5 times, to get a high enough grade, but got A's in economics. I also bombed my test, to get into the upper division business school. At this time, my math ability started to disappear and I did terrible in an advanced Economics class and a Statistics class, as I became unable to perform simple math operations.

I also tried learning Chinese and taking an upper division History of Western Philosophy course. I did terrible in Chinese, because I couldn't learn the characters fast enough and I have a kind of speech impediment, so that I couldn't hear or make the tones, that distinguish between different words, that sound similar, correctly. I had to withdraw, from The Western Philosophy course, as I did not remember, to turn in my paper the first week and was told I could not pass the class without it.

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I then ended up moving out of my parents house and ended up coming back later that year, as I was running through my college money. I actually did receive some college money from the military, since I got an honorable discharge and was in the military, for over a year. The federal financial aid didn't count in my parents income, because I left the military with an honorable discharge. I also saved \$5,000 of my military pay, while in the Army.

Then I went back to college, that summer and fall, and changed my major to journalism. I took classes that summer and fall quarter, including some philosophy ones, which I did quite well in, as it was one of the few classes that were not full. I also had enjoyed my Chinese literature class, that I had taken the previous year.

By the end of the quarter, I thought I had an emotional breakdown and my parents found me walking down the street. The hospital gave me a drug test, and then sent me to the psychiatric ward, of a local private hospital. I was there for 10 days, until the insurance ran out and then left with my parents. I was voluntarily committed, as I was not a harm to my self or others, nor did I commit any crime.

At this point, I felt I had failed, in both the military and college, as I was not able to complete either one. It was not until I published many books, that I finally felt I had accomplished something. I had a desire, to return and complete my degree, until the last few years. Whenever I tried signing up, I had severe paranoia and depression, which was accompanied with physical symptoms, as well.

My life is very different, than many people with Schizophrenia, because: I have never committed any crime, I had an honorable discharge from the military, the veterans decided that my Schizophrenia was directly caused by my military

service; my parents and sister were actively involved in helping me; I have never taken any drugs or abused prescriptions; I have a strong personal faith in Christ; and I do not give up easily and have successfully leveraged my creative abilities, to solve or avoid life problems.

Shortly after starting my website, I was very obsessed with humility (intensified by being enlisted in the Army) and because of what I saw as failures, I found Philosophical Taoism and Christian Existentialism, to answer many of my frustrations in life and help me deal with my situation. I had always been very unusual, in the way I did anything I was involved in and I was seeking a way, to explain to people why I approached life like I did. I had been introduced to these philosophies, in some of my college electives, and they helped me start putting together my own philosophy and my studies, that my books are now based on.

After just the first week of Western Philosophy, I thought Aristotle was a smart aleck and I had recently come to realize, that the key values of Christianity and Taoism were the same: humility and compassion. I sought to prove that Christianity was philosophically more Asian than European, but much later found that Christianity was primarily an Asian religion, for the first 1,000 years and so my focus shifted to history and liturgy.

One of the things that has made a big difference in my life, which I only discovered, in the last couple years is that I am very literal. I still think that way at first, but usually remember to filter that out.

2.5.2 Military and Self Esteem

When I left the military, it was because of a chronic allergic pink eye, but we later found out the problem was mostly mental and I was in fact mentally ill. The two most important things in the military is to do whatever they tell you

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to without hesitation and to always give 150% effort. In order to get people to do this, the military treats you like a piece of meat. In the Marines, they treat you better, after their boot camp. In the Army they just treat you horribly as long as you are in the military.

I remember, during the first two weeks of basic training, we watch a bunch of videos about things like Army law and sexual harassment. We had to drink huge amounts of water and then we had to wait, until the last second, to go to the bath room and we only had a few seconds, to go to the bathroom. For some reason, the drill sergeant thought we wasted too much time eating, so we had only 2 minutes to eat.

We were only given, at the most, 7 hours of sleep and got up at 4:30, in the morning the instant they turned the lights on and had to do extensive exercising, before we were able to sleep. We also had to do watch duty two hours, in the night, and kitchen duty (when we had to wake up even earlier), in rotation.

I remember, when we were practicing with the rifle, that both an officer and a drill sergeant were yelling at me, at the same time, and so I couldn't tell who was who, by their voice and addressing anyone, as anything other than their exact rank is not allowed. I tried looking around behind me, but was told I could not move.

I was told, to fire, with my left hand, even though I am right handed, because I was left eye dominant. I can fire, with both hands now. And, when they tested me, for qualification, in shooting I was assigned a lane that was rigged, so that when the farthest away targets counted, as if I hit them, whether or not I actually hit them.

I remember, after training, that it was hard to get medical help, because of the hours of operation. First of all, every office was closed between 11am and 1pm,

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no matter what. Then, each medical service had its own, completely different hours. When I came off the midnight shift and was sick, I had to then wait 4 hours for the medical clinic.

When I had the been diagnosed, for allergy problems, they wanted to perform major surgery, on my sinuses, that I found out later was completely unnecessary. It was also unclear, as the doctors are all at least a captain, was a commanding officer, so either I needed to follow orders from or I had a choice. I never got around to making the appointment.

When I had put on the an eye medicine, due to an eye infection, I had trouble putting it in my eyes, because it was a kind of gel and the end of it was metal and sharp. The military's solution was to hold me down and then shove it into my eye. Later, I found I could put it on my eyelashes and blink a couple times and it went on fine.

The military re-enforced both my obsession with humility and my pessimistic worldview. I don't trust anyone and always have the feeling that someone is trying to scam me. I plan for worst case scenario. as I have horrid luck. I now eat very fast and used to be able to get up in a split second, until very recently - me medicine is too sedating.

The thing that stressed me out the most was referring to people by the correct ranks, even though I had an easy time passing the test, because you cannot see the ranks on the leaders, until after you are supposed to salute them, or refer to them as a sergeant, and no you are not supposed to salute NCOs (sergeants). I have always been very literal, but didn't understand what that meant, until a couple years ago. This explains why the drill sergeants hated me at first, but then respected me greatly later on.

2.5.3 Experience and Faith

When many people think of the spiritual world and spiritual things, they think of some horror movie, with all sorts of special effects. They think that they will see God visually and He will speak to them, and have a one on one conversation with them. In reality, the Bible says if you see God directly, this will kill you, because the presence of God is so intense. Most believers will never directly experience a vision or hear the voice of God.

We understand God through faith, in that we believe, even though we cannot prove God exists, like we can prove Newton's or Einstein physical laws work. This means that we are asked to believe, without any direct experience, that we can document and explain. I think of my understanding of who God is by intuition, in that I am aware and know that the real God is the Christian God. I don't need the Bible or some sort of supernatural action to believe that the Christian God is real and Christianity is the one true faith.

I have always felt closer to God, in times of crisis, like the entire time I was in the military. I think we don't experience closeness with God, because of how easy it is to get distracted and that God acts both subtly and quietly. I can tell God constantly intervenes rationally, because we are protected from spiritual forces that only God could hold back and also that we are so foolish and careless that it is only God's direct intervention that keeps us from literally destroying all life on earth.

God wants to have us believe in Him, by our free choice and I think He wants to give people just enough information about who He is to comfort His people, but also give those who choose not to believe reasons for their unbelief. I think God chose to allow us to superficially convince ourselves of His non-existence, so

that people would have a valid free choice. Everyone has a conscience and free will, so we all know the truth and there is no need to prove anything about who God is.

I feel very close to God and am aware of His power, when I read the Bible, as it just speaks with such authority and intensity, that I feel like I am going to get burned up. I think God may have showed me more about Himself, more in a visual or audio manner, with me, but I have asked Him not to, because I don't want to mix that up with my hearing of voices and delusions.

I am one of the few people, who believe that there are both mental illnesses, that are caused by chemical imbalances and that there is a real spiritual world. I believe that modern psychology actually comes from the Bible. Paul was the first Existentialist. One of Christ's official titles is Wonderful Counselor.

I see no conflict between psychology and Christianity. The whole concept of God being both 3 and one is most understandable, from the point of view that we have multiple parts to us, which we all consider completely us. God the Father is like the mind of God, Christ is the body, and the Holy Spirit is the spirit. When we have personal problems, they can be caused by many things, like: sin, brain chemistry, and our physical bodies. Depression is a good example of something that can be affected and treated, by all 3 of these factors, and more.

One of the obvious miracles, in my life, is my entire experience in the military. I was very blessed to never have to go through torture training, be captured by enemies, or even have to be deployed into combat. I got out after a little over a year and not only got an honorable discharge, but the process was completed within 5 weeks total. I was in Hawaii, at my permanent duty station, and having Mono, so I was off work. I went to my unit commanding officer and asked to get out of the military and said I didn't care if it was honorable. This is a horrible

idea and never try it, under any circumstances.

I didn't know that my discharge was, because of having Schizophrenia, but rather, I thought it was about my chronic allergic pink eye (conjunctivitis), caused by an over sensitivity to cleaning chemicals. Luckily, I filed for disability pension, for my pink eye and got 10% disability pension, because of that. My parents helped me fill out all the forms, when I filed again, for veterans pension, which processed much faster, because of my previous filing. I was awarded an additional 90% disability, 3 months before 9/11.

The way the military works, that few people are aware of, is that your enlistment is not ever 4 years or 6 years but 8 years. Part is active duty or reserve, whereas the other is inactive duty. In this 8 year period of time, if there is any war, you will be recalled, without any special extension of your tour, or any additional decision by your command.

I swore in to the Army on 2 July 1996, so I could easily have been re-called and been required to serve up until 2 July 2004. Diagnosis with Schizophrenia would probably be enough to keep me from being recalled, but being a disabled veteran with 100% pension guaranteed I would never be recalled, even during a general draft, in a world war.

Many Christians are waiting to get some divine message of what job they should do. God asks one thing of us: follow our conscience. God doesn't care what we do, but rather who we are. There is no need for special instructions, as even without the Bible, we know what is right and wrong. What greater miracle and show of support could God give, then coming to earth as a poor person, dying a very painful death, going to Hell, and breaking out, to save us from eternal torment?

2.5.4 My Personality and My Art

Reason for this List

I think very differently, in my life, than anyone else and I have spent many years trying to explain my point of view, to others. I thought that I was not just opposite of every one else for no reason, but thought that there was some sort of explanation, for this, so I would be more predictable, for myself and others.

I found that Taoism and Existentialism explained how I thought well, but no one understands any of this. Some people may say I am a highly sensitive person, or an artistic person, but that is too simplistic and simply not accurate. I have been thinking about what personality attributes that I have that explain how I approach art, people, and direction.

Working with Differences

Don't share an interest in related activities

Do not identify exclusively with or exclusively value others that share my interests

Interested in seemingly opposing things

Interested in doing things for unusual reasons

Not trying to be different

Approach to Art/Projects

Skip "necessary" steps

Don't create by following a sequence of steps

Do better work if I have more freedom on how to approach project

Constantly thinking about latest project

Design Related Activities

Like control over circumstances

Don't like planning

Not interested in ceremony

Defining Personality Traits

Mind follows tangents

Emotionally attached to creations

Idealist

3 From 20 Years Collection

3.1 Spiritual, Emotional, and Physical Reality

To many today, the only real world is what they can experience physically. Many of us know that there are many more ways to suffer and many other ways to understand and experience things. Physical suffering pulls us into the physical world violently against our wishes to leave that reality. But those who do not know that suffering transcends the physical world do not truly know suffering. Suffering comes from our own bad decisions, but it takes place in our minds, where the physical and spiritual world intersect.

To say that the physical world is the only one, because it is the only thing you can experience is like saying because you are blind, the physical world does not

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exist to you. We may not identify the true sources of our pain and of what drives change in the world, but that does not make it any less real. Just like not knowing about the history of another nation or the personal lives of individual people make those experiences any less real to them. Not knowing why you are in pain does not make it hurt less.

So whether we believe it or not, the spiritual world does affect us greatly. We may not want to accept why it works the way it does or purposely keep ourselves ignorant of this understanding, but that does not make something less real. You may not understand why someone hates or distrusts you nor they be able to even verbalize it, but people feel the way they do regardless of evidence. Whether or not there is evidence available to prove what we know to be real by experience, finding the evidence does not actually change anything.

So evidence will not change reality. Our opinions rarely change, because of this either. Some things that all of us agree are real can be hard to define. Emotions are one example. We know we love certain people, but we don't know why we do. Life is filled with us running into things we don't understand and dealing with them, without us ever fully being able to explain them. We make decisions like career choices, where even after years of training, we later find that they are not like what we thought they were.

We make decisions early in life that affect us more greatly than we could ever imagine before hand and then later experiences like illness or injury dictate our life to be entirely different, than we could ever have believed. Life is full of uncertainty, but we still feel the effects of what drives reality.

Cause and effect seem simple enough and they explain a lot, but they operate in more areas than just our bodies and minds. We feel all the effects of other people's choices, even if we do not know what they were and our own, even if we

don't think that they are significant enough to be consequential.

Reality is what it is regardless of what we want it to be. We hurt emotionally, even when we have no rational reasons, to feel the way we do. But our choices, especially how we respond to others choices, can be what we want them to be. We cannot change what someone else believes, or even what they choose to do, but we can choose our attitude towards the situation.

We will suffer and we will make bad decisions, but that does not need to define us. We can find hope beyond the physical reality and we can overcome our own issues, but we need to look to a higher power, while still acknowledging our complete responsibility, for our own choices.

When you do something wrong to someone else, it does not matter much to them, if it was unintended. You don't stop having a broken arm, because the person who gave it to you signed your caste. It does of course matter spiritually why you do what you do. The significance of intent is one of the most basic differences between physical and spiritual reality. Just like the physical world, the emotional and spiritual worlds operate according to specific parameters.

Faith is when you believe in something you do not fully understand and that is the way in which we perceive God. Of course, believing in God does not make Him real, but Him being real gives you good reason to believe in Him. Belief in something does not make it real, but believing in someone real has value.

God has no responsibility to solve our problems or prevent our suffering, because He never caused sin to happen. But God does still intervene constantly in the world. In fact, if God did not intervene at all, after He created the world, believing in Him would not solve any problems. Knowing God to be real and following Him matters, because He intervened, to take our place in suffering the penalty, for our immoral choices.

It is great that God is perfectly good, so we know He won't create problems for us, but it is essential for our protection that He is also merciful, because we do create problems, that we seek God to help us through. The full penalties for our bad decisions are incomprehensibly horrid. That is why God treats immorality or sin as such a serious issue. He went to the greatest lengths possible and likely suffers eternally for our sins.

It is hard for many to understand why God chose to forgive any and every sin and base the criteria for salvation solely on what He did for us. It does not seem to make sense, from a human point of view. Humans have a hard time accepting the idea of forgiveness, until they need someone to forgive them. Animals understand forgiveness though, although they seem to be the only ones doing the forgiving. So what we really need as people to overcome our bad decisions and immoral acts is the forgiveness of sins. And for our world to heal, we need to forgive the sins of others.

3.2 Meaning in Life

Many people talk about finding meaning in life, but what do they mean? What exactly does one do that is meaningful and to whom? How do we know we are doing enough? For many people, sports, video games, Hollywood, drugs, or music are the key to a fulfilling life. But that is not enough for me and many others. But at the same time, is more than that realistic, especially when you have a severe disability? I think our expectations are too high.

We are expected as Americans to solve everyone's problems, because we have so much more wealth than the rest of the world. Most Americans though have very little extra time and those that do have very little money. To most people, their family is more important than anyone else's and so they usually devote

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most their free time to that and the single over-achievers often spend their free time putting themselves into better shape financially. And with all these vices on the Internet, we have very little left to give.

Is it even possible to find meaning in life and how should we respond? Reading is one way to find meaning in life, but if you spend so much time on that, you sacrifice time to spend on other life experiences. The more you learn, the more you learn that you know very little and this knowledge helps little to improve your or anyone else's life and you can get easily discouraged.

To see the cause of our problems, in the world today, you have to have a very wholistic worldview, which is contrary to the way society wants us to think and act. Our leaders say that we are unwilling to do what is right and stand out from the crowd, but the work world does not support that premise. Famous people all want you to think for yourself and be open minded by doing exactly what they say.

This is where I see religion providing an answer and Christianity actually providing a solution that works. Life is short and has little meaning by itself. God is the ultimate source of meaning, perfectly good, all powerful, and wants to help us out. We are really the source of our own problems.

The situation we are in, where we find no meaning in life, is caused by our decision to attempt to live without God's help. Just like it doesn't work well for us to live well without a good diet or enough rest, spiritually we need to find meaning. The only meaning in life that will improve our lives is Christ. And the situation in which we will find that meaning will be after we die.

So it seems odd to many people that Christians only really expect to be happy after they die, as it appears as nihilistic and cynical. Life is hard and short for most people throughout history and there is only so much time and money to

try to deal with life's continual challenges and setbacks. You don't need to do something immoral to destroy your life. You can do so by just not taking care of your health or failing to engage in networking.

Do not get discouraged, if life is very difficult, and you feel like giving up. Just find and then maintain your faith until you die, and you will be happy forever. Americans are mostly unhappy, because they expect too much out of life and we think because we have more money, we can avoid the principle causes of suffering in this life. Intelligence rarely help avoid many of these problems and self control only solves some.

Many solutions to finding purpose in life are based on making yourself smarter, imparting you with special knowledge, developing more discipline, or making yourself richer. Creativity and motivation seem to me to be the best ways to make your position in life all it can be. Combine that with prayer and praising God and you will find it more encouraging than just trying to become smarter or richer.

What does a psychologist often tell you to do when you are feeling depressed or having a lack of meaning in life? Volunteer. When you change your focus on solving your problems, to solving someone else's, you get perspective and often find out your situation is much better. That is actually encouraging. We need to expect things to go wrong, get worse, and life to generally be difficult and just surviving is quite a challenge. This is the way things are in the other 95% of the world and the other 99% of history.

3.3 Neighborhood by the Road

Like a room full of wood fire smoke

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Like a low fog down by the river

Like the neon green grass constantly being mowed

Like the splashing of rainwater under car tires

Each step I take and as I look around

There are big groups of people walking together

The trashes are full of new electronics

And people on bicycles root through the trash

Walking along the side of the road

Littered with dog poop and broken glass bottles

The street is a tribute to a great leader

And the big thing here is a football stadium

I don't go one way because I fear falling off the bridge

I don't go another because the apartments are depressing

I don't go to the nearest mall because of the homeless trash

I don't go to down to the park and river because everyone is fishing

Everyone has a big dog and a big car

But not everyone has a job

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The stink of pot is everywhere
Except in front of the pot store

When you have so many trees
There are many little birds
When you have so many cell phones
You get poor reception

We are all looking down walking
Me to avoid stepping in poop or glass
And everyone else
To play a never ending game

We take everything with us on these little machines
Be careful not to drop yours
They cost a lot to fix
But they still work with broken screens

What is the cost of modern life
Less and less jobs over time
Everything costs a dollar

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But no one has even that much money

I consider today's world

And compare it to others

Before, after and parallel

We have too much of a good thing

People can even die of water overdosing

Too many things are too easy

We can afford too much sugar

No wonder everyone has diabetes

We have the local mental health, National Guard and juvenile detention

Just a short walk away

And this is the wealthier end of the road

The police seem to be constantly patrolling

Maybe there are too many students

Or just too many apartments

At least the stadium keeps expanding

And we can buy more cars just up the road

3.4 Gift of Boredom

To many people

Life should be an adventure

They want to be a hero

In an action movie

Or be famous

And have a huge number of fans

In real life

No one plays a theme song

When you are going through something tough

No one claps or pays money to see you

Your adventure does not end in 2 hours

You do not get advertised in commercials

And you are not monetized with games or toys

You do not get your own website

You don't get a gold star in Hollywood

With the other famous people

You cannot afford to travel between LA and New York

You do not have time to show up in the best clubs

A hero in real life

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Often cannot release what happened to them

Life in the military is far from exciting

It looks cool to jump out of an air plane

And it sounds cool to fire assault rifles

But the greatest adventure in the Army

Is carrying things around and cleaning things

It looks cool to be in combat

But this part of the military is terrifying

Until you get a leg blown off

Or catch on fire

You are either terrified or bored to tears

There is no in between

Torture is not cool in anyway

Even though most action films

Seem to think it necessary for their plots

A life of boredom

Sounds like a movie without a plot

And a life lived like that

Of no importance

But today the real luxury

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Is being off social media
And not having to carry a smartphone
You surely can do great things with fame
But it distracts you from your own life
Who you are matters more
Than what you do
Just because you do not record something
Does not lessen its importance
You have only so much time and energy
No matter who you are
Do you want to spend your life
Gaining low quality friends
Or spending time with people
Who care about you unconditionally

Jesus changed the world
More than anyone else
But he didn't travel far
He wrote no books
We do not know what He looked like
He didn't even own a house

And He would be considered homeless
And likely mentally ill today
He received no awards
And no one paid any money to see Him
He did not live to middle age
He only really spread His message for 3 years
He had not children or wife
His entourage was by no means special
And His friends uneducated and poor
He was not even a citizen
Of the empire He lived in
But He did forgive sins
And we can live forever because of Him
Not in the underworld of the pagans
But in the paradise of the Bible

3.5 Schizophrenia

3.5.1 Experiencing Schizophrenia

In our society, like in movies, when something crazy happens our first thought is that we are an under cover agent or the world is ending, not that we are mentally ill. We are not taught in school to doubt ourselves. When we did re-

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search papers in school we chose our topics and our thesis at the same time.

When we have political or religious differences, each person think the other person is wrong and they are right. No one is taught to think maybe I am wrong. We see our conflicts and problems as external which is probably why Christians are often so afraid of spiritual warfare but still pray a lot.

We operate on the level that being irrational is being stupid or an insult. We see truth in reason and facts and discount feelings or beliefs as less important. We say someone is not just evil, they are crazy. When someone disagrees with us or wants to make us feel bad they call us crazy. We never consider that we might be the problem or the crazy one.

We also assume crazy is an all or nothing thing. If someone mentally ill was irrational about everything, then how could they end up orchestrating such involved responses to their perceived threats? There are degrees of crazy. There are many very different kinds of Schizophrenia.

Many people with Schizophrenia do not hear voices (hallucinations) or have paranoia (a specific kind of delusion). Not everyone acts on their voices and voices are not always bad. Most people with Schizophrenia do not see hallucinations.

Many religious people think that Schizophrenia is the same thing as being possessed of the devil or that being insane means that you can't understand faith or make spiritual decisions. Just like intelligence not being made greater or less because of Schizophrenia, spiritual and psychological things are as different from each other as physical and psychological things are.

A person with Schizophrenia has a very hard time controlling their brain and so would make a very poor new age practitioner. Most people with Schizophrenia have paranoia that is religious and are often obsessive compulsive about it. So

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a person with Schizophrenia may think they are a shaman or a witch, but hopefully they don't actually pursue that area of study.

Dark knight of the soul and long periods of depression are different things as well. You could easily experience both independently of each other or at the same time. But Schizophrenia is not caused by sin nor is it the result of poor living. Having Schizophrenia does not lower your likelihood to have cancer or not be able to walk.

Having Schizophrenia does not make you more violent because you are afraid and so avoid conflict whenever possible. If a person with Schizophrenia gets stressed out too much they just stop showing up. People with Schizophrenia often direct their paranoia towards the medicine so that they think you are poisoning them or trying to control their thoughts.

Paranoia is basically really bad fear of something irrational happening. Remember that to a person with Schizophrenia, these appear totally real although on medicine half our brain is telling us this is doesn't make sense. Then the other aspect of our brain keeps saying that this is crazy but in this case this is what is really happening to you now.

Paranoia is a delusion where you believe a sentient being is coming after you. Paranoia is very real for the person experiencing it because if your brain thinks things and the rational part of your brain that is taught to control your fight or flight response gets destroyed when you have Schizophrenia. On this level of the brain, the brain is you. There is no way to get under or over this part of the brain. You cannot treat Schizophrenia by reasoning with the person in counseling.

Paranoia comes in waves where it is a problem for a period of time maybe days, weeks, or months. Typically it is one of several things with variations. Often

times there is a trigger seeing something on TV or the Internet. Paranoia is always worse at night. Paranoia's often involve religious themes and are almost always bad things.

3.5.2 IDLE (Isolation, Depression, and Lack of Energy)

Schizophrenia can often appear the same to Bipolar Disorder to people who know nothing about mental illness or when you do not see a person for more than a few minutes at one time, but they are actually very different.

Schizophrenia is much harder to deal with and much harder to treat than Bipolar Disorder, because Bipolar Disorder is a mood disorder, whereas Schizophrenia is a thought disorder.

Mood disorders are simpler to understand and can be treated easier with medication than thought disorders. With Bipolar Disorder, your mood goes to extremes, but with Schizophrenia, your senses and thoughts are much more intense. Everything has meaning to someone with Schizophrenia.

Getting an accurate diagnosis from a doctor who is qualified to diagnose is the essential first step in treating any mental illness. The wrong medicine can have either no effect, bad side effects, or make things worse. You should not do any drugs, even pot as they exasperate both the mental illness symptoms and make it harder to diagnose. Only a psychiatrist with a doctorate in both medicine and psychology who specializes in mental illness is qualified to diagnose you.

Many people take a long time to get the right diagnosis or often never do. The hardest part for the person with the mental illness to do is to keep taking the medicine as they often either feel they don't need it when they are manic or

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with Schizophrenia transfer their paranoia to the medicine. The even harder part is accepting you need help and believing you are the source of the problem and not the world around you. Schizophrenia gets worse over time, if you wait to get on your psychiatric medicine, as you have each psychotic episode.

To get state aid, you first need to have a stable address and someone to fill out all the forms for you. Do this as soon as possible. It will likely take years to get into a program. When you apply for SSI, they will almost undoubtedly turn you down the first time, so you need to get a lawyer, before they will even consider giving you disability compensation. Get on all the free version of stuff, get into section 8 housing, get Obamacare and basically pay for nothing as you will make almost nothing in state assistance.

Schizophrenia amplifies your thoughts and senses, because you constantly have adrenaline running through your system and the body is constantly in a fight or flight response mode. You are always terrified of and often depressed about something as well. People with Schizophrenia are no more likely to be violent than anyone else and are usually the victims of crimes rather than the perpetrators. Schizophrenia makes people feel afraid, not powerful. Adrenaline feels very different over a longer timeframe than most people experience.

Many people associate Schizophrenia with genius, but the disease does not affect intelligence either way and people with Schizophrenia vary widely in intelligence levels. Have you heard about all those people who were great artists or leaders who were mentally ill? Almost all of them suffered from Bipolar Disorder. You cannot have both at the same time. You can have a less severe form of Schizophrenia called Schizoaffective Disorder with either depression or mania (but not both).

There are two major groups of symptoms in Schizophrenia, which are called

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positive symptoms and negative symptoms. The positive symptoms are things that you have in addition to a normal person like paranoia, hallucinations, and delusions. The negative symptoms are things a person with Schizophrenia is lacking that an average person has like isolation, depression, and a lack of energy.

Most forms of Schizophrenia do not include audio hallucinations (hearing voices) or paranoia (a specific type of delusion where you believe people are coming after you). All types of Schizophrenia have types of short term memory loss, inappropriate facial expressions, and delusions. Schizophrenia has similar symptoms to those people who have brain damage and it like a much more intense version of an anxiety disorder.

The primary treatment for Schizophrenia is an anti-psychotic medication that is related to the older type of sedatives given to people during surgery. You also must always keep your stress level under control, and live a low stress lifestyle, as high stress will undo the effect of the medicine. Counseling, religion, and many other types of treatments may be helpful in addition to the medicine.

There are no alternative medicine treatments that can substitute for the modern medicine. The real break through in Schizophrenia medicines were in the 1990s. This medicine treatment goes back to about the 1950s.

Before this modern medicine, people with Schizophrenia were usually committed to an institution. Counseling people to accept that their delusions are not real is ineffective. The brain itself is what is damaged chemically and there is no way of getting between the brain and the person as the person is the brain. It is like trying to perform brain surgery on yourself or teach yourself to write when you cannot yet speak.

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The medication did not make me any less extreme in my beliefs or change my views on religion or morality and does not make me less creative or more easily controlled by others. I have more control, more happiness, and find it easier to create things since I got on my medicine. It is more painful to not be on the medicine.

I have a combination of both being terrified about something but at the same time knowing it is unlikely to happen. I believe something to be true and non-sense at the same time. This is how the medicine interacts with my paranoia and other delusions. I feel like I have adrenaline running through me as well as feel that I am being pushed down at the same time. I also feel like I am slowly waking up more and more.

The medicines are supposed to just target the brain, but almost always slow the entire body down causing constant tiredness, weight gain, and heart disease/high blood pressure/diabetes. Many of the newer medicines developed after 1990 are not effective with many patients, so that they have to take older drugs, which have even more extreme side effects.

I have Paranoid Schizophrenia and suffer from paranoia and depression mostly and I hear voices sometimes. The most disabling aspects of Schizophrenia and hardest to treat are the social ones. I have gradually re-learned how to fit in with normal people better over many years. Although Paranoid Schizophrenia is the hardest to deal with form of Schizophrenia, it is often more successful in its treatment, because the medicine is more effective with treating the positive symptoms.

Lack of energy, isolation and depression can feed off each other to form a cycle that lasts forever. You are tired because you are taking a sedative, so you do not get out and interact with other people, and then you get depressed, be-

cause you become more and more isolated. Ironically, the one thing I wish I could do more than anything else is work a job, even if it was just minimum wage.

Anything that requires me to go to regular meetings or get something done by a certain time stresses me out (which usually triggers paranoia). I have volunteered a number of times, but few organizations will give you the opportunity to do something you find personally fulfilling for them. I have tried to go to school but get stressed out and start getting paranoid.

Computer work has been one of the most successful thing to do, because I can do it at any time and do not have to commit to anything. Even deciding beforehand where I am getting food later that day or my what my next project on the computer will be is stressful to me. I even have a hard time getting on time to movie theaters showings.

One of the things I enjoy in interacting with other people is explaining things to them about academic or technical topics. I find the mentally ill to be the easiest group to work with that needs extra help, because they are actually more sane and less obnoxious than the elderly, the homeless, or young people. I used to be annoyed by what I use to call bus people, but now I think other people see me that way.

3.5.3 Who is Speaking?

God designed the Bible for anyone to understand even to young children and people totally out of their mind. The Bible has a very simple message at its core but it does not give easy answers for difficult problems. Although God is constantly intervening to help us out, He never promised to do so. We brought evil into the world, not God, and we make things complicated and unclear, not God.

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As a person who sometimes hears voices even under low stress, I experience a wide range of auditory hallucinations from simple sounds to positive voices, impressions of being communicated to by God or generic voices, sometimes I hear voices that make me afraid, but I can usually tell that someone is not actually talking to me. This is one of the symptoms of a certain kind of Schizophrenia called Paranoid Schizophrenia and also occurs in people without mental illness especially when experiencing high stress situations like solitary confinement or even just not sleeping for 3 days straight.

One of the concerns psychiatrists have about voices is that you will follow whatever you say. Since the voices are often very religious and are often the voice of God or the devil, psychiatrists are deeply suspicious of religious belief in the mentally ill. They think you might mix up the delusional voice that you think is God with the actual God.

To determine whether the voice is God or not, you should be able to safely ignore it because it would be unlikely for a God to communicate to you in that manner because it would be easy to mix up. If God we're really talking to you, He would continue to give you more and more obvious signs to the point that you would have to go out of your way and commit obvious sins to choose the wrong path. Just remember to follow the Ten Commandments and live your life as close to Christ's as possible. These are also the same thing as your conscience.

One of the very frustrating aspects of the state of Psychology and Religion today is that people tend to believe in the Bible or modern psychology, but rarely both and even more rarely have adequate training in both areas. Since many people with Schizophrenia are actually very religious, separating out what is a religious experience and what is a psychological experience or something is

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caused by religious or psychological reasons could be very helpful.

Many people mix up dark night of the soul, mystical experience, religious rituals, struggles with addictions, existential crisis, news related crisis, depression, psychosis, obsessive compulsive behavior, and other experiences like these because religious and psychological therapies are rarely combined. Diagnosis is critical in these areas of affliction as much as it is for physical ailments. How can you find the solution to anything without knowing its cause?

You can do so with prayer, but I believe that God wants us to have the common sense, maturity, and self responsibility to go beyond this. God can and likely will help you solve any problems in your life, but this is not an excuse to give up and just expect God to solve all your problems Himself. The same is true with sin: just because we are saved no matter what we do, this is not an excuse to continue doing evil.

Many people do not realize this but the Bible is the source of both modern psychology and existentialism. Psychology and theology are both branches of philosophy. Just as God has 3 revealed aspects, we also have three aspects of our existence as well. We are just as much spiritual as we are emotional people.

The ironic thing is that although there are many connections between spiritual and mental disorders in mental illness, Schizophrenia is primarily treated by medicine as people cannot be talked out of their delusions because the part of the brain that handles this in normal people is destroyed or doesn't work properly in people who have Schizophrenia. Even though this most important part of the brain does not work properly in these people, it does not inhibit the ability to make religious decisions or to practice a religion.

So people with Schizophrenia have all the same odds and potential to have as many other emotional as well as spiritual and physical problems as anyone else.

But Schizophrenia does not give you any more problems in the spiritual realm than others without the illness. There are other physical and emotional problems that are either symptoms of the medicine to treat the disease or the disease itself which include depression, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, lack of motivation, loneliness, constant tiredness, poverty, and often homelessness or hospitalization.

3.5.4 Do Not Engage in Battle!

Introduction

Many people see a mental problem in their lives and constantly fight it and come up losing every time. There are 2 basic techniques for resisting thoughts and living with psychological issues. These can apply to anything from mental illness to addiction to obsessive compulsive behavior and depression. If your battle is with yourself then this is for you.

These two techniques are accepting your situation and the things you cannot change about it and distracting yourself from the symptoms, when they are particularly distressing or flaring up. Never take on any fight that you can avoid like someone else's and let God fight the ones within you. Surrender to God rather than fighting the devil. Do something proactive rather than merely resisting.

Acceptance

The first technique is to accept that whether or not your symptoms are good or bad or you deserve them or it is unfair they are just a constant and a reality in your life and are not going away anytime soon. As they say, you cannot break the tree that bends. This means that sometimes resisting something inevitable

or something you have no choice over is not effective. What you cannot change are other people and your past.

When I was in the military, I survived well because I knew how to and was willing to do whatever I was told immediately without question and always give at least 150%. No one ever tried to break me because I did everything asked of me.

One of the problems with my just accepting this reality at the time was that I never changed who I was and so was out of place culturally which made some aspects of the military very difficult. I was willing to cooperate fully and give my all, but I was never going to change how I thought.

Stress caused by fighting your issues can cause a huge range of health problems and I had this occur in my life for about 3 years. After Basic Training, I got pink eye which I realized was related to a sensitivity to chemicals that I developed during my first few months in the Army. I thought I would have this for life.

When I went to the eye doctor, I was often in much more pain. After I was on my first anti-psychotic medication for about a week, I no longer needed to take any more eye drops. I still avoid toxic chemicals like cleaners wherever I can, but am fine with just an over the counter allergy pill. So I finally realized that my stress was causing my allergic/ chemical sensitivities.

Distractions

You can only think about so many things at once and so to push something out of your mind, you must add enough other stimulus or thinking to offset what you want to get rid of. Distraction is an important element in warfare. When someone tries to rescue someone, they create a diversion so as to split up the enemy because one part of the enemy forces have to stay guard and the other

has to investigate what just happened.

This technique was used several times throughout history, some deliberate and some not. One of the most famous battles in history is when the French (Normans) invaded England and at the same time the Vikings led their last major invasion of England. This required the English to split up their army and so they lost the country to the French. That is officially where the current British royal family history starts.

You never want take on anything strong like yourself in battle. When Apple started the series of products that gradually made Microsoft the company less and less relevant, it first publicly stated that Microsoft did not need to lose in order for Apple to win. Apple then created a parallel computer market for an entirely different market segment - consumers.

Most products Apple created are not workalikes to substitute for Microsoft, Adobe, or other commercial software like you often find in the open source world. OpenOffice.org/Libre Office is a direct competitor to Microsoft Office, whereas Apple iWork suite is really an entirely different product. But I bet a lot more people use Apple iWork suite then use OpenOffice.org/Libre Office.

Conclusion

So in avoiding taking the common approach of using your will to fight the battle alone, focus on what you can do and avoid worrying about what you can't. Keep resisting but be smarter about it and let others help you. Use every available tool and technique. This is not a single battle that you must fight and move on. It is a long war where sometimes just surviving is winning.

Think of how leaders instruct people in emergency situations to not panic and they end up doing what they were told not to, because they didn't know what to do. When someone says "Do not panic", people panic because they don't

know how to not do so.

Tell yourself what to do, not what not to do. Don't not panic. Do something slowly that calms you down. Do not try to stop thinking about your symptoms. Distract yourself doing something you love.

Do not use all your energy to fight these difficult situations directly as they are too big for you alone and you need to save your energy for future difficulties. Deny your demons battle.

Feed your good thought and starve your bad ones. Fighting only feeds the bad thoughts because they are actually fighting for your attention. They will settle for even negative attention.

Sound, Sleep, and Mental Issues

Getting a good sleep is one of the best things you can do for your overall health. It is even more important than lowering stress, exercise, or even prescribed medicines. Sleep is often disrupted due to mental illnesses, where you can sleep too little or too much, due to depression and have irregular and less restful sleep due to Schizophrenia due to the medicine and/or the illness. Not getting enough sleep alone can also be the direct cause of mental health issues.

Sound is very tied to sleep. We use sound to wake us up, help us go to sleep, and help keep us a sleep. Most people also enjoy music for recreation. We can use this same technique to help distract us from symptoms from mental illness that keep us awake.

First of all, we have to see sleep as not a shutting off of the mind and that it is connected to the other parts of the day. Getting exercise and allowing enough time to sleep require planning ahead. One of the biggest things that keeps us

awake is stress which is often the result of our circumstances and what happens during our day.

We need to keep our minds focused on positive and good things throughout the day. If we see negative images like in the news or on social media, we need to put in enough positive images in our minds to offset these. It is even better to be aware of what triggers your stress and then avoid that task as much as possible.

Music is a great way to help us relax or distract us from symptoms. For symptoms during sleeping, getting to sleep, or getting back to sleep we can use a variety of sounds such as from music. Different genres work for different people and in different situations. Consider music beyond just your personal taste in music.

For distracting yourself from heavy symptoms occurring right then like paranoia or voices, try a much more intense and complex music. Other aspects of music that are better for distracting you include increasing the volume, watching the music video or reading the lyrics at the same time, or listening through headphones. Sometimes you may prefer hard rock, hip hop, or alternative music for when you need heavy distractions.

For trying to get to sleep, try using classical music, Latin music, nature sounds, easy listening, or music from your childhood or your favorite movie. You can still increase the impact by adding more stimulus like having the TV on in the background or turn on a light. You can also vary the music genre and artist or use artists with more emotionally powerful songs or songs with lyrics to add a little more stimulation.

Religion and music go together from the very beginning of time. Music creation or consumption can in itself be a kind of worship. There are a wide variety of

genres in Christian music, in particular.

Besides listening to sermons in audio or video and the Bible read aloud as in an audiobook, you also have church worship songs like hymns and modern worship music, Christian songs in other languages and from other time periods and regions, gospel music, and almost every other genre from gothic to hip hop to contemporary. Some might include nature sounds and some classical music like Bach and Handel to be religious music as well.

It is also important to find the paranoia or depressive topics that bothers you personally and what triggers this. It would be good for almost anyone to avoid the news and social media, but science fiction or military based shows can be troubling to even those without mental issues.

Sitcoms, animated movies, romantic comedies, and religious broadcasts can be some of the most positive video genres out there. Other surprisingly negative shows can be found on the family channel called free form and animal channel. Kids like horror movies and animal activists keep showing abused animals.

The overall idea here is find what works for you. There are many things in life without a clear list of do's and don'ts. This is one of those areas. Lowering stress and sleeping well though should be goals for all of us.

3.5.5 Ben H. check mark

20 years later

The art of failure

Background

Current Occupation

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Disabled Veteran

Government assistance

Lived independently for over 15 years

Motivation

Failure is the key to success

Failure is always an option

The ten thousand mile journey begins with one trip

Education

Doctorate I bought online

3 years of college with no degree

Read a lot of books

Prepared for disaster survival

20 years to finish personal website

Work Experience

Military one year enlistment

Discharged for being mentally ill

Retired as Private First Class

Boy Scout Summer Camp Counselor

Phone surveys

Security at football games

5. Multicultural Experience

Created my own philosophy

Based on eastern and western philosophies

Created a Micro-nation

Oversee and advice stuffed toy conflicts

Travel Experience

Military Base in Hawaii (Oahu) for six months

Basic Training in South Carolina

Day trip to Tijuana, Mexico

Skills

Published Work

Self Published all books

Print on Demand Technology

Concise writing

Only 60 books in 20 years

Clear focus

Almost all non-fiction topics

Consistent progress

One month to five years to complete a book

Completely original works

1/2 of many books length is quoted from scripture

Opportunity for monetization

People don't read anymore

Marketing strategy

Biggest weakness

Future Prospects and Goals

Staying out of the hospital

Keep taking my medicine

Survive global warming

Go north as weather changes

Not panicking during disasters

Live low stress life

Avoid becoming famous

References

My stuffed toys

The voices in my head

3.5.6 To Be Young Again

When you are young

You run many miles

When you get older

You are happy to walk

When I was young

I wanted to be famous

I wanted to be rich

I wanted to live in a big city

I wanted to live far away

The more interesting parts of the world

Are like the more interesting parts of life

At first we seek beauty and pleasure

But later all we can see is trash and danger

If I could return to my youth

I would make some different decisions

But I would never devote 20 years

To a single project

I would have never joined the military

I could not imagine what career I would have

I would be much more cautious

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And I would trust people much less

I would seek for a way to pay the bills

I would not be so hard on myself

Or have such ridiculously ambitious goals

I would have not been afraid of failure

I would be happier with less money

I would not expect so much of myself

I would not feel I needed to solve others problems

I would be happy to sleep in a warm bed at night

And accept that much of life is repetitive

At the end of the day

Working an honest job would be more than enough

I would be more concerned with my own well being

I would be happy to merely keep the faith

I would not desire to travel

Or get depressed by the news

I would accept that I cannot change

Other people and their business

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I would be happy to read
And watch the occasional movie
If I had enough money
To build up some good amount in savings
I would accept that I did my best
To prepare for the future
I would work much harder each day
But be much happier

Of course if I still became mentally ill
I would need to happy with much less
It is true that Schizophrenia is about fear
And the natural response is to withdraw
No one in government really understands or cares
No one is even aware of how we live
Few of us can advocate for ourselves
Few of us can even read a whole book
Being mentally ill
Is a full time job in and of itself

But honest work

Is what we desire to do the most

So many people despise those on government assistance

And women say they want a man with a job

Being an (old fashioned) man I desire to work

And provide for myself

But sometimes we need to accept where we are

Sometimes merely surviving is winning

3.6 Encouraging Words 2

Best Veteran's and Birthday Cards

for the last 15 years

by Leo, Melissa, and Rebecca Huot

3.6.1 Veteran's Day

2007

We are so proud of the service you gave to our country. I don't know why you had to pay such a high price. You have accepted the sacrifice asked of you with such courage and tenacity that I am challenged to reach higher in my life too. I suppose there is a reason why God does not answer all these questions we have and why. When I feel so overwhelmed I think of your faithfulness each day and that nothing, nothing can separate us from the love of God. The love that created us, sustains us and will receive us home for eternity. Praise God. You are

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our hero.

All our love, Dad and Mom.

2009

We are so proud of your willingness to serve your country. You are a fine son and wonderful man - generous, kind, loving, intelligent, with a great sense of humor. You inspire and encourage me many days. The Lord will answer our prayers in the right time and help us to rest in His peace as we wait together. I am very thankful I have you to share with - it makes it easier. All our Love, Mom and Dad

2011

You gave so very much to serve our country and have never complained or been angry! We are also proud of how you have grown into a loving and caring son and citizen and man. We know you have and continue to have to work hard to overcome all the limitations your illness gives you. God continues to give you grace. We also are so blessed by how you grow in your faith. You have been such an inspiration and example to help me. Enjoy the day. We love you with all our hearts. Mom and Dad

2012

Thanks so much for being willing to serve to protect our freedom and wonderful way of life where we can make our decisions and live as we choose. Most important of all, we can worship as we decide. Love you honey, Mom and Dad

2015

Thank you honey, for your sacrifice so we might be free. You handle your disability with such acceptance and grace. You gave up so much and continue to suffer so much yet you never complain. I know there is much we don't under-

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stand. We love you dearly and are very proud of you and all you have accomplished. I hope this is a good day for you. All our love, Mom

Hi Ben,

This is the day we celebrate you and your sacrifice. We are proud of you! Love, Dad.

2016

We are very proud of you for serving our country. The sacrifice asked of you was very dear, but your response has been truly amazing. Through God's blessing and your constant hard work you are doing wonderfully. I respect the man you have become: loyal, honest, kind, generous and loving. A mother couldn't ask for more. Love, Mom and Dad

2017

Recognizing and celebrating you! Thank you for your service.

We are so proud of you and all you have accomplished on the computer and the website, as well as dealing with and conquering limitations of your illness

We love you, Dad and Mom

Undated

We love you so much! We are very proud of the man you have grown into. You are thoughtful, intelligent, caring, have a great sense of humor and are a very patient teacher. Your mind knows no ends. I love discussing history with you. You gave so much but have worked very hard to relearn and come back to be as independent as possible. I know how hard you have to work at this and your progress is truly amazing. Without the Lord this wouldn't have been possible. I know the Lord watches out for you in a special way. All our love honey, Mom

and Dad

3.6.2 Birthdays

2004

Dear Ben, Happy 26th!

I treasure your friendship each day.

Love,

Rebecca

2005

I know we have told you many times how proud we are of you. I want you to know. We don't say this merely in passing. You are truly an amazing individual. You have accepted the very difficult life given to you and handled it with strength and humor - not allowing it to overwhelm you every single day getting up to face the many challenges and pushing yourself to achieve the goals you set. We love you so much and feel very privileged that you include us so much in your life. May your 27th birthday be as special as you are.

Ben, you are a remarkable young man. You have many fine qualities! All our Love, Mom and Dad

2006

You are a wonderful son - loving, caring, generous and full of humor. Thanks for sharing your life with us and enriching us both. God has blessed us deeply with the gift of you as our son. We want you to know you fill our hearts with love and pride.

Happy 28th

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All our love, Mom and Dad

2007

Dear Ben -

I enjoy our relationship so much! I am honored to be related to you and I always enjoy the wonderful and stimulating conversations that we have.

Enjoy the last year of your 20s!

Rebecca

2008

Happy 30th birthday to a wonderful son. We are so proud of the man you have become. You are kind and generous, hardworking, caring, tenacious and growing in wisdom and godliness.

All our love, Mom and Dad

Dear Ben, Happy 32nd!

I hope these books help you with your humor and writing pursuits.

Much love,

Rebecca

2010

And you are above the ordinary. You have continued to grow and mature so much this year. Your perseverance in spite of your limitations is an inspiration and motivator to me. This next year is going to be an adventure for you in your new apartment close to so many new opportunities. You have so much to offer to others - you are kind, honest, have a great sense of humor, you are caring, thoughtful and I feel so blessed to have you as my son. You are so sweet and

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supportive of me. Many days your call gets me up and going. You've already accomplished so much - living independently learning about and managing your illness plus all your research and the many books you have written. The future lies before you and I look forward to your enjoyment of it. We are so proud of you and love you dearly.

Wishing you blessings, peace of God which passes all understanding, and the closeness of God in your life. We celebrate you!

All our love, Mom and Dad

2011

Dear Ben - Happy Birthday!

I'm so glad we have a good relationship.

Love you so much,

Rebecca

2011

How wonderful to have your birthday land on Easter. To celebrate you and the Lord's resurrection on the same day! You are such a joy - a gift from Our Lord to us. Never forget what a special man you are. We love you dearly. Mom and Dad

2013

35 years

Wishing you a relaxing and enjoyable birthday. We are proud of you and your many accomplishments and contributions.

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Love you so much my best friend.

Love, Dad and Mom

2014

Happy 36!

Hi Ben - We want you to wish you a very happy birthday. We are both very proud of the young man you are and your many accomplishments.

Have a happy, happy day. I hope the Hurd Herd throws you a surprise party!

All our love, Dad and Mom

2017

Dear Ben,

I feel so blessed to have my son be one of my best friends. I can talk to you about anything. You're a good listener with good advice and insight. You have a wonderful sense of humor that I delight in. You are definitely one of my spiritual mentors and have given me very helpful insights into living my faith. It is a joy to celebrate your 39th Birthday! It was just you and me on that first day when you were born. I remember it well. You have grown into a godly, loving, generous, thoughtful and highly educated man. We could be prouder of you honey.

Love, Mom

Dear Ben - We celebrate you, your accomplishments, the person you are and what the Lord has done in your life.

Love always, Dad

Undated

I think back on the day you were born. I remember it very well. You cried so much your first 4 months I always thought it was because you were taken before you were ready to be born. After that, you were happy and cheerful. You loved to play with blankets and rolled all over the place. You didn't do much crawling, just rolling and then you walked! The Lord has given me such a wonderful gift in you as my son. You are truly my best friend and it means the world to me. I love you honey. Thanks for loving me. Love, Mom and Dad

4 Concise Philosophy Outline

4.1 Equal Opportunity Offender

1. It is very hard for most people to accept that they are wrong about their core beliefs.
2. It is hard to teach others things that you have no experience with, their beliefs contradict your base values and you cannot accept even part of their beliefs.
3. It is common with most philosophies to accept part of another philosophy without accepting the entire thing.
4. You can be sure you will offend someone if you talk about anything people care about.
5. People who understand what philosophy is about often hate the entire discipline, because it challenges things that people thought they already had the answers to and those ideas force people to re-evaluate their core beliefs.

4.2 How to Determine What is True

1. faith
2. tradition
3. scripture
4. prophecy
5. history
6. fate
7. theology
8. prayer
9. worship
10. charity
11. volunteer service
12. religious laws
13. forgiveness
14. free choice
15. intuition
16. common sense
17. life experiences
18. divine intervention
19. mystical experience
20. meditation
21. similar methods of discovery

4.3 Summary of My Ideas

4.3.1 Summary of My Ideas on Religion

1. Sin is an addiction
2. Faith cannot be proved
3. Spending time with God is spiritual warfare

4. Talking to God is a privilege
5. Pray for God's will to be done
6. Pray for faith
7. Thanking God is the most powerful kind of prayer
8. You can only see the results of your prayers through faith
9. Do not wait to understand the Bible - Do what you do understand now
10. Christianity is the anti-addiction
11. The Bible does not dodge difficult issues
12. Theology is not ideal but necessary - people get strange ideas when they just believe what the Bible says
13. God is infallible but people aren't
14. Only God can be truly objective
15. Most aspects of God are a mystery
16. Most Biblical theology is based on paradox
17. If it is God's will, the money will come without asking
18. Make sure God gets credit for the good things
19. We can't even breathe without God
20. Cutting down trees to build cathedrals does not honor God
21. If you love God, you should be kind to the environment (His creation)
22. Just because God forgives you, doesn't mean you should continue to sin
23. Even though God bails you out, you should still try
24. We should be happy we have so many choices in Bibles and churches
25. The church is a network, not an organization

4.3.2 Summary of My Ideas on the World Today

1. God is not responsible for the suffering in the world - we are
2. Problem of suffering is an emotional one not a logical one

3. Great changes in society require great changes on our part
4. Society is good at engineering how to do things but is not so good at determining the need
5. We live like kings did in the past
6. We have sacrificed resilience for efficiency
7. The world economy is brittle
8. World makes sense if you see it from a negative perspective and follow causes and effects
9. Most Christians in the world are poor and being persecuted by rich Muslims

4.3.3 Summary of My Ideas on American Culture

1. American exceptionalism is hubris
2. America was founded by atheists and was never a Christian nation
3. People now expect the world out of others but nothing out of themselves
4. Many peoples' greatest fear is doing their job properly
5. Science as a belief system
6. Sci-fi and feminism have become mainstream
7. Most people believe and feel things they cannot say in words
8. Our problem is not that we don't have enough money but that we have poor self control
9. No one owes you anything - tell this to corporations
10. God doesn't need your money - pay your taxes and worship God
11. Don't take out loans - save up before hand

4.3.4 Summary of My Ideas on Individual Choices

1. We are our greatest enemy
2. You can only change yourself
3. You can always improve your situation or make it worse
4. We don't realize how much suffering happens as a result of our sins
5. We expect too much out of life
6. We need to be realistic in our expectations of life
7. What we think isn't very important is the most important
8. People that claim to be objective are the least objective
9. People don't change their minds due to argument
10. I don't want followers
11. Don't be lazy: find your own path
12. My ideas are a way of thinking, not a formula or a series of steps
13. Be creative in your decisions so you save time and resources
14. Creativity is useful in any area
15. Creativity is harder when used within constraints
16. There are no shortcuts to peace and happiness
17. It is easy to solve other people's problems
18. Don't expect that other people will solve your problems
19. Be surprised when things do work out
20. Everyone is an individual, whether they like it or not
21. Don't count anything too close
22. Don't rely on just one thing
23. Trying to be humble is the most arrogant thing

4.3.5 Summary of My Ideas on Other Topics

1. Boredom is a gift - exciting times tend to be painful
2. Intention is everything spiritually but not physically
3. Pain is the most significant thing to you when it happens
4. The ends never justify the means - the means determine the ends
5. I want others to be happy, even if I can't be
6. People that clean and maintain things are the most important
7. There are 2 sides to any personality trait
8. Have lower highs and you will have higher lows
9. Plain writing does not mean simple ideas
10. Understanding comes in mid sentence
11. Getting a degree doesn't mean you know anything
12. Invention is nothing - implementation is everything
13. Simple is not the same thing as easy
14. Think long term

4.4 Future Possibilities

4.4.1 Technological Revolution

Information Revolution is a Great Technological Revolution on the scale of the Agricultural Revolution and any knowledge, institutions, and areas of study that arose when we started the original civilizations will be barely recognizable in the future if they even still exist

1. written history
2. basic math

3. laws and government
4. cities
5. large scale food production
6. public projects like roads
7. accounting
8. schools of any kind
9. religious institutions
10. armies and large scale warfare
11. jobs other than hunter/gatherer

4.4.2 Legal Changes

Vice laws that people think don't hurt other people and Hollywood glamorizes will all be legalized

1. gambling
2. sex outside marriage
3. drug use
4. aggressive panhandling
5. traffic violations
6. bullying
7. gossip
8. dirty words and jokes

4.5 Advice for the Future

1. be responsible and follow rules and common sense
2. take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually
3. eat lots of vegetables, take all medicines, go to counseling, volunteer
4. keep reading the Bible, praying and going to church
5. think long term

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6. be aware of bad signs like doing things in secret or if you have bad feeling about it
7. if you aren't sure, don't do it
8. avoid anything addictive or inappropriate to show to your parents
9. avoid anything too good to be true or something that seems too easy
10. learn as much as possible and be as self-sufficient as possible
11. keep busy doing something productive for others, give 100%, and keep loads of savings on hand
12. always allow much more time to do things than you think you will need
13. obey authorities without question or complaint
14. do not anger others
15. be as anonymous and unimportant as possible
16. do not trust anyone asking for money or identifying information
17. do not break others things especially living ones
18. forgive others for your peace of mind

4.6 Business Ideas

1. Care about your customer and choose an area you know about things other people don't
2. Most successful products or services of the last 30 years were designed and marketed to make something easier for the consumer
3. There are likely no new products or services people need or want anymore
4. Privacy and security are the key ways to differentiate your product now - no one does it but every consumer wants it
5. Multifunctional products or services have a big advantage over single function ones in convenience and overall cost
6. Try to cannibalize other people's products or services
7. Do not rely on just one product or services and expect some of your products to become irrelevant fast

8. Go into an industry that has little competition
9. Find a product or service that is a new spin on an old idea
10. Find a product or service that is not easy for someone else to reproduce
11. Find the most expensive product or service in that area
12. Find a way to make money and do not change it (business model)
13. Target market should be people who are spending a lot on that particular item
14. Your brand is the most important thing - without it you can only compete on price or features and will have very thin margins
15. You need to not hire too many people and control expenses
16. You must do well in every key business area and can fail if you are bad in even one
17. Invest money into the company and advertise
18. Make a website that has at least your company email and phone number, address, hours of operation, map to store and update it right away when any of those changes and always respond to phone calls and emails promptly
19. The key to the cost of stores is location or more precisely foot traffic
20. Sell your company to a bigger one if you can get a good price

4.7 Military Ideas

4.7.1 Military Training

1. There is no way to explain what the military is like or fully prepare a person before basic training
2. The army has a distinct mono culture and designed it this way to bring people from diverse backgrounds together
3. The army is difficult emotionally, not intellectually
4. Every soldier is first and foremost an infantry/foot soldier

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5. What you learn in basic training are called combat survival skills and you train on them constantly afterwards
6. Basic training is the army's version of a psychological evaluation
7. The army deliberately puts you under stress to simulate combat, not to be mean
8. The point of going through a gas chamber in the army is to make sure your mask seals correctly and to motivate you to put on your mask as quickly as possible - you go to the gas chamber every year in the army
9. The army values improvement over anything else
10. The army was too easy in training us for combat

4.7.2 Military Stereotypes

1. Service members are some of the best people you will ever meet
2. Our military is actually as kind as they can be and still win wars
3. The army has no choice in the wars they fight in or how they fight in them
4. The biggest fear of any soldier is serving in combat
5. Everyone can be called back within the first 8 years after you sign up
6. The enlisted service member gets paid too little and the military laws are unreasonably strict
7. Best thing for enlisted soldiers to do for advancement is get college credit
8. Women and men train together and serve from the very beginning of their service - we need everyone we can to run the military
9. One soldier told the Drill Sergeant he was gay and the Drill Sergeant said he didn't care and get back to work
10. The average soldier is in as good shape as an olympic athlete
11. The army expects you to be good at everything

4.7.3 My Military Experience

1. Give 150% and follow orders immediately and you will do well anywhere in the military
2. I was constantly terrified, tired, and trusted no one in the military
3. I had a near death experience in the tear gas chamber
4. I never fully adjusted to the army culture because I never even thought of changing who I was
5. I chose the army over the other services because as I saw it as the common man's service
6. I understood the importance of labor unions during my training in the army
7. Nowhere is more depressing than an army base
8. Happiness is being out of the military

4.7.4 Military's Challenges

1. The sergeants have the toughest job in the army
2. Don't apologize to a sergeant, just don't do it again
3. Most people do not sign up for a second tour
4. The army is a cross section of America

4.8 Schizophrenia

4.8.1 Why I Cope so Well

1. Accepted I needed help from the beginning
2. Felt lucky I was not tortured or burned alive or even had to go to combat or do torture training
3. I had a healthy, normal childhood
4. Never took illegal drugs or smoked anything
5. Never committed any crimes
6. Always on medication

7. Great family support
8. Great support from God as born again Christian
9. Get more money as veteran with honorable discharge
10. Have been able to keep myself busy
11. Live almost completely independently

4.8.2 Experiencing Schizophrenia

1. All stimuluses are intensified
2. Causes adrenaline to go through veins constantly while medicine makes you very tired
3. Always tired and always hungry, gain huge amount of weight due to medicine
4. Lonely disease - stressed out in social situations
5. Very literal and religious
6. Often suffer from anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorders
7. Get regular episodes of depression as well
8. Fear irrational things happening while at the same time knowing it isn't true
9. Counseling people to overcome their fear is ineffective because you cannot out smart your brain because the brain is you
10. Does not affect intelligence
11. Most disabling disease that doesn't kill you
12. Have to keep stress level low or it undoes medicine
13. Medicine basically guarantees you will get diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease

4.9 Web Design Ideas

1. Alice in wonderland like weird and messy design field
2. Easy to do special effects, but very hard to center things

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3. Designs have to work on anything from business cards to billboards
4. Making a website load fast is an entire career field of its own
5. Websites are very brittle and can be broken very easily
6. Everyone has to agree on what features are available and how they work
7. Multiple entirely different and independent software engines have to display the same designs in the same way
8. No matter what is done to make it easier, it creates different extremely bad side effects
9. The career field is looked down upon by business managers and programmers because it isn't "hardcore/macho" enough
10. Every client treats you like a technician and doesn't allow you to use any of the skills you learned
11. Everybody wants to be a designer and very few people are willing to pay anything for it
12. Best design helps the user understand the content better
13. You need to develop the judgement to know when to and when not to follow the rules
14. If your design is ugly, unreadable, or worse than before you designed it, you failed
15. Design is a service industry and clients shouldn't have to know your design process, techniques, or tools
16. Most designers do constant little changes to their designs
17. Tracking down errors and mistakes is everyone's least favorite job
18. I like web design, because it changes fast so that I am always able to learn new things
19. I like the web because my designs and content are always available in their latest form
20. Have enough experience to know what technologies to avoid and which ones to adopt
21. Every one of my design decisions has a reason
22. I am not dependent on any one software program to do design with

23. I don't design for advanced users because they are only 1% of the population
24. I haven't learned to program because there is so much free software available

4.10 Philosophical Influences

Biblical

Apostle Paul

Apostle John

Prophet Jeremiah

Prophet Nehemiah

Prophet Elijah

King Solomon

King David

Chinese

Chuang Tzu

Hsun Tzu

Bodhidharma

Dogen

Han Shan

Li Po

Tu Fu

Other Asian and African

Al-Ghazzali

Hafiz

Kabir

Kebrä Nəgəst

Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Existential

Kierkegaard

Camus

Viktor Frankl

Tolstoy

Dostoevsky

Nietzsche

Renaissance and Enlightenment

Meister Eckhart

Erasmus

Montaigne

Berkeley

Locke

Spinoza

5 Latest Writings

5.1 Finding Qualified Psychiatric Help

It is hard to find good mental health service providers, as mental illness is a speciality within psychiatry and not only is their very limited money in that area, as most people with Schizophrenia are on government financial assistance, but also that it tends to be very discouraging to treat and the amount of bureaucracy involved can be very disillusioning for the providers. In addition, the (human) brain is the most complicated thing we have ever studied, in the physical sciences.

I was very surprised to find out recently that there are treatments for

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Schizophrenia treatments that are effective, in addition to the medicine and the treatments are not difficult, scary, painful, or costly. I didn't put out much hope that this would happen because the amount of research going into this area must be small.

We still don't have any movie stars who are championing our cause and it is very hard for someone with Schizophrenia to advocate to the government for people with this disease, due to them not doing well under stress. Also, Schizophrenia is much harder to treat than depression and anxiety, as it is a thought disorder rather than a mood disorder.

For diagnosis, you need a psychiatrist, which is defined by being someone with a doctorate in both medicine and psychology, because the medicines and the disease affect the body, as well as the mind. For prescribing, you need a mental health nurse practitioner or someone with a doctorate in pharmaceutical sciences, as they need to at least know about how the medicine acts in your body. For counseling, which can be either/or individual or group, treatment is directed usually by a psychologist with a masters or doctorate in psychology.

What my family has found is that some people without degrees know a lot about the disease at times and it is also common to find trained and certified providers who don't know so much about the illnesses. Even reading a few good books and spending several years close to someone with Schizophrenia might give you more useful information than a lot of formal training given to psychiatrists. Even for psychiatrists, mental illness is not the main focus in their curriculum.

You probably already know this, but you need to be careful what you look up and even more what you learn from what you read online. There are many studies that say things like nutrition, illegal drugs, electro-shock therapy, or certain religious practices help with Schizophrenia, but many of these are written

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by non-professionals and either don't work or can cause pain, go against your beliefs, or even make the condition worse.

I believe, as a born again Christian, that there are spiritual realities beyond just the physical world and I believe that many people are misdiagnosed. It is more likely for a person to be going through an existential or midlife crisis, have dark night of the soul, an emotional breakdown, have a different psychiatric condition, or a long list of other conditions often confused with Schizophrenia.

But I do contend that these are different conditions or situations and these should be treated differently. Schizophrenia does not give you any special abilities and is entirely a disability. If you truly have special powers, then you likely don't have Schizophrenia or you at least want to deal with that part in a separate way.

Modern psychology and religion can coexist, especially with Christianity. The mind sits between the spirit and the body, so an ultimate provider would use an understanding of all three, in any treatment of any condition. But for now, you will have to piece together a lot of this yourself. But still, the best advice is to get diagnosed by a psychiatrist and then, depending on your diagnosis, take medicine as prescribed, before you try anything else.

I recommend treatment according to the medical establishment, even though I am not a fan of any establishment, which is not to say that non-professionals don't have good ideas as well. It is just like on the Internet, you can find all sorts of cool little boutiques stores, but when you deal with more important things and you don't want them screwed up, you go with an established brand.

5.2 Breakthroughs in Schizophrenia Treatment

It was for a long time in the modern medical era that it was thought by mainstream professional certified psychologists that you cannot counsel someone to apply reasoning to the paranoia and delusions that come with certain types of Schizophrenia and other forms of psychosis. The only major treatment options centered around taking medicine and distracting the person from symptoms like with music and engaging in conversation.

When I was introduced to meditation, almost 20 years ago, I discovered the Zen Buddhist meditation where you empty your mind of everything and the Tai Chi and Qi Gong meditations where you use movement with meditation. I figured out how to do the Zen meditation and got videos for doing the Qi Gong, but I didn't have the emotional energy to keep doing the Zen meditation and didn't have the ability to commit to a schedule with the Qi Gong.

This kind of meditation that is now being used as a treatment for Schizophrenia is called mindfulness, which I think comes from the Insight Meditation of Theravada Buddhism. It was popularized by Thich Nat Hanh and the book *Wherever You Go, There You Are*. It has also been applied for pain management and death counseling. This is a much quicker and easier and has been successfully used with average middle school age kids.

The mindfulness meditation is not about emptying your mind of everything or concentrating on movements for better health. Mindfulness is being aware of the phenomena around you in that particular moment and then recognizing it and coming back to your breathing and acknowledging thoughts and feelings as they come. This practice can be done with a guided voice track or even just in walking around your neighborhood.

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The point of practicing mindfulness for a person dealing with delusions and paranoia is to work this mental muscle, so they can strengthen the rational part of their mind and control their feelings rather than be controlled by them. As a Christian Existentialist Philosophical Taoist, I am not a favor of rational and concrete thinking about life and problems, but I realized that the point of all this is about choosing and getting control of your life so that you can avoid unnecessary suffering. Those concepts align very much with those philosophies.

Mindfulness can be thought of as critical thinking as applied to your personal life. Just like I have no control over external things like politics or business, so I focus on improving my own life. This is just like the serenity prayer from St. Francis of Assisi used in addiction counseling. Even though the external world is truly painful, irrational, and out of any one's control, our internal lives can be happier and make more sense.

In reasoning out paranoid thoughts, we work against the greatest threat in psychosis which is ambiguity or the unknown. If you train yourself to do something beforehand, it become less stressful later on when you deal with it in a stressful situation. You think of the worst case scenario that is common for people who worry incessantly in a positive direction, but you think of only likely rational scenarios.

You evaluate like they do in business in what is called a cost-benefit analysis. I am very focused on making my website the best it can be and am often unwilling to leave it broken, so that I stay up late fixing it. The thing is though that the beauty of web design is when you make mistakes, no one dies. When you think of something bad happening, you have to first evaluate whether it is factually true or not and is it helpful to think about the thought in that particular way. Finally, you think of evidence for an against this scenario happening.

5.3 Why Things Are The Way They Are

Most people at least try to be rational, but there is a certain strain of thinking that embraces the irrational. It is not that we should do everything for no reason, but sometimes the way we go about reasoning can have some unforeseen bad side effects.

Before what is called the Enlightenment that happened in the mid eighteenth century, a lot of the thinking in the early modern and premodern world were more similar to what we have in the Middle East today. We see only the negative side effects of some very specific policies there, but we have lost some very important things from traditional thinking.

There were also many things that happened right around the time of the Enlightenment like the Industrial Revolution, modern economic ideas, and international law. This all happened at the same time as Western Europe dominated the world militarily and politically and right after the peak and decline of the Islamic world. Basically, the modern world is a creation of the Western Europe, more specifically the Dutch did most of the ideas minus the industrial revolution (which the English and then the Americans co-adopted). This was all made possible by the wealth of the Americas and the idea of world trade.

The Chinese fell behind because they adopted what is called agrarianism as part of Confucianism and the Japanese did not. Agrarianism is an economy based on subsistence where the main business is agriculture and the point is to break even and not do substantial trade in luxury goods internationally. The Chinese didn't keep a big fleet of ships because most their traditional enemies were inland (Turks, Mongols). The Japanese didn't even exist as a united country until

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about the early modern period, which was long after Chinese culture had peaked and China had already existed for thousands of years.

So what does this all mean and why is this a problem? This current world is a world dominated by wealth and power with the use of religion to justify this based on the idea that wealthy people are wealthy because they are more moral than others. Modern China and most of South and East Asia run the same way. Currently for all intents and purposes our entire world functions as one giant economy and much of it also works as one giant police state. The only major areas of the world which are hold outs are Russia, the Middle East and Africa, not coincidentally, the more religious part of the world, both Christianity foremost and Islam secondarily.

So why is this bad? The problem with wealth and power as signs of morality is that the basic ideas of major world religions are opposed to this idea, for good reason. Most people's problems are tied into sex or money. The traditional worldview sees these as problems and the modern worldview as our world cultural output which centers around Hollywood promotes these two things as necessary for realism or personal creativity.

The entire economy and things necessary to what we consider to be the modern world are based on oil which most reserves are in the Russia, Middle East, and Africa. Modern medicine that saves less than it kills is entirely based on disposable plastic containers. Computers, which are used for getting your food on your table before it rots, require a delicate exchange of goods that spans the entire globe, especially in East Asia. This creates a very brittle society because the business community is still trying to base our entire economic advantage in being efficient/cheap as possible at the expense of everything else.

The big obstacle we have hit that we can't get around is that this entire worldview is based on continual growth forever. Once we are no longer able to ex-

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pand our economy indefinitely, then everyone starts getting poorer. The obstacle to continual growth is oil and the amount of oil we can use is leveled off. No one in the world is getting richer unless at the expense of others from now on. The iPhone was the last thing people bought that has significant markups that people wanted and most people bought everything with significant margins that they needed was at least a generation ago.

Everybody now wants to make more money selling stuff, but no one wants to buy anything. The only obvious thing anyone would be willing to buy is alternative energy and Internet privacy/security which are both considered unpatriotic. The most lucrative thing now is people's information but the government and industry will only buy so much especially as they learn more and more that there is less value and ability to get value out of this information than they realize. People aren't going to buy much of anything as they no longer have any extra money, no matter how well you advertise it and the government can only make use of so much data as shown by the continual school shootings that are the government cannot seem to prevent.

So the world today seems very well explained by the beliefs and behavior of the rival groups, but if you don't want to accept that we, as people, are actually the problem to the survival of moral world, than it seems to be more positive to just say things don't make sense. Some of the extreme ways wealthy people go to getting more money and their unwillingness to even consider other ways to make money sound very much like they are addicts. We could get rid of terrorism instantly by either everyone agreeing to never report terrorist activity or accepting that this is an inevitable cost of maintaining a one world economy and just increase security to appropriate levels in critical infrastructure around the world.

So the problem in our world is that we are starved for a relationship with God and the other part of the world that resists this anti-God one world economy

has a very negative and violent understanding of God. We both need to accept that we cannot change the way other people want to live their lives and we have so many things we are doing wrong in our own worlds maybe we want to think about that before criticizing other people's choices. Also, the one thing that could possibly bring us together might be Christianity. But bringing us together has not seemed to bring peace to our society either.

5.4 Why I Try to Think Irrationally

Most people try to approach the world in a logical manner, but in my experience in dealing with most the things I have had to for many years, I have found that it makes more sense just to accept that things don't make sense. Obviously, this creates other problems like in dealing with Schizophrenia, where it is to my advantage to make an extra effort to try to think through things rationally.

My first introduction to nonsense as the normal way of things working was in the military. I remember early on in basic training that we would get a form and we were not to fill it out, until we were instructed how to by the drill sergeant. If someone started filling it out, it was ripped up and they had to listen to how to fill it out. We would cross off some items and write in others. Most of the space on the forms we never filled out at all.

The Drill Sergeants were mostly very serious about everything, but one of the few things that made them laugh is that the government passed a law for the reduction of paperwork. The way this was implemented was that we had to fill out an additional paper for this. Years later I realized the point of the paperwork. It basically works as a contract where filling it out acknowledges legally that the law congress has passed is being followed correctly and is a way for those following the law to show they have complied.

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Although I have heard that officers get very different training, the enlisted training I had in the Army basically was that you just did whatever you were told down to the last detail with no thought as to whether it made sense or not. We were like the arms and legs or worker ants of the military and the officers and NCOs so some extent were the brains. It didn't matter whether it made any sense. It was not our job to consider that possibility. This is probably the core reason why it is hard to adjust to the military vs. civilian way of life and most people only do great in one or the other.

So after I left the military and went to college, I was introduced to Taoism and Confucianism in my Chinese Literature Class I originally took because I was trying to learn Chinese when I transferred into the local university after I got all the credits that I could at the community college. I was horrid at it as I was at French in high school. It just went too fast for me. But I understood the philosophy quite well especially Taoism from my very first reading of Chuang Tzu.

Taoism makes sense if you understand Confucianism, which was familiar to me because of how my grandma and uncles from my mom's side acted and similarities to the military. Confucianism is all about manners and respect for learning. In traditional China, the government controlled all business and the Emperor employed managers to run the farming which was most of the economy. The basis for selection was by taking a public service examination where you proved how well you understood Confucianism by writing poetry. Education, not business, law, or warfare was the highest ideal for profession.

So as in most things Chinese, there is a duality to each of the basic ideas, popularized by the Yin Yang symbol. In Confucianism, everyone has a certain rank in clear hierarchy and every decision made is entirely political. In Taoism, the highest good is survival and the avoidance of unnecessary pain. Daoism in ancient China was like dropping out of society and was counter to the idea of any politics. Daoism was always associated with writing poetry and drinking

wine. If you failed your imperial examination or were placed in Southern China, your alternative choice was to be a Taoist sage.

Confucius set the place for Taoism when he said that the village idiot was wiser than himself. Zen Buddhism is a kind of hybrid between Taoism and Buddhism, but in practice Buddhism and Confucianism have more in common than Taoism. This is because Buddhism and Confucianism are reflective and mental, Taoism is more physical and impulsive like an animal vs. a person. It is often described as spontaneity.

Neo-Confucianism (starting at 1000 AD) takes ideas from Buddhism to provide a metaphysics, as traditionally Chinese philosophy and medicine never asked the question of why, but how (or the way). The rationale for both Confucianism and Taoism was that previous Chinese dynasties followed what we now call Taoism and Confucianism ideas and Confucius and Lao Tzu were actually not original in their philosophies but rather wanted to bring things back to a better golden era in the past.

Soon after this, I learned web design because I had a sensitivity to chemicals and it was the one thing I could do that I could avoid being around cleaning chemicals. Web design is irrational as well and has gotten more so as time as progressed. In web design today, you have to make the same design work on everything from a postage stamp to a billboard, which has never been the requirement for any other type of design in history. Special effects are very easy to do, but it is almost impossible to center things especially vertically, do any sort of columns, or printing without cutting off the page right in the middle of the sentence (vertically).

One of the big problems today is that people's requirements for web design might not even be fully possible geometrically in the physical world. First, some people are still trying to make web pages that are basically written or

graphically intense documents where others are trying to make a very sophisticated programming system out of exactly the same techniques and with the same content. The other thing that people want to do with web design is to make it design itself and the other questionably physically possible is they want to put random things into a space without knowing anything about them including dimensions, media type, or proportions. And the biggest rule of the web is that everything created beforehand needs to work forever in any future technology with the same techniques.

So I have thought of a model to put these things into a conceptual framework to combine both the rational and irrational elements to accurately reflect life and integrate them into my beliefs and experiences while still giving me peace of mind. There are 3 basic levels. The first level is boring and routine and fairly rational and predictable. The second level involves chance and luck and is driven by probability and people's decisions. The third level is God and His purpose working in the world as well as His direct divine intervention.

5.5 Childhood Lessons in Religion

Two of the big challenges I have had to deal with from an early age were an anger problem and a silliness problem, which much later I realized they were related. I had masked my anger problem with my silliness problem. This coping strategy finally fell apart in my first few weeks in the military. This kind of put on a major personality change that made me much more serious, having little patience, and having a serious self esteem problem.

After leaving the military before my tour was up and not knowing at the time that I had Schizophrenia, I found in college that I was not good at business as I had planned for a career in and found out that I was good in philosophy and writing. After looking for a number of years after leaving the military to help explain myself beyond just being unique, I finally found that a combination of

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Christian Existentialism and Philosophical Taoism explained these unusual views I had from childhood and gave me a framework to deal with my failures in the military and college and later Schizophrenia.

I had always been a born-again Christian from an early age, but I often got in arguments with others about it and this often made me angry and was divisive. I finally came to the conclusion shortly before I was diagnosed that it was futile to argue about religion as no one changes their mind due to argument. I also came to the conclusion that talking about it in a less personal and emotional way and more from an academic point of view, talking about religion became less divisive and more civil.

I also learned in college that the biggest thing stopping Christianity in 95% of the world was its association with American Imperialism (the Modern World Economic System, Secret World Police State, and Hollywood Culture). Most things you hear about well known Christians in popular culture and the well known televangelists is that they are extremely conservative, rich, powerful, and aggressive. I have always been a liberal environmentally and animal rights wise and since my first major job (serving in the military) I have been liberal in terms of labor rights and financial aid for the poor.

So I see a place in Christianity to bring the Gospel to a new demographic not served by politically conservative evangelicals. I am aiming for the seeker (the not yet believer but interested in spiritual things). I am not concerned with appealing to other Christians, who think I am not faithful for things they don't understand. I have chosen to go about this in a different way partly because of my personality and partly because so many Christians have tried the more popular route and adding one more to that would make less difference than taking an entirely different approach.

I believe that if someone truly searches for God, they will end up with faith in

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Christ. First they need to start reading again and second they need to start being more critical in their thinking. I would like to give them some information to people interested to help them criticize the establishment and then motivate them to read the Bible. One of the major parts of my writing that many Christians find fault with is criticizing the many different parallel church organizations as I do all of the establishment (and their blind support for the establishment). My answer is that you don't know the mind of God and I can hear His voice directly and do not need you to understand God and the Bible.

I am a born again Christian and I am unique and I follow the Bible the best I know how. I do not support the World Government and never will. I don't care how many times you try to explain to me that God likes rich and powerful people and hates the poor and needy, I don't believe that a system that is based on greed is Biblical. I also think for all the positives and negatives of this world that this kind of world is one of the few I could do more than just survive in.

I do not believe that God is conservative or mainstream and I believe that there is ample evidence all through the Bible that God wants to rule us directly and communicate with us directly. The only way to change our world is through prayer and it is also the safest. The only thing we can all change is in how we live our lives and how we think about things.

I have chosen to commit a good portion of my life studying comparative religions for several reasons:

- I enjoy studying about other cultures and traditional cultures have to be studied with their belief systems as that was what was most important to them
- it is a much better way to go about self help psychology as the answers are more profound
- how can you know Christianity is truly better if you do not study (other)

peoples' opinions?

- the objections to studying "Eastern Philosophy" are based on ignorance and cultural stereotypes in our popular culture
- picking and choosing only some aspects of Asian philosophies to adopt is perfectly acceptable (just not of the Abrahamic faiths)
- historically, the greatest philosophers were often the same as the smartest and most devout Christian theologians (the trinity concept and using reason in theology both come directly out of the traditions of ancient greek pagan thought)
- Tai Chi and other martial arts, Feng Shui, and Traditional Chinese Medicine are all directly based on Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism and are accepted by evangelical churches
- The Serenity Prayer of Saint Francis is a good summation of the philosophy of Taoism

5.6 Mindfulness 2.0

I am continuing to learn about mindfulness meditation, so I am giving a better idea of what it is and how it can be useful in treating Schizophrenia, as time goes by. First of all, the best and primary treatment for Schizophrenia is still psychiatric medicines prescribed by a mental health professional. There are many misconceptions about mindfulness as it is a subtle concept.

Essentially, anyone who has tried to deal with disturbing thoughts like in physical pain, anxiety or addiction has found that trying not to think about them almost always leads to a negative outcome, where you get the exact opposite of what you want. This is why you engage in what could be described as not-thinking in mindfulness which means that you do not try to think or not think about the disturbing thoughts.

Many people who have been in the mental health field, who work with the men-

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tally ill have long considered any kind of counseling as ineffective in treating Schizophrenia. This new approach with mindfulness does not go against this reality. You do not try to reason out a mentally ill person's delusions or paranoia to convinced them they are not real.

These thoughts are as real to the people as time is to everyone. Ultimately everything physical is impermanent and ultimately an illusion. But when we experience pain, it throws us back into the middle of our physical world with such force that we cannot hold back how real it is to us.

So mindfulness is a skill that needs to be practiced to be effective. In mindfulness, you let thoughts come and go and notice them without forming judgments. It is like when you try to accept your life as it is that you learn to accept your limitations not as points of suffering but simply as a reality.

The more you think about or try not to think about your suffering, the worse it gets. The mind does a good job of putting things together and making sense of it and in a person suffering with paranoid thoughts, the starting point is the fear. Then the mind tries to explain it and in so doing builds a picture of it that gets more elaborate and convincing as it feeds on your attention.

Fear thrives on uncertainty and a good way to limit its destructive power is to just accept it and let it go rather than trying to fight it off or figure out how to suppress it. Distraction is also a proven method for dealing with disturbing thoughts, but the problem is that you have a hard time getting to sleep, while you are trying to distract yourself from your thoughts.

These fears unleash the flight or flight response, as the part of the brain, that helps others realize that these fears are irrational is destroyed or doesn't function properly in a person suffering with Schizophrenia. So the conventional strategy often used in more classical meditation and different ways of develop-

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ing discipline and thought control are ineffective in a person with Schizophrenia's mind.

We often think too much and with it get overwhelmed by how much information is available today and have a hard time identifying what is relevant and what is not. Not only are many things not worth learning or finding solutions for, but also many feelings we are burdened with don't need to be fully examined or explained. With some aspects of life it is enough to accept that they exist, even though our minds don't want to let the feelings go.

As much as we try to find other ways to fix our problems externally, sometimes the best solution is to exercise our free will. You cannot choose your DNA or your childhood, but you can choose how you want to live your life. You really do have the power to think about what you want to.

Do not just accept that you have to fight your own mind. There is no need to struggle, because you are already in control. If you want a peaceful mind, it already is, so just let go of your violent thoughts. You cannot always choose what thoughts you want let in your mind but you can choose what thoughts you dwell on.