

## Studying Schizophrenia From A Different Perspective In Fallen Standing, My Life As A Schizophrenist By Reshma Valliappan

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### Abstract

The text *Fallen Standing, My Life as a Schizophrenist* (2015) by Reshma Valliappan is about the Reshma's encounter of living with schizophrenia. It talks about determination, medicine, and treatment in expansion to the day-to-day battles, which incorporate connections and mental wellbeing disgrace. The content is composed amusingly and quickly, advertising trust for recovery." The book's primary topics are schizophrenia, pharmaceuticals, treatment, and connections that alter over time. The content begins with Reshma's early childhood, where she states that she was cheerful, in spite of the fact that things changed when she was diagnosed schizophrenic at age 17. After the conclusion, she and her family found a specialist who endorsed medicine and treatment. She clarifies how these medicines worked and what they did to her wellbeing. The book, too, talks about her connections with individuals influenced by schizophrenia. She discusses how these life changes lead to monstrous push, uneasiness, discouragement, and low self-esteem.

### Introduction

The book addresses a few vital questions, like: Why do individuals get schizophrenia? How do you bargain with it? What are its signs and impacts? What can one do to anticipate it? It, too, offers a few down-to-earth arrangements for managing the clutter. Reshma Valliappan, who composes the book, could be a schizophrenic who has been living with it for over two decades. She, too, goes on to say that she was not born with schizophrenia but had obtained the clutter because of the disregard for her inward self that was driven by it. In reality, Reshma uncovered that she was suffering from discouragement. A long time ago, she got schizophrenia and,

as it were, because of her other sicknesses, never gave much thought to treating her discouragement. Hence, it comes as no astonishment when Reshma said that, in a few cases, discouragement seems to lead to schizophrenia. Reshma has composed the book *Fallen Standing, My Life as a Schizophrenist* to assist other individuals with schizophrenia and offer assistance to reach their full potential as a person.

Reshma Valliappan, who suffers from schizophrenia, does not try to disguise her condition. She shares her deepest emotions and the difficulties she faces in addressing them. The author walks the reader through her struggle with schizophrenia, utilising techniques that assisted her in healing herself without the need for drugs by utilising natural medicines, optimistic thinking, joyful experiences, and self-acceptance. During her worst years, when she was institutionalised in a mental health facility, the author supported the reader on how she began to live a schizophrenic lifestyle and how she overcame it, along with her feelings, ideas, and actions.

When Reshma suffered from hallucinations and delusions, many around her also had a skewed perception of her. Others' reactions to Reshma were based on their perceptions of mental illness and its effects on people. In *Fallen Standing, My Life as a Schizophrenist* (will be addressed as Valliappan), Reshma was viewed as being different in many ways; for example, with the mannerisms she exhibited, the fact that she did not fit in with the norms of society, and other times because of her strange behaviour. Some people even went to the extent of thinking that she was evil. Many viewed her as being responsible for all the crimes happening in their area, and therefore, they left her alone. However, with time, other people began to view her peculiar behaviour differently; they began associating it with another person with a mental disorder. Still, others thought she was a "parting gift" from the devil or that she had returned from the dead. Even when Reshma tried to explain things, some did not listen to what she had to say.

Reshma has been around for a long time, and some people treated her differently because they assumed she was always the same. She explains the situation as it is:

I do not want them to exclude me from the activities just because of the way I am. Sometimes these kids make fun of me for the way I act or dress. They laugh at me or they think they are better than me." More

so, they didn't think that she was "fallen" or wrong in the eyes of God: "They could not see me as I saw myself. In their minds, I was still the same person as before. They could not accept that I had fallen". (Valliappan 11).

Individuals who were acquainted with Reshma throughout her childhood could not appear to comprehend her emotions. This is because at the time her symptoms started to appear, they had a different understanding of schizophrenia and mental disease. They refused to listen because they believed it to be something to be embarrassed of. She was no longer seen the same way by everyone because of her schizophrenic symptoms, which caused her to lose her previous status. Her father remarked that while she had not anticipated it, she thought she was entitled to do as she wanted because everyone is equal. We all go through hard times, so he has nothing against her and hopes she may learn to accept herself.

Reshma's mother and aunt had different theories on how schizophrenia affected her mental health. They believed that because the devil had twisted her mind, what she was going through was incorrect. She says, "My mother, who was there when I first saw my first hallucination, believed that I had been possessed by a demon." (Valliappan 47)

Some people stood with Reshma despite what others thought of her. These people believed in her. During her battle, she encountered certain individuals who listened to her and recognised the challenges a person with a mental illness may have in dealing with these symptoms. Some were even prepared to assist with the symptoms: One day, when she got home, her landlady arranged for a holy man to visit and offer prayers on her behalf. Reshma also had much support from her friends, who stood by her side during her darkest moments and embraced her for who she was. Instead of passing judgment or assuming anything about her status in their life, they observed her with genuine concern and care:

Among my friends, the ones who knew I had schizophrenia was very good at listening when I needed to talk. (Valliappan 19)

People saw Reshma Valliappan in *Fallen Standing, My Life as a Schizophrenist* as a patient suffering from schizophrenia; hospital staff members were educated to manage mental health concerns, which is why physicians frequently referred patients with mental health problems to

hospitals. Healthcare professionals, including doctors, often saw their patients as sick individuals in need of their knowledge and skills. Schizophrenia patients were often handled differently from other patients due to their unusual behaviour, which posed a risk to others or themselves.

Numerous individuals had misguided judgments about Reshma's mental well-being ailments since they did not understand its mental ailment well sufficiently. Individuals did not get mental wellbeing ailments, and how do they influence individuals? As a result, they did not back her with mental wellbeing issues. Since she had schizophrenia, she was never acknowledged by her community. Understudies looked at her as a "crazy" individual. They either looked down upon her, derided her, or were frightened of her. Looking diverse and not fitting in made them think something was off-base with her. Lisa, an understudy, once made fun of Reshma and called her insane. Leah reacted by saying, "That is so cruel. She is fair different." In reaction to the comment made by Lisa about Valliappan's clothing in the lesson one day, Leah argued for others not to make fun of Valliappan for how she dressed. She asked them not to treat her unreasonably as she had no control over her appearance. She also said not to make fun of her and to say nothing negative.

A 19-year-old lady with schizophrenia experienced separation based on her conclusion of schizophrenia. To begin with, after a long time of determination, she was encompassed by individuals who did not get it. She felt hushed in society and was constrained to live in a hush, reclusively, since she was diagnosed with schizophrenia and went through the involvement. She began figuring out that individuals around her did not have a clue about her determination and were not as strong as she thought they would be. When the determination was reported, she misplaced numerous of her companions, and she found it humiliating to confess that she had schizophrenia and felt like apologising for it. Her family was strong, but her companions began removing themselves from her. The hardest portion was figuring out that her companions judged her on the off chance that she said something off-base or inquired senseless questions. At that point, she had to begin over once more. When she joined a modern college, she attempted to put through with individuals around her, but they may not get her, and she might effectively get it by their looks that she did not appear to be ordinary.

Talking about mental diseases was frowned upon since they were stigmatised and forbidden. Reshma Valliappan

encountered harassment and unfavourable stereotypes because of her schizophrenia diagnosis. She endured being ignored, being teased, being abused, being alone, and avoiding particular locations. She has faced prejudice in the last few years due to her schizophrenia diagnosis. She clarifies:

When I was diagnosed, I lost many friends because they all thought I was weird". Some people were afraid to be near me because they thought I would hurt them or I would do something bad to them. "My life is very lonely sometimes. No one really wants to hang around with me and no one really cares about how sick I am. All they care about is the way I act and the way I dress. Sometimes I wish that I wasn't even here. My life is miserable, and no one cares. This was sad because a lot of times, just by doing nothing, people assume that you are dangerous. (Valliappan 65)

Because of her schizophrenia diagnosis, Reshma endured fear, abuse, marginalisation, and bullying. She could not figure out why schizophrenia was viewed with such disdain. People assumed that she was constantly on the lookout for violent or potentially hazardous people. The young woman remarks:

Well we will see what else happens." "I was laughing with my friends because I couldn't hear well in class because the noise from the crowd was so loud. I knew something was wrong with me." "Being laughed at like that made me feel hurt inside and made me hate everyone around me. No one cared about me and no one knew what was going on in my life. (Valliappan 65)

Reshma Valliappan faced various forms of bullying, such as being ignored, experiencing peculiar conversations in which others would not respond to her, and being subjected to gossip and open mockery. Her appearance, speech, and behaviour intimidated people as they could not comprehend the reasons behind her actions. In an attempt to suppress her discussions, she was prescribed "herbal" remedies as a form of treatment. Because they believed Reshma would harm them or do something horrible to them, others around her were terrified to be close to her. People took for granted the particular expression or look she usually had on her face. There were many unfavourable preconceptions regarding her mental

disorder. Her relatives would occasionally make fun of her strange behaviour. Additionally, due to employers' preconceived beliefs about people like her, she missed employment and promotions.

Valliappan was given medicine to assist her in getting through her episodes, and through painting, she gradually gained more and more coping mechanisms. She writes *Fallen Standing: My Life as a Schizophrenist* in the hopes that others may learn the same things about how art can bring about mental calm. The author's drawings, paintings, and some textual backgrounds are included in the first edition; charts and graphs are not. Valliappan believed it was important to discuss her art and how it helped her deal with her schizophrenia as she started to write more and more of her life narrative.

Art made a difference in Reshma Valliappan's overcoming schizophrenia since it was the way it was, the way she might express herself in an unchallenged, powerless and genuine way. Her art gets to be a way to decipher the occasions in her life. When she feels a scene coming on, she lays down and paints to calm herself down and recapture her mental well-being. Her art gets to be a helpful instrument for her: it gives her a sense of reason and pride when she works on anything imaginative. She can see something great from something loathsome or dim (Valliappan 53). Her character as a human comes from coming to terms with the reality of life and the "fallenness" that everybody faces at one point or another. Her art makes a difference in her being mindful of the world and herself for others to drop and stand in life. Valliappan's art can be depicted as expressionist since she paints from her soul and heart. She paints out everything she is feeling at that minute, which gives a passionate side to her art. She says, "I was able to see that I was slipping. These words portray both Reshma Valliappan and the way she sees life. Her art was motivated by her environment, the colours, and the scenes she saw around her. One of the concepts that made a difference in Reshma Valliappan from being analysed with schizophrenia was the thought of living in a way that's more in tune with nature and being tranquil. One day, after an annoying assembly with numerous lodging workers, she painted a picture of their faces, which she felt exceptionally closely spoke to what happened to her that day. This was, after all, everything that had fallen separated for her by and by, and she did not know how she would make it through this battle she was having with herself. After wrapping up the picture, she felt soothed, serene, and prepared for another day.

Art made a difference in her elude, the haziness between the universes of people and nature. Her art and life have a magical side to them, one that is comforting and full of peace. This peace is an elude from reality, taking it all into your hands and permitting yourself to be acknowledged. In making this art [as a way of expression], Reshma Valliappan found peace of intellect where there was once nothing but fear and misery. She endured organising in the mental healing centre where she got her pharmaceuticals in India, but this, as it was, made a difference in her picking up more control over what was happening (Valliappan 29). Valliappan chose to be organised to seek after her art and get the assistance she required. The way her art reflects her life has made a difference in her overcoming schizophrenia and its repercussions. The work of art communicates what is happening inside, within the world around you, and who you are.

She felt a sense of opportunity from the past, and her art parallels who she is and where she stands in life at this moment in time. Valliappan needs others to be mindful of who they are, of the dull side that stays inside us all. "My art features a depth," Reshma Valliappan said, "and it's not fair superficial." Valliappan employs her art to get her claim of mental sickness and gives an understanding of what goes on within the intellect of somebody who endures schizophrenia. Her art lets you into the mind and heart of a lady who has looked cancer in the eyes and acknowledged it for what it is. In sharing her work of art, she points to assisting others in bargaining with their claims, battles, and fears.

Valliappan's art is exceptionally typical; she employs colours to speak to certain periods in her life. She feels that the most excellent work of art ought to have meaning and not fair be something to hang on the divider. Her art communicates where she has come from and where she needs to go. It lets you in on her battle with mental ailment. It lets you know that it is conceivable to overcome it with a few offers of assistance, medicine, and the back of family and companions and, most vitally, by picking up a sense of reason through your art (Valliappan 45). Schizophrenia takes a toll on individual lives; it invades each perspective of the individual and changes their character. Reshma Valliappan relates her claim story with schizophrenia and how art played an imperative part in her recuperation from psychosis and gave her much-needed autonomy and opportunity from the sickness.

Reshma's schizophrenia developed into a complete psychosis that made it difficult for her to engage with the



outside world. Her internal and external voices would torture her thoughts, causing her to get more and more lost in her hallucinations. This led to a deep sense of alienation and melancholy that made it impossible for anybody to relate to her on any level. She was a legendary hermit who hardly left the comforts of her house, where she could take a seat and write or sketch. She believed she lacked the necessary skills to meet society's high expectations. Reshma could communicate her long-standing self-doubts, disappointments, and animosity over her illusions via her artwork (Valliappan 62).

Reshma discovered that painting gave her a controlled and safe area to express her ideas and feelings during her journey through schizophrenia. She could create whatever on the canvas represented how she felt on the inside by painting however she wanted to and with whatever materials she chose. Through her painting, she was able to express herself and find her voice fully. By expressing herself in this way, she gained a sense of independence. She established an identity for herself by painting, both inside her family and subsequently outside of it. A recurring topic in her paintings was isolation and loneliness, which she connected to her own experience and the experiences of many others who have schizophrenia. Reshma conveyed the core of emotion and sensation experienced by people with schizophrenia via her use of colour and shaped through expressive brushstrokes (Valliappan 45). She explains the meaning of art to herself, saying, "My work is based on my own experience with this... I enjoy angular brushwork, impressionist colour theory, and thick layering. I think and speak as if I were painting. My words and thoughts are influenced by the painting process. I exist in space as an expression of my own personality. (Valliappan, 62)

Valliappan's story is one of numerous conceivable stories from individuals with schizophrenia, but it is one in which art played a critical part in her recuperation handle. Those with schizophrenia ought to know that there is trust and a way to recuperate. Art can be a device by which those who endure schizophrenia can express themselves in an environment where the expression of their inventiveness is energised. As Valliappan says, "Art may be a way to communicate." Creative Characteristics: Reshma Valliappan's special aesthetic fashion is characterised by thick layers of paint connected on canvas in huge gestural motions. She states that her art appears her sentiments through her life involvement and how she paints them: "The to begin with the thing about my fashion is that it doesn't seem like anything



else... I like to blend references; I just like the works of Frances Bacon and Marc Chagall; I drag from those impacts... These are my feelings. My art could be a sign of me."

"A Provisional Typology of Disability Representation" from the book *Aesthetic Nervousness: Disability and the Crisis of Representation* (2007) is related with the book *Fallen Standing: My Life as a Schizophrenist* which refers to Quayson's typological description of disability. Here, two of his relevant typologies are dealt with.

#### **Disability as inarticulate and enigmatic tragic insight:**

The majority of the characters in this category are female. He feels that female characters make the finest representations because of their unique blend of catastrophic insights and lack of articulation. She had received a lot of support and gratitude from others with different recognised issues, which has been incredibly beneficial for her since the beginning when she received a lot of unpleasant, offensive, demeaning, and critical comments from many people. Some suggested that her father had to pay a significant sum of money to have the book written. Some have suggested that since she can write with such clarity, perhaps she does not have schizophrenia. Her parents may have misled her about her schizophrenia, according to several reports. She yet continues to express herself despite the critical comments. Disability is therefore shown as inarticulate, but she overcomes it.

#### **Disability as Normality:**

This category may describe any text or representational media that provides a voice, depicts a disability, illustrates a person's journey with a handicap, and tracks the gradual evolution of a disabled character. Reshma's suffering is masterfully portrayed in this novel. The nature of the journey with schizophrenia has been as follows: the person she was before developing schizophrenia; listening to vampires or voices telling her to paint; her father realising her painting talent; her realisation of the real world and the world of romanticism; challenging judgmental responses; expressing her thoughts on schizophrenia; and showing the world how to explore mental health through creativity or confront the problem with alternative approaches. She provides support to individuals with schizophrenia via *Mind Arcs* and *The Red Door*, two of her organisations. She does this to demonstrate to the world that disability is a mentality created by our culture that approach-based remedies can address.

Valliappan's goal was to improve the lives of those who have schizophrenia by providing support and assistance. However, her parents sent her conflicting messages. Reshma was quite confused and upset at the same time. She had to devote a lot of time and energy to her studies as well as equal amounts of effort to manage her mental illness. The school became a struggle, and rather than providing her with the sense of success she had anticipated, it made her feel inadequate. But Reshma was deeply committed to assisting people; she started by aiding her friends before moving on to assist those who were suffering. She was diagnosed with schizophrenia and went through the experience of feeling silenced in society and compelled to live a quiet, isolated life. She began to realise that others close to her were not aware of my condition and were not offering the same level of support that she had anticipated. She lost many relationships once the diagnosis was made public, and she was embarrassed to acknowledge that she had schizophrenia and wanted to apologise. Her friends began to turn away from her despite the backing of her family. The most difficult thing was realising that even her friends would criticise her if she made a mistake or asked an absurd question.

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