IN/SANITY TRIP
From

PSYCHOSIS to

DIAGNOSIS to

FREEDOM
I was a relatively normal kid
I had an okay childhood
“Forgetting to Remember”
a poem by
Pamela Spiro Wagner

(in LEARNING TO SEE IN THREE DIMENSIONS)
Fifth grade, we lived in England
Nothing unusual or traumatic happened otherwise

EXCEPT...
PRESIDENT IS SLAIN

Suspect Held

LBJ Is Sworn In
SKIING ACCIDENT at 10

BROKEN LEG SET TWICE, BOTH TIMES ALONE. THE FIRST TIME WITHOUT ANESTHESIA, THE 2\textsuperscript{nd} TIME WITHOUT ...
“If Wishes Were”
poem by
Pamela Spiro Wagner

in
LEARNING TO SEE IN THREE DIMENSIONS
Well, okay, maybe there was *some* trauma...
Let’s start again
I heard voices starting the day Kennedy was killed, people telling me that I was the assassin...
I believed them, and for decades blamed myself for the loss of “Camelot”
But because I did not know how to tell anyone, I mostly stopped speaking...
What was going on?
I was afraid. I wanted someone to help me, rescue me from my life experiences.
I was taught
That my brain was ill...

That something was wrong with me
For decades I was diagnosed with schizophrenia
This led to hospitals...

and more hospitals
WE WERE ALL FED BULLSHIT

a major advance in

Psychiatric Treatment

‘Thorazine’ is useful in controlling anxiety, tension, agitation, confusion, delirium, or hostility, whether occurring in schizophrenic, manic-depressive, toxic, or functional states.

“There is no evidence that large doses [of ‘Thorazine’] impair higher mental functions as is the case with sedatives and central nervous depressants... Intelligence, memory and judgment are intact, indeed are often strikingly improved in most psychotic patients... As much as 2000 mg. a day [of ‘Thorazine’] has been given though the average requirement is about 400 to 600 mg. per day.”


‘Thorazine’ Hydrochloride is available in 10 mg., 25 mg., 50 mg. and 100 mg. tablets; 25 mg. (1 cc.) and 50 mg. (2 cc.) ampuls; and syrup (10 mg./5 cc.).

Additional information on ‘Thorazine’ is available on request.

Smith, Kline & French Laboratories

1530 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia 1
Drugs and more drugs
After a while, psychiatry controlled my life and all my thinking.
I was a revolving door regular
But no one helped me get better or learn how to live with the voices and visions or what they called “delusions”...
Hospital abuse started early, but I did not recognize it as abuse.
They called this “helping me...”
I was so ashamed of having been restrained like that for 3 days non-stop.

I told no one for many years, certain I would be blamed for what they did to me.
Every MD-to-be should be required to take 10mg of this torture drug!
At this hospital they did not even pretend to care...
I knew when staff enjoyed it
Or simply wanted to punish
“Poem in Which I Speak Frankly, Forgive Me”

Poem from LEARNING TO SEE IN THREE DIMENSIONS
Meanwhile the voices got worse and more persistent, despite years of psychiatry and dubious meds...
They told me to set myself on fire

And I obeyed…
Complicating matters...

In 1999 I was bitten by a tick...
Lyme disease in my brain altered my world forever
Then a complete meltdown
Chained Burka Liberty - how I felt
How I was treated because of hallucinations of every sense
I have depicted the voices in many ways but always it seems a failed attempt to portray the invisible and what was to me utterly terrifying.
These are the “little people” – bragging, nagging voices that usually did not bother me.
Then one morning in 2007

I woke with a different message: Build a human, you must build a human... they told me... And since I had no reason not to, I did, in 3 months: The life-size Decorated Betsy.
Art changed my life...

Doing art was how I took charge and began to communicate to everyone. I began saying how I felt and what I wanted. My life became my own.
When I was made mute by the voices, Art spoke for me
I thought I could not draw faces. But I had the passion to learn everything...
This is just a tiny selection of my art since 2008 when I first began, at age 55.
Other life changes

• I left my home state of 58 years and moved to Vermont where I knew literally no one.
• I met people who were not interested in keeping me “mentally ill.” Most important of all, I met the woman I call My Guide
• She taught me NVC and I practice it
I found out love is real
I had nothing to fear any more
“Ice Hospital”

a poem in

LEARNING TO SEE IN THREE DIMENSIONS

by pamela spiro wagner
When I learned I could control my feelings I could control the voices as well.
No one can make me feel anything.

- I choose my response to other people.
- I choose how I react with regard to their words or behaviors.
- When I stay aware of my emotions, I live in harmony with the voices.
Yes I am still supposed to take meds
But I’ve stopped taking them
I am at peace with the voices now
“To Forgive is…”
a poem in WE MAD CLIMB
SHAKY LADDERS
by Pamela Spiro Wagner
My style of art has changed...
TREE OF LIFE BEADED BOWL

ALL ITS PATHS ARE PEACE
I CHANGED MY NAME TO:

PHOEBE SPARROW WAGNER

phoebesparrowwagner@gmail.com
Now I’m at peace. What more could I ask?
Thank you for coming

I hope this has helped you and that you can take something from it that will be of use. Please help spread the word that schizophrenia is not hopeless or even a meaningful diagnosis. People get better and move on into happy lives.
• DIVIDED MINDS: Twin Sisters and their Journey through Schizophrenia (2005) memoir
• LEARNING TO SEE IN THREE DIMENSIONS poems and art (2017)
• WE MAD CLIMB SHAKY LADDERS poems (2009)

ALL available at Amazon.com
For further information:

https://arteverday365.com

https://pamelaspirowagner.com

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