



Recovered, Not Cured: A Journey Through Schizophrenia

By Richard McLean

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This very personal exploration of schizophrenia explores each stage, from the early signs and reactions from friends and family to seeking help and the challenges of recovery. McLean bravely shares his paranoid delusions and offers both a verbal and a visual experience by including digital artwork he created to help objectify and control his impulses and fears. As McLean relates his experiences step by step, issues of sexuality, identity, and drug abuse are discussed, along with the overarching issues relating to mental health and the medical profession. Messages from online posters who either have suffered from mental illness or have cared for the mentally ill are included throughout, adding more perspectives to the author's personal experiences. This powerful combination of words and pictures provides a unique and poignant insight into a hidden, internal world.

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Editorial Review

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Starred Review The words in this small but mighty account verbalize the essence of mental illness, and McLean's graphic illustrations crank up the volume. The Australian's raw candor and stirring clarity in both words and images make this a rare nonfiction gem, with a power that grips the reader as if by the lapels. McLean's first recollections of paranoia come from adolescence, when he heard voices from the other side of the backyard fence. Soon he was picking up "messages" from automobile license plates, radios, and disembodied voices. Not unlike many who suffer from schizophrenia, to escape the torment of a constantly shifting reality, he self-medicated with the usual drugs of youth, alcohol and marijuana. Despite plunging ever deeper into mental illness, he managed to graduate from university, hold a job, and travel throughout Europe, thanks to the emotional support of family and friends, who often excused his bizarre episodes as personality quirks. Frequently at a loss to understand McLean, they nevertheless provided opportunities for him to conduct what he calls reality checks. The happy ending is that professional medical care has brought his illness under control, and he lives on his own. The price he pays is a life that is "less interesting" but offers hope for thousands who either suffer from mental illness or know someone who does. *Donna Chavez*
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Review

"This is a powerful, quirky and important book. . . . It outstrips anything else I have read about schizophrenia for its insight into the nature of psychotic thinking and behaviour." —Anne Deveson, author, *Tell Me I'm Here*

About the Author

Richard McLean suffers from schizophrenia. He is a graphic artist and illustrator for *The Age*.

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