



## ***Coping with Schizophrenia Relapse by the Gradual Onset of Medications and Multimodality Treatments***

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I was diagnosed with schizophrenia when I was in my first year of bachelor's, and the relapse happened in the early master's. When I had a relapse, I was sleeping like a stone in my college hostel without the ability to move my extremities. Only that I can remember. I was admitted to the hospital and was given treatment in the form of medications. But fate did not favor me, and I failed to regain my senses. Later, I was given brief pulse stimulation therapy almost 6 times in the hospital. I regained my composure, but irrational thoughts were distracting me from my work. I thought, why are people working? Why can't I work like them, and many others? I went to work, forcibly neglecting those thoughts for around 6 months. By brief pulse stimulation therapy, I lost most of my previous memories permanently. My head of my department helped me in every aspect of learning. My guide also supported me. Later, I felt exhausted, and my thoughts were no longer under my control. I felt something crawling all over my body, lost my thinking ability, and was sleeping most of the day.

I consulted the treating doctor, but he said this is a major depressive disorder, and also due to avoidance. Again, the medications were adjusted, and I rejoined my duty. My conditions kept aggravating. I went to NIMHANS for a review. There, it was diagnosed as catatonia with depressive symptoms. I was treated with medications there, too. Later duty continued with some excuses. Then I could not wake up early in the morning. I could not perform any task with ease. I went for a review again at NIMHANS. Thirty sessions of RTMS and TDCS were done, following which I was on regular medications for the same. I could not recover. Later, it was planned for ECT.

I had many difficulties during the period of relapse. I believed in astrology and waited for a few months, thinking falsely about it. It was very difficult for me to take a bath early morning and was not interested in doing any sort of activity. I felt giddy most of the time. I was like a fish out of water. A few times, I could not memorize things. I could not follow commands. I felt, why is God giving all this to me. I cursed him for a while. I cried. I shouted at my parents for no reason.

I thought, who will take care of me after my parents' death? I thought I could not do any work other than begging as my cognition was lost. I felt I was fit for nothing. I was haunted by many thoughts. Even with all these difficulties, I was managing my duties. I am grateful to my head of my department, who allowed me to join duty whenever I brought the joining letter. He gave many excuses for my duty. My professors did not scold me for any reason. My colleagues supported me.

When I was admitted to the hospital, I saw many chronic patients of Schizophrenia who were admitted for many years. I was very afraid, comparing my situation to theirs. But only one thing which was on my mind was to finish the course and come back. Due to financial reasons, I attended duty forcibly for a few months. I gave my best. One of my professors boosted my confidence in me, telling me always to remember the code word, "this too shall pass". I conversed with him about sharing my difficulties. My friends in district rural postings helped me a lot. I completed the district rural postings of three months because of my friends' support and my staff's on-duty.

All this time, the doctor who treated me in my first year of bachelor's took retirement from duty. When I came to know that he was back on duty, I consulted him and explained about all the

incidents which happened for two and a half years. Later, he suggested a modification in medications. I was not able to improve. Luckily, I found a doctor in the same hospital who gave me the same medication that was given in my first year of bachelor's, altering a few, and treated me well. My tactile hallucinations diminished, and I can think properly now. My sleep cycle is getting better, thoughts are improving, but I have a few things that are troubling me right now, like hand tremors, and I have tried many ways to regain my memory, but I have failed. Apart from that, I am like the commoners leading a happy life with regular medications. Some of them suggested me to quit the course as I was having all these difficulties. But I wanted to achieve my childhood dream and to fulfill my parents' wishes. I remember the proverb, Try, try, and try till you reach the goal.

I believe that time will not remain constant all the time. Every dog has its day. I waited for 3 years for the medications to get adjusted. Never stop psychiatric medications on one's own. Never make the mistake that I have committed. I found out from a doctor that, if the psychiatric medications are stopped on our self, then double the dose should be taken if the relapse occurs. A stitch in time saves nine. I came to know another thing that when the treatment is sought, never worry about the diagnosis. Focus on the cure. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. I need all of your blessings for the completion of my course and to achieve my dream.