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**Intro to Psychology**

Disorders: Using the “Perspectives”

The following *New York Times* article details the struggle of Lori Schiller, an individual who explained her battle with schizophrenia in a book titled, *The Quiet Room -- A Journey Out of the Torment of Madness*.

**First, read/underline/annotate the article. Then, you’ll examine Schiller’s experience with schizophrenia from the viewpoint of the various psychological perspectives.**

**“Breaking the Deadly Hold of Schizophrenia”**

**By KATE STONE LOMBARDI**

LORI SCHILLER'S life began to unravel at age 17. Before that, she had been an achiever -- driven to succeed, but also known for her sense of fun and humor. The oldest of three children in her family, Ms. Schiller maintained a 3.9 average at Scarsdale High School, while heading the prom committee and serving as literary editor of the school magazine.

It was in the summer of 1976, while she was working as a counselor at summer camp, that the first sign of what would be a horrifying journey into madness appeared -- one from which she would ultimately make a miraculous trip back. As she lay in bed, musing about a past summer romance, she suddenly heard a loud voice yelling, "You must die!" Other voices joined in chorus, shouting, "You must die!" "You will die!"

Terrified, she leaped out of her bunk, ran out of her cabin and climbed onto the camp trampoline, frantically trying to bounce the voices out of her head. She jumped until she was exhausted. "I thought I was possessed," Ms. Schiller, now 35, said in a recent interview at her home here. "It was horrifying. I didn't know what to make of it. I thought if I told anyone about the voices, the voices would kill me. Or if I just hinted to someone what was happening, they would put me in a straitjacket and keep me in an insane asylum for the rest of my life."

What Ms. Schiller was experiencing were the first signs of schizophrenia, a devastating mental illness characterized by disturbed thinking -- often marked by delusions, hallucinations and paranoia -- as well as emotional isolation. She would battle the disease for years to come, with repeated suicide attempts and numerous hospitalizations.

Ms. Schiller credits her recovery both to her psychiatrist, Dr. Jane Doller of White Plains, and to a medication called clozapine, a drug that until recently was considered experimental. Ms. Schiller likened the drug's effect to "coming back to life after living in hell, returning from the dead." She is convinced that without the medication she would now either be dead or in a state mental hospital. Instead, Ms. Schiller is busy with a book tour and giving lectures on mental illness. She is the author of "The Quiet Room -- A Journey Out of the Torment of Madness," which she wrote with Amanda Bennett, a staff reporter for *The Wall Street Journal* who wrote about Ms. Schiller in that paper.

The book chronicles her battle with the illness and reveals a woman who, though desperately ill, showed tremendous courage -- first in fighting the disease itself and then in sharing her experiences in the book, which is in its second printing and is an alternate selection of the Literary Guild Book Club and the Doubleday Book Club.

"This book was like my mission," Ms. Schiller said. "I was very, very sick at one time, and I'm doing terrifically now. It's my turn to give back. I want to give people hope and the courage to fight and never give up."

Her own fight against the disease was terrifying and exhausting. After the first summer she heard the voices, she managed -- through sheer determination -- to hide her symptoms from her family and friends. She graduated both from high school and from Tufts University. But her secret became increasingly difficult to keep.

As a Spanish major she spent her junior college year in Spain, where the voices would yell at her in Spanish, "Puta! Puta! Vaya con el diablo!" ("Go to hell, whore!") She trained herself to keep from looking around when she heard voices. When caught whirling her head around, she would say, "Oh, I just thought I heard a noise."

Ms. Schiller was not only tormented by voices that by turns screamed at her, called her filthy names and laughed derisively at her, but she was also haunted by horrifying images. A police officer who stopped her for speeding appeared to her as a wild creature, with bugged-out eyes and hair standing on end. Faces appeared before her and then became distorted, melting like wax. Body parts seemed to hang off trees.

Eventually, the illness overwhelmed her. She made the first of repeated suicide attempts in March 1982.

Ms. Schiller recalled: "People would say to me, 'Why do you want to kill yourself? Are you depressed?' More than anything else I wanted relief. I couldn't listen anymore. I could see those faces on the walls laughing at me or telling me I had to die."

The next seven years of her life were spent in and out of psychiatric institutions. Doctors tried electroshock therapy and a variety of different medications at different dosages. At one point she was on 2,800 milligrams a day of Thorazine (the average dose of the tranquilizer is 600 milligrams), and she remained so tormented that she was still unable to sleep.

The title of the book, "The Quiet Room," published last spring by Warner Books, refers to a small locked room at Westchester Division, New York Hospital -- Cornell Medical Center in White Plains. The room contained only a mattress and was meant to decrease stimulation and provide a safe, tranquil place where patients could relax. For Ms. Schiller, though, it was a room to which she was often carried by several burly hospital attendants in an effort to calm her agitation and keep her from hurting herself.

In 1989 Ms. Schiller asked to be put on clozapine, at the time an experimental drug, which she had heard about in the hospital. Her therapist, Dr. Doller, hesitated to use the drug but after assessing the risks, and conferring with Ms. Schiller and her parents, he started the new medication. Within weeks, Ms. Schiller's thoughts grew more coherent. She felt calmer, and she was able to sleep. The voices, while still present, began to be softer. For the first time, Ms. Schiller wrote in her journal, "I want to live."

There is still no cure for schizophrenia. Clozapine and other antipsychotic drugs control symptoms in some patients but do not eradicate the illness. Still, Ms. Schiller must be vigilant about taking her medication. She must cope with the different responses she has received about going public with her illness and battle a number of misconceptions, among them that she has multiple personalities. To men who ask her out on dates, she says: "Go check out my book. Then if you want to see me, call me."

Writing "The Quiet Room" was often painful for Ms. Schiller. But she said that she is enormously gratified by the hundreds of letters she has received thanking her for sharing her experiences. Among them are letters from people saying that her book saved their lives by giving them hope for recovery.