

Introductie

Psychosen boezemen vaak angst in, omdat je erdoor in een bewustzijnstoestand komt die je niet kent. Het lijkt erop of je je verstand kwijt raakt. En je bent bang dat het weer terugkomt. Maar zou het toch niet zijn nut hebben, is er wellicht een bepaalde hoop te bieden? Door mijn bipolaire stoornis heb ik meerdere malen psychosen gehad. Over het wezen daarvan heb ik uitgebreid kunnen nadenken, omdat een bipolair zoals ik het merendeel van de tijd geen psychosen heeft. Een deel van mijn ervaringen en denkbeelden heb ik in het stuk "Psychosis and hope" opgeschreven. Het geeft mijn visie op de samenhang van psychosen met persoonlijke ontwikkeling, lijden, medicatie, hulpbronnen, filosofie, religie en zelfmoord.

Psychosis and hope

Tim Daalder, 27 November 2011

Why I wrote this

The psychoses which I had were the most frightening experiences I had. 'Losing one's' mind is feared by all people, and it happened to me several times. In my case it came with my bipolar disorder.

Is there anything good about psychoses, is there anything that can offer hope? From my personal experience I would say, yes, there is. The psychoses I had seem to be a form of turbulent, sudden personal development. At least the ones I experienced and know best. These are the ones with positive symptoms, like delusions and hallucinations. Over time mine became more and more benevolent and understandable. In general, psychoses can be understood, sooner or later – if your life lasts long enough.

This note restricts itself to the kind of psychoses sketched. It is based on my personal experiences, and on what I read about the subject. The reader should be cautious about interpreting his or her own experiences on ground of this note, because there are many varieties. I tried not to generalize too much. I hope you are a lucky one like me, some one who can get over psychoses.

Furthermore, I am not promoting psychoses or inducing psychoses because of their possible positive effect. I am only promoting a positive interpretation of psychoses that happened for some reason or the other. An interpretation that is more fruitful the closer to the truth it is, I think.

The inspiration to write this personal note came from the Soteria Symposium held on April 14 2011 in Goes, The Netherlands. The sections that follow are entitled:

What is a psychosis with positive symptoms?
Psychosis as a chaotic transitional phase between order and improved order
Night and day consciousness
What did I do wrong?
What did others do wrong?
Personal development
What is the purpose of my suffering?
Will inducing a psychosis accelerate my development?
Medication
What might be helpful during a psychosis?
A materialist scientific view
Philosophy
Religion
Suicide
Finally

What is a psychosis with positive symptoms?

A psychosis is a state of altered consciousness in which you can have frightening experiences. The positive symptoms are the experiences added to what you are used to in your ordinary, unaltered state. These additions are delusions, auditory and/or visual hallucinations, etc. A delusion is an irrational thought, like being spied on. An auditory hallucination can be an audible voice inside your head. The best one I had said: 'You have to see a psychiatrist'. But all in all this is hardly worth the 'positive', isn't it? On top of that your sleep will be often disturbed, and you lose contact with other people. And they with you. No wonder you can be frightened like never before, and even can feel your life is threatened. Luckily, this will not last forever. Typically, the most severe phase will last for days to a few weeks. However, the experience is so impressive that it can take a considerable longer time to get over it. This means giving it a place in your life, to integrate it as a part of 'you', to accept it. This will be harder if you were treated badly. For example, if you have been locked up against your will, or treated with wrong medicines.

For completeness sake: negative symptoms are things you lose compared to your ordinary state. Examples are the experience of pleasure, interest in things, etc.

Psychosis as a chaotic transitional phase between order and improved order

Ordinary brains and thoughts are in a more or less orderly state. The things you experience and think are what you are used to, and enable you to interact adequately with your surroundings and other people. You might not even be consciously aware of what is going on inside your head. Thoughts apparently come and go in a smooth, quiet kind of way. This is the ordinary state of consciousness you are used to. However, assume that due to a stressful event this equilibrium gets disturbed and you develop a (positive) psychosis. You will experience this as a chaotic, disorderly state you are not used to (if you experience this for the first time). All kinds of thoughts regarding the past, present and future get mixed up in your head. It is impossible to tell the right from the wrong. After some time this chaotic state disappears and your normal self will appear again. And then you maybe discover something unexpected: this is that an improved order remains. That is, during the psychosis your consciousness was altered to a chaotic state, but a heightened state of consciousness (awareness) and insight can remain. So a psychosis might lead your mind from order to improved order.

I will try to make the latter a bit more plausible. A stressful event, like the death of a parent, or the attendance of a personal development course etc. is demanding for every person. All these events can make a person learn about their past, or their position in life, develop his/her abilities, etc. I sometimes think that the less sensitive people do not learn much from these events. On the other hand, the more sensitive, the larger the potential to grow. The events given above can induce a psychosis in the sensitive ones. These people suffer more, but also learn more than the insensitive ones, I suspect. More about learning follows in the remainder.

Night and day consciousness

Psychoses are accompanied by a lack of sleep. Maybe this gives a clue about their nature. Let me call our consciousness during day time 'day consciousness' and during sleep 'night consciousness'. Day consciousness experiences almost exclusively understandable everyday situations. I mean situations that we experienced earlier, and that can be understood rationally.

On the contrary, night consciousness is confronted with often irrational situations. Night consciousness can reveal itself in day consciousness (and the other way around). Often just after we wake up we remember the strange experiences during our dreams, that we were aware of due to our night consciousness. It is thought that during sleep new experiences (of the day before, for example) are integrated with old ones in one's brain. This probably turbulent process generates dreams. Some people try to interpret these afterwards.

When people encounter serious problems they start to sleep less. More day consciousness is now available to process and solve the problems. This suggests that day consciousness is better at this than night consciousness. Psychotics sleep bad for a longer time. You can say that they start to dream with their eyes open. Dreams that otherwise could only be interpreted by day consciousness because night consciousness transferred them, are now directly presented to day consciousness.

My speculative positive message is this. Ordinary experiences can be dealt with by your night consciousness. Sometimes a dream 'spills over' to day consciousness, which can be used to interpret it. A psychosis is the result of extra ordinary experiences. The dream like material is directly presented to day consciousness because this is better at handling it than night consciousness. Especially if one is able to abandon fear, and use the rational day consciousness to full extent.

I will give an example. I once got the delusion that my mother would die before a certain date. I simultaneously believed in it, feared it, but also did on some kind of higher level not believe in it. Luckily my mother did not die, and the delusion disappeared. I afterwards interpreted the delusion as being due to being too dependent on my mother. Ultimately, I feared her death and being left alone. This fear was exaggerated and finally appeared as the delusion of my mother's nearing death. After realizing this I started to loosen up the bond between me and my mother, which solved the problem as far as I am aware of now.

What did I do wrong?

A psychosis is one of the most terrifying experiences in one's life. It is only natural to search for a reason for the psychosis after recovery. Also because it not only influenced you, but probably also other people like your parents, partner, friends, etc. If you find a reason, you may hold your self responsible. In other words, you may blame your self. If your psychosis was due to a disturbing life event, like the death of a relative, an ending close relationship or something like that, there is I think no reason for blaming yourself. Neither if you took drugs, or did other upsetting things for the first time. Life is full of surprises, and it seems that some surprises result in a psychosis, from which you can learn at the expense of suffering.

And do not forget that it is often too simple to say 'this reason caused that effect'. I think all effects have more than one cause, although there maybe be a dominating one. For example, if you meet a person at a certain place (the effect) not only you have to be there at a certain time (cause 1) but also the other person (cause 2). A psychosis is not only caused by a trigger event like the death of a relative, but also your mental constitution at that time, your genetic make up (which influences the vulnerability for psychoses), past experiences, etc. So if you really, really want to blame your self: realize your self that the blame concerns at most a part of you.

So I conclude that you did nothing wrong. But what about the self induced psychoses? For example, if you know that using drugs can lead to psychosis in your case? Well, than it is your responsibility. In the end it is up to you to decide what you did wrong.

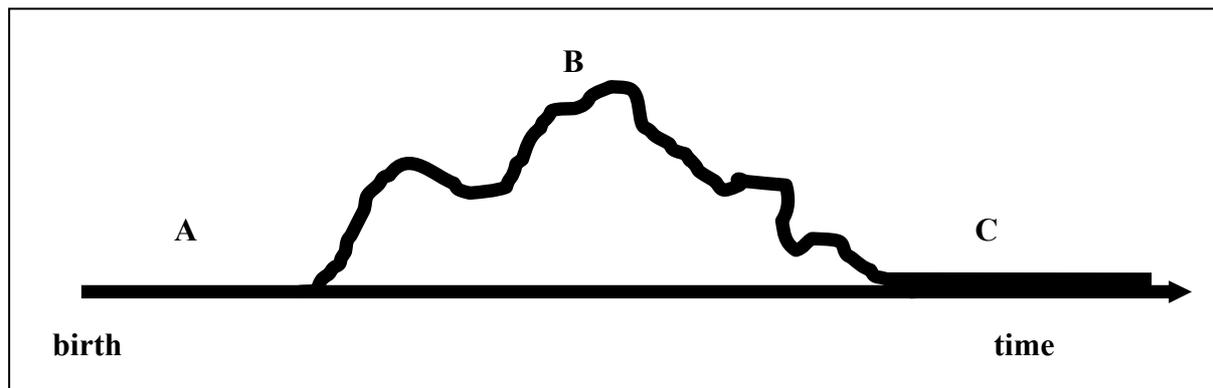
What did others do wrong?

Apart from blaming your self, you may try to blame others. Most probably, others did not willingly want you to develop a psychosis. However, looking back you may recognize a bad influence from people. A common example is looking back at your youth, and your parents. Blaming them and becoming angry at them may be helpful for some time. But in the long run you will feel better if you forgive them, and recognize they were not aware of what they did. After all, part of all people you met is in your head, and you do not want to have fights going on inside between you and them, do you?

Many people are not aware of what bad consequences their behaviour can have. Think of Jesus' saying '[Father forgive them, for they know not what they do](#)', in which 'they' are the people that crucified him. As you grow older you will come across many different people. All have some influence on you, and from all you will learn. The best thing you can learn is how to avoid the mistakes they made, if they made any. This will lead you to a greater awareness of causes and effects of human behaviour.

Personal development

Everybody's life has its ups and downs. Psychoses account for the sudden, larger ups and/or downs. Without psychoses personal development is more gentle than with psychoses, in my view. It can be compared to a theory in evolutionary biology called 'punctuated equilibrium'. This theory states that evolution consists of extended periods in which little change occurs, and short periods with sudden development. In my view, development will never end. Beware of people saying otherwise. I think life will present you challenges through all of your life. What is life without challenges? Below is a picture illustrating development.



Assume your life is going very smoothly (which seems quite uninteresting to me, by now). Then your life will proceed according to the straight track starting at birth. During period A, your childhood, your life proceeds as intended without much trouble. During period B a rough time (including psychoses, possibly) occurs, and you are blown away from the nice, straight path. However, you manage to get back on track and proceed from there according to C, smoothly again. Note that the C path is quite fat. This is to suggest that the experience gained during detour B adds to that if you had continued on the straight track from A. Note also that when you are on track B it might be helpful to look back and remember what life looked like during your childhood. The undisturbed state of A may give you a clue what life intended for you. About what your natural talents were, for example. And about what things you did like then, when you were still your pure self. Finally, in this example we had only one detour B. This might of course occur several times, repeatedly 'thickening' your life experience.

Jung's individuation concept comes to mind. It is the difficult process of getting rid of trouble from the past (a part of what is sometimes called 'the ego'), to uncover your pure self.

As soon as that is done life will be easier, and you can do better what you were made for. Not many people will discover this during their life time. On the other hand, for some it is the almost natural state. Apparently, they have a less troublesome genetic and experiential legacy.

What is the purpose of my suffering?

Has suffering a purpose? With this question we get into the territory of religion. One of the best answers I have is that suffering leads to learning. And in the case of psychoses of learning about my self (including my past), other people and what life is all about. In this way it is possible to break away from bad habits you recognize in other people, and so increase the level of 'humanity' in your self.

In fact, psychoses may have a religious/spiritual component (like thinking you are Jesus), or lead to increased interest in these after recovery. You may understand things from the religious texts (like the Bible) better. This is in my opinion due to the fact that those things are written by people that had similar experiences as you. A resonance between you and the writer, because of shared experiences. If you are of the creative kind, you may even feel an urge to write your own aphorisms. One personal example: 'If you are afraid of the dark, you'll never see the sun rise'. More about this in the section 'Religion'.

There is an interesting book that takes this view a step - a large step - further. The author acknowledges that every generation has its charismatic spiritual leaders, its gurus. Examples he describes are Gurdjieff, Freud, Jung, Steiner, Rajneesh, St. Ignatius, Boeddha and Jesus. Some are true saints while others get corrupted and misuse their status. The author describes many commonalities among them: an isolated childhood, a need for certainty, a demand for obedience, and a time of isolation with possible the occurrence of psychoses. He suggests that the transition from order to chaos and back to improved order sketched above offered these men their novel ideas. In other words, their suffering led to ideas that attracted many people. A modern example I like to add is Eckhart Tolle. These is a connection to mystic and esoteric traditions.

I can sketch an even larger picture. The current view of our universe is that it started small and expanded ever after. You will have heard of the physics model with the Big Bang as the starting point about 14 billion years ago. First things were simple, but with time more complex structures appeared. From quarks to atoms to molecules to organelles to cells to tissue to organs to organ systems to organisms to ... you. This is the order in which the things that make you up came into existence. It is the order of life, so to speak. Complexity and learning, what do they have in common? I believe that your learning - which can result from your suffering - contributes to this ever increasing complexity, and ultimately more harmony. You can even see your entire life as a continuous process of learning, that increases complexity and harmony. This is your personal contribution to what might be called the cosmic game. It makes me feel small, but also in a sense directed (purposeful) and connected. What about you?

Will inducing a psychosis accelerate my development?

I don't think so. Like pulling grass will not make it grow faster, forcing a psychosis will not work. It seems to me too selfish an act for life to reward. I think, however, that life rewards the people who are brave and cautious at the same time. These are not necessarily opposite traits.

Another view is based on brain development (see the section 'A materialist scientific view'). Maybe a psychosis only develops spontaneously when the brain is ready for it, and when the 'right' external events take place. That is, when the brain reaches a stage in which

you can benefit from it. This implies that inducing psychosis has no advantage for development. It predominantly causes turmoil and fear.

Medication

If you were the only person in the world, no medication would be needed to free other people from your psychosis. In other words, you would be able to live through your psychosis without medication, and without influencing other people. The turbulence you experience would not be any less, though. Maybe reducing that alone would be worth taking medicines.

Maybe it would be wise and encouraging when a psychiatrist, as soon after stability has been reached after a crisis, started decreasing the dose, at the right (mostly slow) tempo. After all, sedating people hampers their development. Keeping them on the verge of stability promotes creativity and activity in general, which leads to development, in my view and from personal experience. Of course this all depends on the personal situation and type of medication. My personal experience is almost solely restricted to using lithium for bipolar disorder, and some limited sleeping and anti psychotic medication.

What might be helpful during a psychosis?

It may give hope to mention things that helped me through psychoses. These are:

- Self discipline.
- Leading a regular life.
- Not taking any other drugs than those prescribed by a psychiatrist. I tried to keep my consciousness as clear as I could, apart from the trips life itself gave to me, and the effect the medication had.
- Honesty towards your self and others.
- Going on with daily chores, like doing the dishes by hand.
- Crying.
- Thinking (I just let my thoughts go).
- Keeping a diary (this wove a rope through my life, i.e., the psychoses did not become detached from my ordinary life).
- Walking, cycling.
- Connecting to people.
- Music (lyrics); guitar playing.
- Going through it without too much help made me feel stronger
- Realizing myself afterwards that I live a full life, i.e., experience much. This is important for a next psychosis.
- Taking good care of the 'island of clarity' in me, i.e., the sane part that guarded me as it were from the outside.
- Recognizing that 'fear' sometimes gives good advise.
- Fostering 'doubt'. This caused me to always doubt the validity of what I was thinking.
- Reading about what (had) happened to me. Jung's work was especially helpful through the years.

A materialist scientific view

Up till now I have only talked about 'thought stuff'. But of course it is your brain, 'material stuff', that does the processing (I neglect the important brain-body interaction for this section). What about that? Let's have a look at evolution. Our brain developed through the

centuries. Probably, the newest parts will be least stable. These are the most vulnerable, but also the most promising parts. It is related to what is called neurodiversity. A diversity that is necessary for humankind to advance, just like biodiversity is necessary for nature to survive and develop. It could be that psychoses are due to these newest parts. They make a person sensitive to them. Seen as part of the evolution you are a very delicate and precious experiment in which nature tries things out. Cooperate and make the best of it.

Another idea is that our left and right hemisphere are not well balanced. The more rational and conscious left part is thought to be dominant. Maybe psychoses compensate for that, and force balancing the left and right hemisphere (more related to feeling and unconscious processes). A clue for this is that many people suffering from mental problems are going to do creative and relaxing things like drawing and meditating. You may recognize part of your therapy in this. The idea of balancing material things in my head resonates with the balancing of my conscious (~day) and unconscious (~night), and with all the commotion that goes on when that happens.

A psychiatrist wrote that every thought you think alters something in the brain, and conversely that every alteration of the brain alters something in your thinking. Thinking and brain development (by balancing the hemispheres, for example) go hand in hand. They cannot do without each other.

Philosophy

If you have a curious mind, you might feel attracted to philosophy, the ‘love of wisdom’. Psychoses feel like they shatter your mind, so you probably are longing for wisdom. Philosophy can be of some help, is my experience.

A good starting point – if you are a starter - are children’s books on philosophy. This is no joke. I give two reasons for this. The first is that good children books about this matter are written in a clear way. They generally expose the essence of the general philosophical problems well. The second is that in my opinion what matters foremost are the assumptions and results of philosophical theories. The reasoning to come from the assumptions to the results is less interesting. This is a rational thing, more often than not written down rather obscurely. This depends on the philosopher, of course. For example, Montaigne, Descartes and Schopenhauer write very clearly, to name but a few. But probably you will have to gain the experience of wrestling through some of the obscure reasoning before you will understand this. Just like mathematics can only be understood well if you checked many proofs for theorems (results) that follow from axioms (assumptions).

The foregoing shows an analogy between mathematics and philosophy. The connection is the important part that reasoning (proving) has in these two disciplines. Reasoning is foremost a task of the brain’s left hemisphere. This is a process that can do with a closed world view. Because of this, computers can be programmed to reason. This is not to say that computers can generate mathematical and philosophical results of the same importance as humans did. They lack the typical human creativity and intuition. These are right brain traits.

After the children’s books a natural follow-up are books that sketch the history of philosophy. In such books many philosophers and their ideas will be outlined. This enables you to pick and study the ones you like most. Note that some books contain both western and eastern philosophy. Eastern philosophy appeals to many having had psychoses, probably because in the east the left-right hemisphere balance tends to the right, while in the west it is just the other way around.

Psychoses let you loose your mind temporarily, but something has to be gained, as we have seen. Generally, this leads to another, open world view, less based on rationality. Philosophy is one thing, but religion - a more right hemisphere thing I think - another.

Religion

To me, science, philosophy and religion are all windows on the same underlying reality. Windows through which curious humans peek, and pass their findings orally or in writing. This writing resulted in religious texts like the Bible, Qur'an, Tao Te Ching, Torah and the Upanishads (in alphabetical order). The text are old, and therefore full of symbolism and myths. They have also been translated and changed (if only by selecting what is included in the texts) to suit people's needs. As a result, these texts are for the average person far more obscure and ambiguous than other texts. This is a pity, because, being the oldest source of knowledge, religious texts contain I think the deepest truths about life. Could you only interpret them correctly...

If you have had one or more psychosis experience you have an advantage in this. Because you experienced the depth of life, you can start to resonate with what is written in the religious texts, as I said before. Your very life experience is the key to the religious texts. You can through your experience start to understand what their real message is. Messages about suffering, love, purpose, the path of life, grace, etc. Probably things you will understand first have to do with the religion you were raised with or have. I was raised as a Christian and that's why the book of Job, and later the sayings of Jesus on the cross resonated with me. Because I felt left alone and crossed by my condition. Of course, what I felt depended on my interpretation, of the connection I made between the Bible and my personal condition. That is where the power of the ambiguity of the religious texts enters the picture. The ambiguity allows for messages and insights that have a personal meaning. Just like poems or song lyrics can inspire them. And what is more, the ambiguity let's you develop new views – your personal or not so personal future 'religion' (remember Eckhart Tolle?). Because ambiguity triggers your imagination, intuition and creativity. This was also understood well by Zen Buddhism, that presented koans to lame rationalism and on the other hand stimulate imagination etc.

I wrote already about what the reason for this resonance with the holy texts probably is. It is that they are (partially) based on the same experiences as all humans going through difficult times have had. It is the resonance of recognition, of sameness, of being one of a kind.

All religions have mystic traditions. Mysticism is about experiencing. And because you experience(d) as no other, the mystic tradition may attract you. Some words of caution, though, which holds for interest in religion in general. A notion from transpersonal psychology is the difference between pre-rational and trans-rational stages of consciousness. A pre-rational stages is regressive, back to past ideas. For example, I jumped once in a pond, thinking I was Jesus and had to sacrifice myself (this was after an extended period with limited sleep, also due to wrong medication). This clearly was related to my upbringing. I must have heard the story of Jesus a thousand times as a child, and this became the prime example of a good person for me (in Jung's terms: an archetype). Because I, as every other person, was born to be good, this was imprinted in my mind. An imprint released by my jumping into the pond, which certainly was a transformational experience and a step on my way to salvation – to use a biblical term. Note that this interpretation of what happened to me is an example of the way a religious story can be interpreted in a fruitful, personal way. Having a narrative connecting all the loose ends, the seemingly unconnected parts your life is seemingly made of, helps. However, the truer the narrative the better, I think.

What about trans-rational stages? Unlike pre-rational stages, which are characterized by regression and fear, trans-rational stages reveal themselves by transcending what you know and by feeling normal. By understanding more, and having increased consciousness of what is going on in yourself and in the world. For example, I now seem to understand the common

ground of human knowledge better than before, including that of religions. Not that I say that there is nothing more to learn.

Pre-rational experiences can be held for trans-rational ones. This is called the pre/trans fallacy. Pre-rational experiences can for example be initiated by studying mystical texts a little early for your developmental stage. The effect of this is that your development gets a too large boost, which can manifest itself as a psychosis. Probably you will be confused because what you experience is a mixture of the pre- and transrational. If you think you only experienced transrationality, it can be that you get stuck in this behaviour. The solution is to limit involvement in activities that accelerate your development to a level that suits you. This may not be easy, because developing oneself is a natural tendency.

Finally, to people who have not experienced things like a (spiritual) psychosis all this talk about religion will be rather vague. Good news for them: all this is human experience probably connected to the brain, its functioning in (approximate) isolation and as connection to the outer world. There is already a scientific branch, called neurotheology, dedicated to the study of the links between neural (brain) phenomena and spiritual experience. This is one way in which humanity as a whole will increase self knowledge. Knowledge of our hardware and software, our internal workings and our relation to the world. Mystical and psychotic states of consciousness will be understood better, probably as a stage in the development of our brains and thoughts. A stage on our journey towards a stage of more balance and harmony – in the long term. The latter stage being one in which many more people will experience the positive parts of mystic and psychotic states of consciousness. A stage in which learning is less based on suffering. A stage in which all people become mystics of some kind. A stage in which we are all mystics, and hence no mystic remains.

Suicide

I have thought about it more than once. These are my latest thoughts on it, and probably not my last. I believe that the world advances at every moment in time. In this I agree with the philosopher Leibniz, who said that we live in the best of all possible worlds. So whether you commit suicide or not, the world will advance. However, the exact way in which it advances is different. If you stay alive, the world is advanced by your acts as a human being and/or the reactions to those. If you die, the advance is twofold. Firstly, people will be shocked by your demise. Their suffering will in due time lead to advancement. For example, because they try to prevent your condition in others. Secondly, your thoughts and material remainders will be recycled. Like leaves fertilizing the ground when they fall of during autumn. Do you want to journey through autumn and winter, right into the spring? Remember Gandhi's words: "Be the change you want to see in the world." The choice is yours.

But wait... is the choice really yours? Who are you after all? You are for a large part the sum of your past, the material and non material. Poetically speaking, materially you are made of star dust. Non materially you are an accumulation of a substantial part of the knowledge gained by human kind. It was given to you by your parents, by your teachers, by the books you read, and what ever else you experienced. The essence of you is maybe the part that combines all this in your own unique way. The part that is steered by a certain amount of free will, the part that will hopefully strive to advance this world towards a more harmonic state. In one way or another.

Only one out of ten to twenty suicide attempts succeeds, according to some internet source. Do not be surprised if your suicide action turns out to be only an attempt. The world does not allow everyone to pass way. It seems not to like invest for nothing. I think it likes living people more than dead ones. Otherwise, why would she bother to produce them at a rate of

about four per second? But I will not judge you, whatever you decide. I certainly will be shocked, if I know you.

Finally

Psychoses can have a positive effect on your personal development, although it may take a long time to recognize this – if you reach that stage. The fear, the turmoil, the negative influences on your life ... does your personal development compensate for this? My answer tends to 'yes', after untying my own knot over the past 31 years. Of course, everybody suffering from psychoses has to make up the final bill for him/herself.

The suffering caused by psychoses or for that matter every bad condition in general can raise your development to great heights. In my experience, the larger the suffering, the larger probably the activity to get rid of it. In turn, the more activity, the more there is learned. For example with respect to applying the four cardinal virtues from ancient Greek philosophy: wisdom, justice, self-mastery, and courage. And the 3 theological virtues of [faith](#), hope, and love.

The more you learn, the more you feel connected to other people and the world as a whole. A world that you don't want to let go, a world that does not want to let you go. Because you understand and feel a lot you and so became a more than precious person.

Transforming your condition in something good, transforming the past that you more or less are in something better is a most rewarding experience. See your self as one in an endless row of relay race participants. It is everyone's task to pass the baton on a little lighter than it was received. Until there is nothing left from it, and we can run without having to stop. Just for fun.

Resources

The idea of continuous personal development can be found in the work of people like Jung and other representatives of positive psychology. A forum especially dedicated to bipolar disorder (which may lead to psychoses, as in my case) and what is called 'awakening' (as I understand, discovering who you are and where you came from) is <http://bipolarawakeningup.ning.com/>. An interesting book about the brain hemispheres is <http://www.amazon.com/Master-His-Emissary-Divided-Western/dp/030014878X>. There are many, many more books, but I propose to find them yourself. Give luck a chance.