



MGMH

Movement for Global Mental Health



SA Federation for
Mental Health

Together Against Stigma

Schizophrenia

presented by

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At age 18 I was diagnosed with schizophrenia and my first response was fear and a sense that my life was over.

The most significant impact in my life was how others responded to my diagnosis ...



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The word “schizophrenia” sparked all kinds of reactions of how I was perceived ...



- *Unpredictable*
- *Dangerous*
- *Need to be institutionalised*
- *Unable to have a conversation*
- *Unable to feel emotion*
- *Unable to think or make decisions*
- *Unable to achieve at anything*

Decision-making was suddenly taken away from me bit by bit, I had no say over my own life ...

- *I could no longer drive a vehicle*
- *I could no longer live on my own*
- *I could no longer work*
- *I could no longer manage my own finances*
- *I could not take part in my own treatment plan*
- *I could not go anywhere unaccompanied*



Finally my independence was taken away from me

9 years later, I took my life back, went public and achieved beyond everyone's expectations ... yet the word "schizophrenia" still sparked reactions ...

- *"You don't look like a person with schizophrenia"*
- *"You don't sound like a person with schizophrenia"*
- *"A person with schizophrenia can't achieve or do what you do"*
- *"Isn't schizophrenia someone who has a split personality ... someone who is a psychopath?"*

The social experience ...

Stigma, discrimination, ignorance

**Society's
perceptions**



People with schizophrenia are:

- violent and aggressive
- unable to function in society – need to be locked up
- unable to speak for themselves or make decisions
- unable to be educated or be gainfully employed
- unable to achieve at anything

Incorrect and negative perceptions like these, prevents people living with schizophrenia from accessing life opportunities and fully enjoy their basic human rights

Negative attitudes like these often forces one to live by it.



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Changing the term
“Schizophrenia” will reduce
the effects of stigma



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Thank you!

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