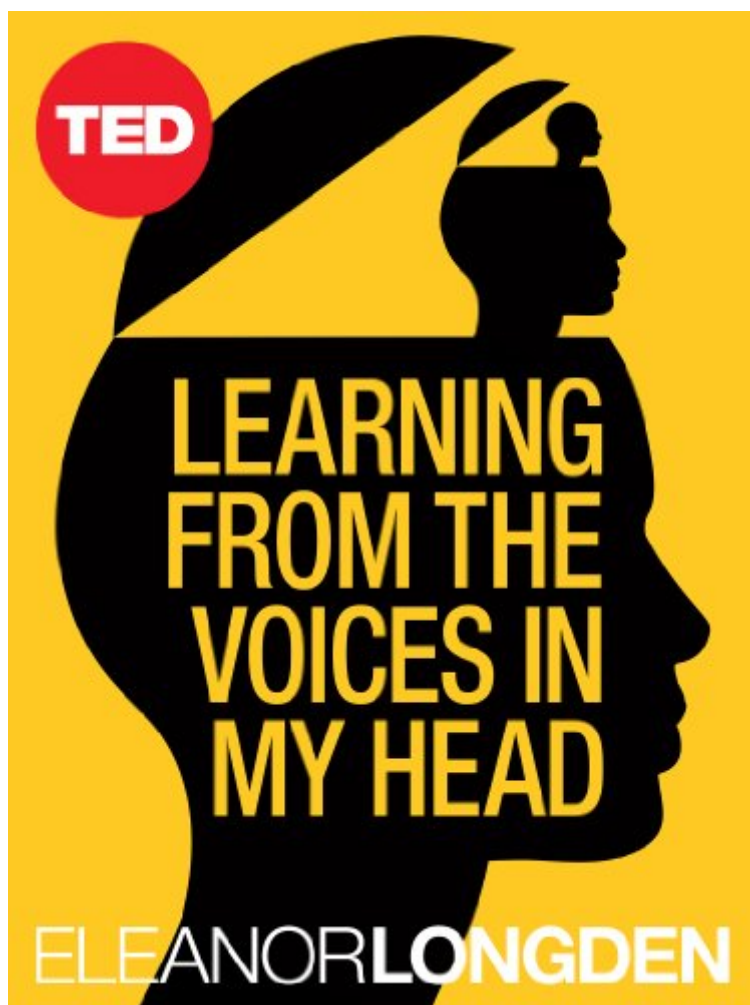


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# Learning From The Voices In My Head (TED Books Book 39)



## Synopsis

Eleanor Longden was a college freshman when she started hearing voices in her head. Diagnosed with schizophrenia and checked into a psychiatric ward, Longden spent years trapped in a nightmare of hospitals and medications, pain and despair. Yet she survived. Her technique: to learn to listen to her internal narrators, not reject them. Now on the cusp of finishing her Ph.D. in psychology, Longden still hears voices and she says she wouldn't live without them. Part personal memoir and part medical argument, *Learning from the Voices in My Head* challenges society's definition of crazy. Longden calls for a new, nuanced understanding of voice hearing and urges us to see madness not as a condition, but as a process one through which those who struggle with mental health issues have the chance to emerge with their sanity intact. Longden's story shows that there is, in the end, a message in the madness.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'd give this memoir more stars if I could. I saw the author on TED talks and had to look for her book. A personal story of recovery by an insider, Longden tells us what helped and what was hurtful to her

at the depths of her mental illness. Much like *Dante's Cure: A Journey Out of Madness* and her recovery from severe symptoms of schizophrenia, Longden's book refutes unsubstantiated claims by drug companies and some psychiatrists that medication is the only treatment for a "hopeless" condition. My son has a diagnosis of schizoaffective and is on no medications. I tried to communicate to his doctor what he was doing and what nutrients seemed to help and was met with "none of that matters, he has psychosis and needs to stay on medication." The medicines (we tried several, as directed) made him much worse. I can relate to the grief displayed by Longden's family; my beautiful bright boy seems to have lost the battle, but books like this give me hope that if we try to understand and treat him with acceptance, despite the lack of any appropriate services in our community, he could find his way back. I admire my son for his courage, ditto for Eleanor Longden for writing this readable and informative account. I'm also grateful for the references she provides to others who are speaking out.

excellent feedback on over medication and the inadequacies of the mental health system, BUT I wanted more details on how to talk to the voices, how to be in control of the voices and how they are different now- this is the area where she has a unique voice and I would love to hear it.

So little is truly understood about mental illness and what hearing voices means that I found this refreshing, enlightening and helpful. It's provided a new way for me to talk to the people in my life that hear voices. I am no longer afraid to address those people and question them about those voices. When I engage with them in a non judgemental way with genuine curiosity where I'm looking for learning my education begins. Prior to that I was always searching for a cure. If you are curious about ways to support voice hearers you know this is a must read.

As the mother of a voice hearer (and niece of a "schizophrenic") I was petrified that my child would be drugged and labeled. The hopes and dreams for his future, both mine for him and his own, seemed to come to a halt with his admission to me of his voice hearing and visions. My sister sent me Eleanor's TED Talk and I immediately saw hope and a response to his individuality that mirrored my own way of looking at the world. I only wish this change in psychiatry had been available to my Uncle who died at 80 after years of stigma and medication. The world is full of individuals with their own spin on life, Eleanor and the HVN shows us that voice hearing is just another way of looking at the world.

I don't think I will ever go back to using the term "schizophrenia" again. The notion of "Voice Hearers" resonates with such truth, integrity and hope that I cannot imagine ever thinking of this life-world in any other way.

As a professional in the mental health field, myself, I find Ms. Longden is giving hope to a population that were classified, diagnosed, and treated or, should I say mistreated, without enough information about what trauma or PTSD or other circumstances that brought the voice hearing on. I am afraid we have failed to offer hope when there often could have been to many people. I applaud the author for her courage to bring light to a field that begs much-needed research.

Amazing honest and well written. I had to read this after watching her TED talk. She is quite articulate and her experience and ideas cannot be dismissed despite the fact that her recovery from psychosis stands as a marked contrast to conventional psychiatric recovery in the United States with its absolute reliance and prescription of strong and potentially harmful medications. Her intelligence, insight, and subsequent accomplishments in the larger world make this a book and author that cannot be dismissed.

Good book regarding the stigma of hearing voices and dealing with them.

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