



## Twisting My Kaleidoscope

*Shannon Love*

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Shannon Love, a seemingly happy woman, through unforeseen circumstances, falls into a critical psychotic state, while living in Beijing, China. Enchanted by a voice in her head, she becomes suspicious of humanity--most of all Charles, her husband, believing he wishes her dead. Shannon's hallucination, along with relentless delusions, send her into a state of terror, landing her in a Chinese psychiatric hospital, as the only foreigner. Then, after sinking deeper into madness, she must be evacuated to the U.S. for intense treatment. Meanwhile, her husband, with his undying love, holds firm to his matrimonial vow "for better or for worse," and never gives up on his wife--even through the turmoil of a relapse. Shannon eventually returns to him as her sane self but concedes that she may have never broken free, if not for his eternal devotion.

## Twisting My Kaleidoscope Details

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Author : Shannon Love

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## From Reader Review Twisting My Kaleidoscope for online ebook

### Shwetha H.S. says

What happens when a loving mother, wife and friend becomes psychotic? What happens to her doting family? How do her friends and extended family deal with this situation? How long do they have to suffer with a lunatic female who doesn't realize that she is losing her mind?

Shannon Love is an expat residing in Beijing along with her husband Charles and three children. She has many friends in the expat community. They all have been living out of USA for so long that Beijing is their home now. An annual medical check up brings out reports about Shannon's abnormal heart rates. Though her health is perfect, concerns about her heart don't fade away. One thing leading to another, Shannon slowly develops a mental condition in which she imagines situations which are not true and listens to voices inside her head. Her husband's company, unable to risk the health of expats, deports her for a time being to her home town in USA. She gets hospitalized to improve her condition. When things take a turn for betterment, they come back to Beijing. But is she cured completely? Does her psychosis relapse? What does her close circle of people do?

Shannon Love's memoir is about her life with a psychotic condition and how her family and friends dealt with it. Her intention behind writing *Twisting My Kaleidoscope* is to let others know what a psychosis patient goes through and what the patient's family goes through. As she has mentioned in the book, she has altered the events and situations in the narration to keep certain people out of the book due to privacy reasons. Apart from that, it is good book for one time read and is actually entertaining.

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### Erin Sweeney says

Shannon starts out her memoir as a sweet, vibrant and energetic young mother in an exciting life - successful husband, life in China, three children. She is also about to get thrown into the rabbit whole.

Shannon's the type of friend everyone wants and she has plenty of friends to show for it. She's naturally empathetic, gentle, and fun. Then a combination of life's stresses affect her so seriously that she slowly becomes unhinged - gradually getting more and more out of touch with reality until she suffers a psychotic break. You live through the challenges she faces from within her twisted world view - her fears and irrational thoughts dominating each choice she makes - from flushing her wedding ring down the toilet to destroying her children's treasured artwork. This memoir gives you a chance to see from the inside what it's like to lose your mind. It's fascinating and terrifying. The lesson of the story is powerful. Love is the thing that brings Shannon Love through her challenging situation and that's what we all need to remember when we think of the mentally ill. They need our love - not our fear. Read this book to find out how the unconditional love of one woman's family saves her from a dark future and returns her to the light.

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### Cynthia says

Wow! This book is mindblowing! It's hard to imagine what goes through someone's mind when they're psychotic. But, *Twisting My Kaleidoscope* does just that. It puts you in the author's mind, and you feel what

she's going through, riding the ups and downs with her. It gives you a different perspective of mental illness how profoundly it affects someone as well as their family. Two thumbs up to Mrs. Love for persevering through it all and to her husband for standing by her.

A great read and as entertaining as it is educational.

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### **Rebecca Graf says**

Sometimes we wonder if someone is crazy based on their actions. It is more of a joke, but what you might not realize is that there could very well be a mental issue. Psychosis is more prevalent than people realize, and one author takes us on the journey of a lifetime.

In this book, the author opens up her soul and shares with the world her journey into psychosis and how it affected her family. This isn't a feel-good book though there is hope throughout it.

Obviously this book is very personal for the author. She goes into her emotions and thoughts that led up to the break as well as during. Bearing herself to the reader, one feels drawn into her world.

I will say that I think the author could have gotten into more depth, but maybe that was all she wanted to expose at that moment. I found myself drawn into her world and intrigued by the challenges she faced to the point where I began doing some online research into the topic.

I highly suggest this book especially if you know someone with psychosis or think you might. If you are a writer, you might want to consider a resource book.

I applaud the author for opening herself up to us all. I wish her luck in continuing her journey.

Note: I received this book from the author with no expectation of a positive review.

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### **Cindy says**

Awesome author and friend! She does a GREAT job at telling her story in hopes to help others. I think she nailed it!!

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### **Tami Winbush says**

It took me forever to read this book. Not that it was bad, but first I lost it then when I found out again it was a hard read sure to the problems this poor woman had to endure. Having mental health issues myself I found her hardships and endurances thoroughly amazing. I want to hug her and let her know she's not alone, but she knows and is reaching out to others and continuing to help them. Bless you Shannon!

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### **Biswanath Banerjee says**

Everyone around her is an enemy of her.

She has a feeling that the world is watching her every move-waiting for her to take a false step. She also has a firm belief that with her power she can help people-only she has forgotten how to use them.

She started imagining that the male population is keen on controlling her special magical charm-that is why they are after her. She started to have a sensation of repulsion whenever a man came near her-as if he has an evil intention for her-as if he is going to commit a heinous crime.

Even she started to suspect her husband for putting her into hospital-he must have planned a profit running venture in putting her into hospital. He must have put her into hospital to live a life king size-of his own will!

Full review at

<https://jayasreesown.wordpress.com/20...>

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### **Sunny says**

I liked this story a lot!

We need more stories sharing about the experience of psychotic mental illness, and reintegrating our identities after the significant experience of severe mental illness. This book shares part of the story that needs to be heard. I related deeply to the author's journey and commend her for writing her story. It is so hard to know real from unreal in the throws of a psychotic break. The author was able to capture the experience of psychosis in her work and share it with the reader. For those of us who are privileged and get care early it is so important to go on to write our stories, and I think this is important work that needs to be done by many. By sharing stories, we show different paths to living in treatment with mental illness, and share the personal struggle to accept ourselves when we break.

For me, the most important part of the journey will come in future works by this author. I hope that she'll continue to write about how she has moved forward into reality and how she managed to function as a mother, wife, and contributing world class citizen, all while battling relapse and finding effective care. I want to read that book, too. Those are the skills that make a life a full one, and bring hope through seeing others like the author succeed in their journey.

I was fascinated to read the similarities in the ways the author experiences her delusions that may be almost universal when getting sick and coming from the similar cultural backgrounds and value systems. In this way I identified deeply. It was a positive story, and I look forward to reading more as the author continues to write reflections about her life and the ways she manages symptoms and finds healing from her experiences.

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### **John says**

WOW!! I have to say that I was very surprised as Twisting My Kaleidoscope was not what I expected, it was way way better. I have to give kudos to Shannon Love for putting it all out on the table. All the FIVE Star reviews are spot on. Great job! I won this great book on GoodReads and like I do with most my wins I will be paying it forward by giving my win either to a friend or library to enjoy.

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### **Dave says**

I read this book for research and was surprised at how much I enjoyed it. Don't get me wrong, parts of it are dark and depressing. But, there are some light and funny scenes as well. All in all, it was like reading an exciting novel with all the twists and turns.

As for the research, I learned a lot about psychosis and how the mind of someone suffering works. Believe me, it's something you need to experience to understand. I think I kind of did that with this book.

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### **Victoria Brinius says**

I liked that the author was honest and is spreading awareness. There are so many people waking up every day and dealing with the same issues that the author did. Now they know that they are not alone. I liked the drawings in the books as well, and the format that the book was written in. Journal entries and letters are shared throughout the book. Unconditional love is an amazing thing to have. I am giving this book a 4/5. I was given a copy to review, however all opinions are my own.

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### **Amy Adams says**

Shannon Love was in an interesting predicament. She was overseas with her husband and two kids for her husband's job. Everything was going great until stress started to weigh down on her. Slowly, she started to become paranoid. Then the voices started. One voice, Valentino, tried to convince her to leave her husband for him. She battled between reality and psychosis, and with the help of therapists and a residential treatment facility, she overcame her first psychotic episode. However, that did not prevent her from experiencing more episodes.

This book follows Shannon from happy housewife to paranoid delusioned patient, and through the cycle as it happens again. You get a true glimpse into the mind of someone experiencing psychosis, and it's a scary thing!

The main problem I had with the book was the heavy reliance on metaphor and personification of ideas. It was hard to tell sometimes whether she was talking about two people playing with clay or having a baby. (You'll have to read the book to find out about that one.)

Overall, I'd recommend it to someone interested in taking a closer look at what it's like to experience a psychotic episode. Be warned, though, it's like a bike wreck. You want to stop it as it starts because you know what's coming, but you just can't!

I was originally paid to review this book, but that did not influence my honest rating and review of the book presented here.

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### **Leila Tualla says**

Twisting my Kaleidoscope offered some uncomfortable insight into what life is like to live with these delusions and psychosis. I applaud Shannon Love on the courage to look at her mental break and fight it with words. Words she penned to find what was happening to her and around her. Words to access what was real and what was not. Words to focus on. Words to conjure up images of her loved ones and fight for them.

I could not put this book down, except of course for usual 'toddler' cravings and antics that needed my attention. I have gotten sentimental as a mother and I honestly cried at parts involving her children and those that love her. To see a person you love with depression fighting internally and rejecting those around them - as the viewer, my first instinct was to shake them. As if shaking them would somehow dislodge whatever hold their internal powers had on them and bring them back to reality. I had chosen to believe that the stronger ones are the ones that fight the war they waged themselves in head-on and the weaker ones were the ones that "tapped out" and attempt the "easy way" of death.

I know each person handling their own mental warfare is much stronger and tougher than I have ever given them credit for.

I cried for the shame and embarrassment that I know her children and husband must have felt and then cried for the helplessness you feel of seeing someone become a hollow shell of who they used to be. There was far more tears in this book than necessary and I think I may have scared the toddler.

Shannon Love took what she knew: her psychosis, how her world changed, how her family and friends changed and painted a picture of what it is like to be sick. Diseased. Seemingly separated from the "realities of life." But it is how she choose to handle the life that was suddenly different that the one she was accustomed to, that begs to read almost as much as I'm guessing willed the writer to pen this book. I could not put this book down because I wanted to know what (and I'm going to be blunt and impolite here) a "crazy" person thought about during a delusion.

Seeing her in person and reading her words is such a powerful contradictory. This quiet, thin, beautiful woman who carries her mental illness with grace and steely determination is a stronger force than meets the eye.

And 'they lived happily ever after'

I recommend this book to anyone curious enough to see how people with psychosis and delusions look at and deal with life. To say it was an "eye opener" would be an understatement. While it certainly opened my eyes to her world, I would say I walked away with a little more knowledge and compassion for those who have to live their life at a standstill some days. I will also point out that what I loved most about this story- and where most of my tears stemmed from- was how her husband choose to love and show his love to a woman who was slipping away from him. What a beautiful testament to how married couples should be

toward one another. Instead of yielding to the damsel clearly in distress, the knight fights for their marriage, their love and showers his bride with patience, courage and a brave front for the family and most of all, prayer. Like any self respecting southern damsel, she takes charge of her fight and meets her knight halfway.

And yes, I understand that there may not be "living happily every after" with people who have mental illness but there is this beautiful hope that somewhere in this kaleidoscope, one can find some semblance of happiness and I am so so thankful to have read this book. I take my own "normal realities" for granted and could not imagine what would happen if my world shifted into a "different reality."

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### **Imran Usman says**

Scenery through a Mind's Kaleidoscope

Never thought I would finish the book when I started due to its length but after a few pages it got me thinking - 'Ah! this was in fact a real story', immediately dawning a hat of curiosity and then proving to be completely worth it.

First of all, hats off to the writer / the protagonist of the book for writing about her Life and her Psychosis. It's very difficult to open up after going through such a phase/phases in her Life.

Secondly, the way it was handled was amazing. Perfectly penned.

There were some very beautiful lines in the book. Most others were thought provoking. My best would be "...I see beauty that roses can only begin to imitate"..."Kindness comes out of a veil people try to keep you from..."

Few basic things one can learn / relearn from this. Not judging others 'You don't know the story behind...'. Unconditional love, it's real. The empathy is important in trying to understand / relate to someone.

All in all the Writer is humble and a fighter. She tried to repay as much as she could. She regretted, she corrected, she accepted. That is about everything anyone would need to fight anything.

The most stood out character was her husband, Charles, the one to whom this book is dedicated to, or maybe because he was more relatable as a male.

She dealt with a serious issue very understandably to reach out to people. And I sincerely hope she does not go through it again.

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### **Abigail says**

I received this book as a prize. I am reviewing it as honestly and unbiased as possible.

I know very little about psychosis. This was a shocking, exciting and heartbreak ride through mental break downs and the battle to overcome them. I laughed, was stunned and my heart broke for the author. I really felt for her kids and husband as they put up with seriously dreadful stuff throughout the process. Shannon and her husband enjoy life on the go. They live and work in China. Shannon enjoys her 3 kids, a group of highly diverse girlfriends and supportive family. However she is worried about heart problems as it runs in her family and some have died from it. When her company EKG comes back with strange results it scares her. She does everything in her power to manage her health and prove she is really ok. She writes more. She increases her involvement in spiritual things. She sees a shrink, or two and a marriage counselor. And she ends up losing touch with reality. She becomes paranoid and falls in love with a voice in her head. Her husband is the hero in this story. He writes many frantic letters to Shannon, stating his undying love. He

also talks/writes with her Drs, shrink, etc stating his concerns with her behavior.

Shannon and family return to the US and she is placed in a mental facility for treatment and recovery. After she recovers she has to see a shrink and go on lots of meds. Unfortunately she hates meds, believes they won't help her and hides them. She gets worse again. Eventually her med refusal is exposed, she discovers ways of sorting out fictions of her mind from reality and gets better again. One method she finds very helpful is writing in her computer journal. She decides to turn her experiences into a book to help others.

At the end of the book she has an epilogue. In it she states that another break down came, and she had to go on meds again to manage her symptoms.

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