

For educational purposes I am writing a brief biography in hope that it may shed some light on why I experienced a series psychotic episodes when I was in my twenties. I am writing this mainly for the psychological professionals out there, and I am trying to be as honest as possible as best I can remember. A word of caution though - Some of the content is rather raw and frank and could act as a trigger for some people.

When I was around 4 or 5 I remember my Mom taking my older brother and I to Sunday school and church. I remember being in a Sunday school class and the teacher telling us that God was always every where and always knew what we were doing at all times. If we were good after we died we would go to heaven; if we were bad we would go to hell and suffer for eternity. I grew up believing this to be real.

My Mom used to play solitary, and she would call it Beat the Devil. Most of the time as the game ended she might say I almost beat him and once and a while she would announce with glee, I beat the Devil. I also remember being over at my aunt's house when there was a thunder storm and after a loud crack of thunder my aunt explaining that the thunder sound was the Devil beating his wife.

When I was around 8 or 9 I started to develop an interest in sex. My experiences were probably pretty normal for most kids growing up though I might have been more on the hyper-sexual side. There were times when a female cousin or family friend and I made excuses to lie close to one another. Once one cousin of my cousins was mad at me and told my Mom that we were lying close to each other, and I was rubbing something hard against her. My Mom confronted me and I ended up being very ashamed of my behavior.

Once a couple of my male cousin spent the night. I had been very good friend with the one maybe a year younger than me. That night before we went to bed we were fooling around and wrestling on the floor, and when I had him down I started to get an erection when my penis was rubbing against the back of his underwear. We just laugh about it a little bit and then went to bed.

Not long after, when we were at my aunt and uncle's house, I was watching TV, and Liberace was playing the piano. My uncle made the comment that he was a great showman but was queer as a 3 dollar bill. I asked my uncle what queer meant and he explained to me that it meant that he like to sleep with other men. Not too long after that when I was playing with my male cousin in the back yard a minor dispute came up and my cousin ended up

calling me queer as a way of getting back at me. It really hurt my feeling at the time because I had just learn what a queer was and it something to be ashamed of.

As a child I was anxious over all. I would worry a lot. I remember even laying in bed at night worrying about worrying. When I was in the 4th grade I had stomach x-rays to see if I had an ulcer. I remember being on a special diet for a while. At times I would get real bad migraine headaches. I also developed a fairly bad stuttering habit and was made to see a speech therapist at school. Sometimes when I would try and talk other kids would make fun of me, and I remember for a while I decided it was better not to try and say anything unless it was really important. It wasn't until I was a teenager that migraines and stuttering gradually ended.

Something strange happened late one evening in the living room of my parents house. It was maybe around 10pm and everyone else had already gone to bed. I had finished watching TV and was headed to bed myself. As I was leaving the living room I suddenly notice hearing this real heavy and loud breathing coming from behind the sofa. It sounded very real to me, but the sofa was against the wall and all of the windows were closed. It freaked me out enough that I went to my parent's room knocked on the door and woke up my Mom. When she came into the living room there was no more breathing sound. I remember her telling me that it must have been just my imagination.

When I was in the 6th grade I made a good friend who lived a couple of miles away. We spent a lot of time hanging out at school together and doing things together outside of school. He was a good looking kid and some of the girls in our class had crushes on him. Some nights on the weekend I would get to stay over at his house. I remember one night as we were getting ready to go to sleep feeling a strong affection towards him.

Girls seemed to be always the objects of our fantasy relationships though. I dreamed of one day getting married and raising a family. When I was in the 8th grade I had a girl friend who was one of the nicer looking girls in our school. We went to a school basketball game and set together in the bleachers. I was feeling pretty good about myself at the time until these 3 boys from another school came up and started making fun of me and the way I was dressed. I got so embarrassed that I left and went outside sat in our school bus and started crying. My good friend came out and tried to make me feel better by saying that those guys were a bunch of jerks.

Hunting and fishing had been an important part of my life when I was young. Both were something that I could do with my Dad and my uncles and they seemed to just be very manly things to do. My equivalent of a manhood initiation was when I passed my hunter safety course and was able to get my hunting license carry my own gun and decide for myself when to use it.

After my freshman year in high school we moved away from where I grew up to a small town on the coast. My Dad, who had always enjoyed fishing, decided to give commercial fishing a try. It was tough for me leaving my old friends and the places where I grew up. I was the new kid in school at this high school on the coast, and I was reluctant to make friends. I thought that I would be able to move back to my old school and finish high school there. I spent most of my time studying and doing my school work at the new school and usually got very good report cards. I didn't have much of a social life except for the fishermen and their families that my parents became friends with. It wasn't until my senior year, when I realized that I would not be moving back to my old school, that I really start to make friends at high school.

A lot of the students at the new school were experimenting with drugs at the time, and they dressed and acted a lot different from the students at school my old. I waited until it was the last semester of my senior year before I smoked any weed. The first couple of times that I smoked it I didn't get high. Then one evening I smoked some with my older brother and when I laid down to go to sleep and closed my eyes I started to see cartoons behind my eyelids.

After we made our move to the coast there was no more church for us kids. My Mom would sometimes go but my Dad would never so my 2 brothers and I started to follow his lead. Beside, in high school I started to learn about evolution and began to think if this part of the Bible was BS then the rest of it must be as well.

I had a couple of English teachers in High school who would analyze the different books that we read through the symbolism that the authors would weave through the plot. This one real good teacher English teacher told us that his college professor once told him if you had to name the greatest American Novel ever written it would have to be Moby Dick because of the symbolism. He said that it was one of the first times that white was used to represent evil; before that black had always been used. He also pointed out the biblical references

through out the book and the significance of the opening line, " Call me Ishmael." He stated that Ishmael in the Bible was the bastard son of Abraham and was cast out into the desert along with his mother and was sometimes known as the wanderer. Another English teacher once told us that this symbolism could become like a game where you could see it in almost everything. She was acting pretty spacey that day and in retrospect I wonder if she could have dropped some psychedelics over the weekend.

I never had a girl friend in high school. I remember this one rather tall girl liking me, but I didn't pursue her. In retrospect I feel that I was feeling self conscious about what other people would think of me having a girl friend taller than I was. Worrying what my parents thought really seemed to influence why I was reluctant to just settle for any girl.

When I went away to college it was in a town close to the place where I grew up, and I was able to reconnect with some of my old friends. My one good friend had married his high school sweetheart when she got pregnant and they were living in a small rental close by. He had begun experimenting with drugs and soon so did I. At first we just started smoking weed and drinking beer, but soon we started to experiment with psychedelics.

Once, after a day of taking LSD, I went home by myself still being kind of high. I remember thinking how phony so many people at college seemed to be. At that time I was also taking psychology 1-A and had recently studied about the various symptoms associated with psychosis. That night, when I was still on LSD, I noticed some of those same symptoms in myself such as delusions and paranoia. I thought to myself that this must be what it is like to be psychotic.

Later that year in college I took a Health Science class and learn that doctors will sometimes give Thorazine to people who are having a bad LSD trip and that Thorazine is also given to psychotic patients to relieve their symptoms. In the section on drug abuse from that Health Science class the drugs were studied in 3 categories: stimulants, hallucinogens, and depressants. Hallucinogens were kind of a special category with marijuana being a mild form. Something else that I recall learning in that Health Science class from either reading or hearing from the professor was that for a person to have good mental health they should have faith or belief in something.

After a couple of years of college I had finished with most of my general requirements, but I couldn't really decide on what I wanted to major in. I really liked commercial fishing so I

decided to take a break from college and buy my own small boat with the plan of fishing it during the summer months and going back to college in the fall.

The first year went pretty well. I made some good money as the fishing was pretty lucrative back then. I enjoyed the sense of freedom of having my own boat and being able to make my own decisions on what direction I wanted to go and where I wanted to sell my fish. In retrospect I seemed to be very conscious of my identity of being a fisherman. It was a mostly a man's world with a woman fisherman being a rare exception. Women would sometimes go fishing as deckhands, but I only met one that own her own boat.

During this time I did briefly have a girl friend. She was good looking enough and a nice enough person as well, and she seemed to like me also. She was looking to get serious, and I was still in my early twenties and shy-ed away from a commitment. I often wonder what my life would have been like if I had had nurtured that relationship. At that time I was still partying a lot - drinking and smoking weed mainly. I found that booze would lessen my inhibitions and make it easier to meet women. One night stands began to be fairly common. I did go back to college that fall, but I ended up dropping out before the end to that semester.

The second year of fishing my own boat didn't go as well as my first. I seemed to be encountering many problems with the various electronics on the boat. Once I had to replace a set of batteries that I used to start the engine. As I was being sold a new battery, the man at the marine supply place told me that the battery was the most important part of the boat. As I was fishing by myself, I started to related myself to the boat as a sort of game or fantasy. I came to the conclusion that if you had to name the most important part of the boat it would have to be the compass. Fishermen and Sailors would believe in their compasses to be true and put their trust in their compasses to get them to where they wanted to go. I thought that this was very much similar to how a Christian would use a Bible. I then started to think about the chart and how magnetic north would vary slightly in its relationship to true north depending on the part of the globe a person was located at. I thought about all of the different churches or denominations and how they interpreted the bible slightly differently or from a different perspective, and I thought about how similar this was to people navigating with their compasses with the various magnetic variations depending on their perspective or location on the globe. I then looked at the chart and noticed how true north stayed the same regardless of your perspective or where you are located at on the globe. At that time I had

this real intense sense that I had just discovered or stumbled upon something very significant or just had a very deep insight.

Not too long after this I started to think about how a magnet could affect the compass. Also around that time I had saw a film of a Russian lady using what appeared to be this invisible power radiating from her hands to move objects such as a wrist watch around a table. To me it looked almost like she was using magnetic energy of some kind. I had also read about a type of photography that could photograph auras or energy fields around people and other living organisms. Thinking about a magnet and its positive and negative poles, I started to relate this to the two different categories of drugs that I had learned about in my Health Science class - stimulants and depressants. I started to think about the downers and how they tended to bring out the Id in people. Then I thought about the hallucinogens and how they were in a category by themselves. At the same time I thought about a magnet, having a positive and negative pole, must also have a mysterious point in the middle that is either both positive and negative or neither positive or negative or zero. I thought about this zero point in the middle being where the hallucinogens lie, and then I had another flash of having an extreme insight and thought to myself that being in the middle was being like God.

This was the official kick off of my schizophrenia, and I was around twenty-one years old. Everything was fitting together and making sense to me. I started to call it my theory. It seemed extremely important that I try to convey this information to the right people or people that could better understand what I was talking about. Most people that I would try to explain my theory to would simply reply, "Your not making any sense." I decided that I should stop fishing, put my boat up for sale, and go back to college. Maybe I could find the right people to explain my theory to there.

When I went back to my old college, I first ended up talking with a Astronomy professor and he asked if I wanted to sit in and watch a film he was showing about Astronomy. It was about the universe and different mysterious structures such as black holes. It stated that the gravity of a black hole was so great that light could not even escape.

I then ended talking with the chairman of the religious studies department who was also well schooled in psychology. He kind of reminded me of a psychiatrist in a way. I started to talk to him about the difference between magnetic north and true north. He said that when I spoke about true north he thought that what I was really referring to was my own personal

truth. He stated that many people will develop their own personal truth if they don't feel like they can fit into a religion with its collective share truth. He said that he had his own personal truth. When I told him that everything was fitting together and making sense to me he suggested that I read Jung's Memories, Dreams, and Reflections. He said that it was written as an autobiography when Jung was in his eighties and it stated how his whole life fitted together and made sense to him. I thanked him for his time and left his office.

I re-enrolled in college that fall semester but didn't last that long. I seemed to be having trouble staying focused on the different class material. Then one day I was driving the main road of town when I heard music coming out of my radio. This took me a bit by surprise as my radio had not been working for about six months. It was country music, but the station wasn't quite tuned in. I started turning the tuning knob back and forth, but still the station wouldn't come in clearly. Then I reached down to turn the volume knob up when it clicked, and I suddenly realized that the radio hadn't even been turned on. Later I decided to tell a college councilor about what had happened, and he recommended that I drop out of college. He even made arrangements for me to go to the county mental health facilities for the weekend. When I finally saw the doctor he prescribed Stellazine for me, and I left for where I was living at the time. I just took that medicine a couple of times before I stopped taking it. I gradually just started to get back to normal before long.

One thing that I heard around that time stuck with me. I had drove over to my Aunt's house around lunch time and she was there with her boss. I started up and conversation with him, and I must of mentioned something about true north and magnetic north because he said that he knew where true north and magnetic north were the same. He said that he just read about it a couple of days ago in the newspaper and the place was called the Bermuda Triangle or sometimes called the Devil's Triangle. That was the first time I had ever heard of such a place, but I thought that it was significant because just a few month prior I was out on the ocean comparing true north with magnetic north and relating them with the Christian religion. Now I learn there is a place where true north and magnetic north align, and it is sometimes called the Devil's triangle where some ships and planes will sometimes mysteriously disappear.

It was also around this time that the movie The Exorcist first came out. After I saw that I also ran into a religious pamphlet explaining the opening scene of the movie with the white

and black dogs fighting. It stated that symbolism was from the Tarot moon card. It then stated the famous psychologist C.G. Jung once wrote that hell is a reality. It then stated that The Exorcist was based on a true story. All of this information had a strong impression on me at the time.

That winter I worked in a fish house cleaning fish and unloading boats. In the spring I landed a job working on a pretty good boat with a captain that caught fish. I was making pretty good money at the time.

On my days off, when I drank, I would drink to excess most times. I still like to smoke weed when ever I could also. I had also started to experiment with harder drugs such as cocaine and heroine around that time. A friend of mine that I had worked with at the fish house shot me up with heroine for the first time. I used to have a hard time shooting up so most of the time he would get me off. He used to say that heroine was better than sex. It was like a beautiful woman caressing your whole body he would say. Through him I started to fall in with the group of hard core drug users of the town. I was lucky that I never got addicted to heroine. I guess that I used it maybe 25 or 30 times. I did OD 4 or 5 times and nearly died a couple of times.

While I was fishing that year I started to read some of Jung's work such as Memories, Dreams, and Reflections. I remember reading what he wrote about the fish symbol. He stated that the fish symbol represented Christ and that when ever you kill a fish you are symbolically killing Christ. All of this information plus the drinking and drugs that I would do on shore started to work on my head that fishing season. After a night of drinking my captain and I got in an argument, and I ended up quitting in a port a few hundred miles from home.

I continued drinking as I made my way home. I remember scoring some LSD from some guy that I met in a bar. By the time I got home I was in pretty bad shape. I guess the decision was made that my mom and sister in-law should drive me to a hospital in the city. I remember being in the back seat as we were driving about 60 mph down the freeway. All of a sudden I saw a guy all dressed in black standing in front of the car. He slowly started to walk around to the driver's side door. I told my mom that she better lock the door. I believe that I reached up and did it for her. He then started to walk back around the front of the car and over towards the passenger's side door. I told my sister in-law to lock her door, and I remember them telling me that there was no one out side of the car. We were after all

traveling 60 mph down the freeway.

When we were got to the hospital I was pretty out of it. It was a general hospital with no special wing for mental patients. Within a day or two I had gotten back to fairly normal with the help of some sleeping medication. It was at this hospital that I met my psychiatrist who I would work with for the next two years.

My psychiatrist pretty much fit the mold of what I thought a psychiatrist should be. He was probably in his 40's, smoked a pipe, and wore tweed jackets with arm patches. When I asked him what had happen to me he said that I had a toxic reaction to the alcohol and Valium I had been taking. He said that the sleep that I had been getting had been the wrong type of sleep. He ordered a head X-ray to see if I had something organic going on.

I told him that symbolism was bothering me, and told him that I had a theory. He didn't seem to want to question me too much about my theory. I ask him what he thought of Jung's theory. He said that he thought Jung was a brilliant man and probably every bit as intelligent as Freud. He said that all a theory is however is a tool that you use to structure your work by, and he preferred to use Freud's theory. After a few days I was released from the hospital and we decided to see each other once a month for an hour.

On one occasion I remember telling him that I think that I needed a girl friend. He said that would be healthy. It was around this time that the gay liberation movement had been gathering steam, and I remember the Pope coming out and making a statement about homosexuality being a sin. A couple of rock stars had recently came out in the media stating that they were bi-sexual, and that puzzled me why they would say such a thing in public. These guys were rock stars and could have dam near any woman that they wanted, and I thought if a guy could choose between having sex with a man or a beautiful woman why would they choose a man. When my psychiatrist sensed some confusion on my part, he would say that he had tried them both and had found that women were a lot less messy. I always thought that statement was funny. Once, I told him a story of getting pretty drunk and ending up in a room with whom I thought was a lady prostitute only to suddenly realize that it was a transvestite who was giving me a blow job. I got up and left the room as soon as I sobered up enough to figure it out, leaving the transvestite crying at my rejection. Upon hearing this story my psychiatrist said to me some what angrily that a blow job was a blow job.

Once when I was in his office and he stepped out, I pulled a book off of his shelf and started thumbing through it. I can't recall the exact title, but it was about the ancient Sumerians, the Euphrates valley, and the sacred or magic mushrooms. It stated that the Sumerians considered those magic mushrooms sacred because they appeared almost magically in the morning after a rain, and they were a phallus symbol. I asked my psychiatrist if he thought that drugs made you more creative. He was always pretty honest with me, and he stated that Freud said of himself when he was using cocaine he was the terror of Vienna. My psychiatrist then told me that I should try and stay away from those drug related insights though. I told my psychiatrist of what I had learn a few years prior in my college Health Science course; that for a person to have good mental health they should have faith or a belief of some sort. He said that he didn't think that statement was necessarily true. At the time, many young people who had been into drugs were now deeply into a religion of some sort. I believe that he thought this made them just as messed up. Seeing how I was abusing alcohol and drugs, he told me if I had to believe in something then I should believe in gravity.

My psychiatrist got set me up with several months of disability, and in the spring of the next year I got another job on a pretty good boat. I fished out the year and in the fall when I went to the hospital to see my psychiatrist it was decided that it would be a good idea to go through the 30 day alcohol and drug detox program. My liver enzymes were high, and I had had two DUI's within six months of each other. Being in my mid-twenties, I was some what hesitant about taking on the title of alcoholic. I asked my psychiatrist if he thought that I was an alcoholic as I was leaving his office. He was always very honest with me and he said, " No, but I do think that you are trying to kill yourself." I just looked at him with surprise and thought to myself, "What are you talking about?" Later on when I started thinking about my DUI's and the times that I OD-ed, I started to realize that he was right. On an unconscious level I was trying to kill myself.

In retrospect, it was a good thing for me to enter the detox program at that time. I met another very good and honest doctor that ran the program. Once, a group of us guys were sitting around a table drinking coffee and discussing whether or not there was a higher power. When he walked by, he asked, " Well, when you went out and got drunk and you don't remember driving home, who drove the car?" I thought that was kind of an interesting argument. He told me on another occasion that another reason why he believes there is a

higher power is because humans are the only animal that mates facing one another. I was not sure if that was true, but it was interesting how his thinking went. I also remember asking him once if he thought that I was too crazy to benefit from the detox program, and his reply was that he thought that I was as crazy as I wanted to be.

While I was at the detox program, another psychiatrist came and gave a lecture to our group. A couple of things that he said stuck with me. He said that some philosopher once stated that non-humans react but humans respond, and the word responsibility means having the ability to respond. He also told us that many times anger is actually guilt turned outward. I think that this anger generated by guilt can also be turned inward in the form of self destructive behavior as was my case.

While I was at the hospital and before I entered the detox program, I made friends with a young man who's original home was located in the tropics. He was planning on returning home the following summer, and he invited me to come along and take a vacation. I think he saw that the rat race was getting to me. Anyway, we stayed in touch, and that following summer we met up where he lived in the states for a few days before we left for his homeland. At his place in the states I met his female cousin and found myself becoming attracted to her, but I did not let my feeling be known as our original plan was a vacation in the tropics and experience all that lay in store there.

When we arrived at his home village his younger brother was the only one staying at his family home. He was a big husky kid and sort of the leader of the rest of the young men of the village. Because he was such a big kid I think that most of the girls his age were a bit afraid of him. He seemed to be very masculine, but he would engage in homosexual acts with some of his friends. Sometimes he would jokingly say to me that I had a nice ass. I would say to him that there were other guys in the village. He would reply yes, but I was the only white one. After about a week staying at that house I felt it would be a better idea if I moved in with my friend's aunt and uncle who lived in another village not far away. I became good friends with them, and they really made me feel at home. I stayed there for about a month and then came back to the states.

In the states now, I moved back to the town where I grew up. I rented a small place by myself and got a job as a laborer on a construction job with an old friend of mine and his older brother. His older brother was the real boss, and I knew him from when I was a kid. His

wife was rather attractive and would flirt with me when ever she got the chance. Because I was friends with my friend and his older brother I didn't feel right about responding to his stray wife's advances. I did find her attractive though and would fantasy about her when I was at my home. I was not drinking any alcohol at the time but was smoking weed. Sometimes in the evening just as I was starting to fall asleep I would sense that something was trying to poke me in the butt and wake up suddenly. Because I wasn't drinking I would not go out and try and meet women. Then one day I ended up alone with the flirtatious wife at their home. She was giving me every opportunity take her, but I couldn't bring myself to. I couldn't handle working around her and started to wonder about my own manhood for not responding to her. I remember trying to reason with myself at the time by thinking that I couldn't be queer because every time that I masturbated I always thought of women. I ended up getting drunk and quitting my job. I had written several times since my tropical vacation to my friend's cousin who I first met in the states the year before. The next day I decided to get in my car and drive to their place so that I could see her again.

Once there things seemed to go well and in a day or two I started to feel like I was falling in love with her. I started to fantasize about marrying her and living together at her tropical home. My original friend was here at the time also having returned from the tropics several months prior. He thought that it would be a good idea if we got out of the house and away from his cousins for a day so we could talk some in private. We ended up renting a motel room close by. While he had went out for something I was lying on one of the beds thinking about our vacation the previous year and his younger brother. He was a big strong masculine guy, but he seemed to prefer to have sex with other guys. Then I had a thought as my mind was wandering, that before all of this religion BS people used to be bisexual. Just as I had that thought I happen to look out the crack of the motel door that was open several inches. On a hill not too far away were a group of trees who's limbs and leaves were blowing in the wind. There I saw a very anger animated and what looked like a demonic face snarly and growling at me for several seconds. I instinctively smiled at it and gave it the finger. The experience really blew me away because it seemed so real and happened so suddenly and out of the blue. I started to think that I must of just had some kind of religious experience and that the thought that I had just prior to the vision must be of great importance and significance.

I had entered into another schizophrenic episode, and it didn't take too long before I started to wear out my welcome with my friend and his cousins with my crazy talk. One of things that I started thinking and talking about was how the tropical place that I visited the year before was like a happy medium between capitalism & communism. I thought that I had discovered an answer to the world's problem or conflict, a zero between the positive and negative. I decided that it was important that I see my psychiatrist and tell him about my discovery. He was after all bisexual. I remember talking with him on the phone and telling him that I realized that I was bisexual now and him saying to me that I sounded better. Then when I saw him in his office and told him about having that thought, before all this religious BS people used to be bisexual and then seeing that animated angry face formed out of the blowing leaves and limbs, I thought that I noticed fear in his eyes. I told him that he must be my psychological father like Freud was Jung's psychological father. Then, because of his last name, I told him that I must be Ishmael.

He had other members of the office staff talk with me for a while. It was after all a teaching hospital. After a while my parents had arrived, and they made arrangements for another hospital to grant me admission for a while. The lady psychiatrist that I first saw there talked me into taking the medicine by reasoning with me and telling me that it would help to slow my thoughts down. It did do that, and after about a week I was well enough to leave that hospital. I remember my Dad telling me that he never wanted to see me like that again. He had warned me before about experimenting with drugs like LSD. He said that a friend of his told him that some people who take that stuff end up turning queer. That was a major concern for him.

For me the worst part of having or going through a schizophrenic episode like that was the shame and mortification afterward. My life was definitely not going the way I had originally planned it. After a couple of months I felt like I was back to normal enough to stop taking the medication. I did not like the way it was making me feel. I guess it was making my thoughts slow down too much. I remember talking with this old seaman once and telling him that I think I need a girlfriend. He kind of smiled and said, "Yep, the one medicine that you need and they won't give it to ya."

There was this one old wino fisherman that I knew who would frequently go on a port wine benders and then sometimes say, "I seen em, I seen the head gorilla." He sort of

reminded me of the crop duster pilot character that Randy Quade played in the movie Independence Day. He was tortured by an experience that he once had and that turned him into an alcoholic. Once I saw him in a bar and asked him what he was talking about when he said the head gorilla. He asked me if I had ever heard of evolution? He then said that he had saw God once in a tree. I then told him that that is where I saw him also. He told me to leave it alone because it would drive me up the wall. He then said that he had a problem and then he just said, "women"

There was a radio program that came on once a week entitled Rock and Religion. I remember listening to it once when some guy who sounded like he might have been an East Indian was explaining his understanding of things. He said that when people are hypnotized and report these past life experiences that what is actually happening is these spirits are coming inside their heads. He said that the same thing happens when people go into deep states of meditation or use some of the heavy drugs that many people of the day were experimenting with. Then he said that UFO's and aliens were actually angels. I also recalled learning about the Rastafarian and how they would smoke marijuana so that they could be closer to God. From my college days I had already made the association between psychosis and psychedelics. I remember asking a regular M.D. About this connection when I ended up in the hospital the first time, and he told me that all of those drugs were a form of psychosis.

Religion then seemed to me to be a controlled form of psychosis or related to psychosis in some way. When I was talking with that M.D. I told him that I seemed to have a conflict between science and religion. He told me about learning about the Baha'i religion and that I might want to check it out. He said that the people seemed to be nice and well grounded. I did learn more about it, and I found it interesting. The founder stated that mankind was like a bird with one wing being male and the other wing being female. He also stated that mankind was like a bird with one wing being science and the other wing being religion. Religion without science was superstition and science without religion was too hard and cold cut. As my belief or world view or theory was forming, I began to view psychology and especially depth psychology as trying bridge the gap between science and religion. It was the zero between the positive and negative.

After a few months had past by I got another job on another boat. It was a new type of fishing for me and things were working out well until something triggered another

breakdown. It was a public humiliation. I had been drunk at a bar a few nights before and must of said something to this one fisherman that I knew that must of pissed him off. Then during a work day and in front of other people he yelled out and asked me if I was still jacking off. I remember giving him the finger and wanted to fight him. That comment had triggered elements of the episode that I had the year before.

The year before I had the thought that before all of this religion BS people used to be bisexual. I could not really conceive of myself as being this way though. I began to feel like I was in some contest against this supernatural power; it was like I was trying to beat the devil. At the high point of the episode I was just kind of going with the flow, and I felt like much of what was taking place was what Jung had labeled as synchronicity or meaningful coincidence. Much of what was taking place seemed to have special symbolic meaning, and as I thought that I was in a contest with this supernatural power, much of what I did had symbolic meaning also. Much of the meaning had sexual symbolism to it such as putting out a cigarette in an ashtray. At times I thought that I had won the game only for it to start up again. The amount of money that I had also seemed to play a large part in the contest. I felt like I was trying to save everyone else and myself also. The symbolism behind the homosexual acts between two males seemed to me to be unnatural. Two of the miracles of life seemed to me were that we could consume food and drink and sustain life and that we could have sex and procreate.

I had ended up driving to the city as I thought that I might be able to enter the detox program again in the hospital I was once at. It was in the middle of the night and the security officer asked me to leave and come back in the morning. As I was walking through the city I came to this store that was open 24 hours. To make a long story short I found myself in a situation where I felt that my personal safety was at risk if I didn't let this gay guy have oral sex with me. I could not cum and he ended up masturbating while he was looking at me. When I was leaving he said that he was sorry and that someone else put him up to it. I remember telling him that it was alright, and it was just the symbolism that counted. I did feel rather angry though.

That morning, when I finally made it back to my car, I started driving back to my home town. As I was driving I started to feel this weird sensation starting to form and build around my head and shoulders. I finally pulled off a side road and stopped at a store. When I got out

of the car it felt like this energy that was building around my head and shoulders suddenly flew off. I guess that it must have been a type of hallucination, but it was definitely a strange one.

When I finally made it back to my parents house I was getting pretty tired physically so I laid down in my bed. I thought that maybe if I could masturbate I would be able to get some sleep. I had thought about drugs and how they were a form of psychosis because they stimulated the imagination. As I was masturbating I thought that this is what I was doing right now, stimulating my imagination and was that not a form of psychosis also? Then I had the thought that what I was doing right now was really trying to beat the devil. I then started to feel what felt like a snake starting to crawl up my spine. It freak me out so I stopped trying to masturbate. Later that night it felt like my soul was trying to leave my body from the top of my head. I remember if I put a small mirror over the top of my head and the feeling would stop. I started thinking that I was losing my soul to a black hole. I was definitely entering into a panic, and it seemed like everything I was doing was part of some kind of symbolic ritual that was constantly evolving.

I was in pretty bad shape by the next morning and my parents decided to take me to the mental hospital that I was at the year before. Once there, this male nurse had me in this room, and he was trying to get me to sign this voluntary consent form. He had a goatee, and I remember thinking of the similarities of the devil trying to get me to sign a contract for my soul. I told him that I was thirsty, and he told me step on this foot peddle and get a drink out of this sink faucet. I remember thinking about the sexual symbolism behind this at the time. I was in the hospital for close to a week before I became stabilized on the medication again. I remember thinking in a comical way at the time that it was my nuts that were driving me nuts.

My old psychiatrist was no longer working at the general hospital that I had originally came to so I started seeing this younger psychologist. Just a word about my old psychiatrist before I move on, I felt that he was a good and intelligent man who tried to help people, but I found out a couple of years later from his old secretary that he had committed suicide. I felt some guilt when I heard that news. This new psychologist was much different from him. I was talking with him in his office about homosexuality and the churches taboo on it. I told him about reading Michener's *The Source*, and how he described the old Rabbis coming up

with a taboo on pork because when people ate it they sometimes became sick. He thought that was interesting reasoning. He was trying to convince me to keep taking the anti-psychotic medication this time. He told me if I kept taking it for a couple of years I might not go crazy again. I told him that I had been talking about sex and religion and any time you start talking about those two subjects you are going to get some people really angry. I said look what happen to Larry Flint. I told him that I was different, and if I had a real reason to be paranoid should I still be taking that medicine? I remember him telling me at the time that I was going to end up driving him crazy.

I stayed on the medicine for several months when I got back to my old home town. I didn't have very many friends left at this time. Most of them drifted away when the heard how crazy I was becoming. I guess they thought that some of it might rub off on them. I did have a few left though. I remember talking with this one friend whom I went to school with and who was a fisherman also. He also used heroin when ever he could. I told him that I thought that I was trying to beat the devil when I went crazy this last time. He then said something to me that I later thought was very profound. He said that you can't beat the devil; you have to become partners with him. In fishing when you become partners in a boat one partner doesn't submit to the other one, but you learn to work together. Later I would come to realize that I couldn't beat the devil because it was really an aspect of myself that I was trying to beat, an aspect that I was having a hard time coming to terms with.

A couple of things happened relating to fishing during the next year that I thought had special meaning. I will not go into the details, but I thought them to be unusual coincidences that had religious overtones. At the time I thought that they were signs or omens related to the religious theme of my previous episodes. I started to think about what had happened to me when I went crazy before. Everything that I was doing had special meaning or was part of an ongoing symbolic ritual that I was caught up in. In a way, I was being superstitious or taking magical thinking to the extreme. Around that time I was driving in my car and listening to a DJ on the radio. It happened to be Friday the thirteenth that day. The DJ said that some philosopher once stated that superstitions were for people who are too stupid to figure things out for themselves or can't afford a psychiatrist. I had been buying into Jung's theory of synchronicity or meaningful coincidences. What if things just happened randomly and the only meaning that they have is what we assign to them.

The last time I went crazy I was fishing again. I think what triggered it was I felt like I was falling in love with this lady that I had met when we were in this one port. When we went out fishing my imagination started to run away with me again, and before long I found myself entering another episode. My captain, who was also a friend, cut the trip short and let me off the boat again. This episode was not as intense as the previous one. I think because I was getting use to the symptoms and the process. I knew that before I would go into a panic so this time I made a conscious effort not to panic and not to get caught up in the symbolism of things. I think that I had also come more to terms with the bisexual theme of the previous episodes by remembering what the good doctor who ran the detox ward had once told us. He said that a person could be born an alcoholic, live their whole life an alcoholic, and die an alcoholic without every having taken a drink of alcohol through out their entire life. That reasoning or rationale, if I applied it to the bisexual theme, seem to make it more acceptable to me and ease the panic from before. I also found that drinking a few beers help me feel fairly normal so that I could have some social interactions without totally blowing people away. I did not like the anti-psychotic medication and the way it made me feel. I had been working with this one regular MD and this other councilor that I would see occasionally, but they did not feel like they could help me much if I didn't want to take the medicine.

One day I happen to meet up with this young lady who was taking her trash out. I had been drinking beer, sitting on the curb, and waiting for a friend to show up when she noticed me. She invited me into the house where she was staying with her brother, and one thing led to another and before long we were in bed together. She wasn't that good looking and had some health problems, but she seemed like a nice person and was very hungry for a relationship. At that time I had my own small place where I was staying, and I invited her back there. We both seemed to find comfort in each others company, and she ended up moving in with me on a trial basis. When I woke up in the wee hours of the morning she was there to talk with and interact with. I wasn't alone with my own thoughts like before. She was also ready to make love whenever I was ready to make love. Within 5 or 6 days of her moving in with me my delusions and paranoia had both subsided, and I was able to have a regular night sleep. I also didn't feel like I needed to drink beer in order to feel normal. The regular doctor that I was seeing at the time couldn't believe that I had gotten that well that fast without taking any anti-psychotic medication.

That was the first successful ongoing relationship with a lady that I had been able to establish. It was like a hurdle that I had to jump over or a threshold that I had to cross. After about a year and a half, when I was out of town working, she had met up with someone else. When I came home for the weekend she was gone. That was a bit traumatic for me, but I was able to hold it together and after a couple of months I was able to establish another relationship with this lady who had her own place and 3 kids from her ex-husband. We would see each other for the next two years when I wasn't fishing, but I never moved in with her.

One day out of the blue I received a letter from this one girl that I had once met when I was in the tropics. I was in between jobs at the time so I decided to take another vacation. We hit it off and decided to get married. I was able to save enough money from fishing to build a house. We ended up having a couple of kids, and I was able to go back to college, get a four year degree, and land a respectable job. I was lucky that I made it through my twenties because my thirties and forties were a great deal better.

It is my hope that this biographical narrative can be of some educational value to aid in the understanding of schizophrenia.