

Fractured Minds and Rewritten Selves:

Mapping The Human Psyche in *Life is What You Make it*

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## ABSTRACT

Paul Ricoeur's concept of narrative identity from *Oneself as Another* (1992) provides a framework to understand Ankita Sharma's psychological journey in Preeti Shenoy's *Life is What You Make it*. Ricoeur explains that identity is not fixed but is shaped through the narration of one's life experiences. A person understands who they are by connecting their past, present, and future experiences into a meaningful and

continuous story. Ankita's trauma and bipolar disorder disrupt the continuity of her life narrative. Her sense of self becomes confused and divided, and she feels disconnected from the confident person she once was. However, her recovery is not only medical but also narrative. With the support of her parents, therapy, friendship, and self-reflection, she gradually rebuilds her identity. She learns to accept her past, and makes responsible choices for her future. The paper centres on three key ideas: the fragmentation of identity during mental illness, the reconstruction of identity through relationships and memory, and the development of ethical selfhood through personal responsibility. Even when life brings deep psychological pain, the self can be reshaped through understanding, storytelling, and hope.

Keywords: Narrative identity, Ricoeur, Selfhood, Mental illness, Recovery, Resilience.

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