

Tips For Communication And Family Living

Most of the symptoms of psychosis have to do with perception and information processing. Psychosis directly affects a person's ability to perceive, interpret and communicate information. Because of this, family members have to learn new communication skills.

A Few Key Tips:

- Psychosis generally makes people much more sensitive to emotional tones and stimulation.
- Be concrete and specific.
- Be careful about word choice to avoid communicating judgment.
- Provide consistent, sincere praise and positive feedback.
- After you speak, give the person plenty of time to digest the information and respond.

Reflective Listening:

- The steps in reflective listening with a person who has a psychosis:
 - o Listen to what they're saying. Look for elements of reality.
 - o Ask clarifying questions only.
 - o Give the person time to respond.
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 - o Begin to identify "common ground" - reality you can agree on, or a way of addressing the feelings the person is having.

Learning To Solve Problems:

- Don't put all your energy into problems.
- When selecting where to focus, always prioritize safety and well-being.
- Focus on only one problem at a time.
- Articulate the problem in terms of the person or people who identified the problem, and no one else
- It is helpful to do this process in a group.
- Identify the problem in as behavioral, specific and concrete way as possible.
- Think about similar situations in the past and what worked then.

Developing A Family Agreement:

- There is a baseline of behavior with no exceptions
- Supportive does not mean permissive.
- Before a family meeting, make sure heads of household agree on baseline behavior and priority issues to address.

- Choose no more than one to two key issues to address at a time.
- Accept that your family member will not like the agreements.
- Everyone's needs should be addressed.