



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.
SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN
SOCIÉTÉ DE SCHIZOPHRÉNIE DE LA SASKATCHEWAN
UNE SOURCE D'ESPOIR, DE SOUTIEN ET D'ENTRAIDE.

Early Warning Signs for Schizophrenia

Change is the important element. The person is different than he or she used to be.

- Withdrawal from activities and social contacts
- Irrational, angry, or fearful responses to friends and family
- Sleep disturbances
- Deterioration in studies or work
- Inappropriate use of language—words do not make sense
- Sudden excesses, such as extreme religiosity, extreme activity
- Deterioration in personal hygiene
- Difficulty controlling thoughts, difficulty concentrating
- Hearing voices or sounds others don't hear
- Seeing people or things others don't see
- A constant feeling of being watched
- Inability to turn off the imagination, delusions, off-the-wall ideas
- Mood swings
- Increased anxiety
- Somatic symptoms: weakness, pains, bizarre body sensations



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Strategies When Interacting with Individuals Experiencing a Psychosis

A Psychosis is when an individual is actively experiencing delusions or hallucinations.
They are out of touch with reality
Their senses are over stimulated

1) REDUCE STIMULI

- ❖ Shut off Radios & TV's.
- ❖ Reduce numbers of people in the area.
- ❖ Limit your own movements. ie: don't talk with your hands.
- ❖ Limit eye contact.

2) BE CLEAR & SPECIFIC

- ❖ Remember the person may be frightened / terrified.
- ❖ You can't reason with someone who is psychotic. Do not argue with the person, about his/her delusions or hallucinations because their experiences are very real to them.
- ❖ Response may be slow. Give them time to respond.
- ❖ Be clear about what you want from them or what you want them to stop doing.
- ❖ Speak in short, simple sentences. One thought at a time. The person may have problems concentrating. You may need to repeat yourself.
- ❖ Be patient and use a friendly tone of voice, these are essential to developing trust and rapport.
- ❖ Engage the person, who is in the psychosis. In conversation that aids in explaining to those, who may be around and affected by their actions, what is going on.

3) BE CALM

- ❖ Speaking in a calm, controlled manner tends to have a calming effect and visa versa.
- ❖ Do not touch the person, push or corner someone who is in a psychosis. Give the Person extra personal space.
- ❖ Do not shout. A person may not be responding but they are not deaf. They may not respond because they are over stimulated with hallucinations.
- ❖ Do not talk down to the person. Use a moderate non-threatening tone and body language.
- ❖ Reassuring the person that "I am here to help you".
- ❖ Taking control of the situation because often times the person feels like they are out of control. Do not take anything personally. Remember, it is the illness talking.
- ❖ Be compassionate and sympathetic.
- ❖ Give the Person extra personal space

4) BE BRIEF

- ❖ It is important not to overwhelm the person with information.
- ❖ Disordered persons may become increasingly energized and depressed persons may become more withdrawn.