

Discussion Guide

*Experiences of Young Adults:
Living with Mental Illness and Psychosis*
Video Series

Part 1: Symptom recognition and impact

1. How can clinicians better equip families to recognize early symptoms of psychosis such as those referenced in the video?
2. How can clinicians address the diversity of symptom presentation in clients?
3. How do early recognition and intervention affect treatment outcomes and long-term recovery?
4. How can clinicians differentiate between typical development, trauma responses, and early signs of psychosis?
 - a. What assessment tools can help guide appropriate treatment?
5. How can clinicians facilitate person-centered care and shared decision making during the initial phases of treatment?
6. What strategies can be used to build trust and address concerns about stigma or coercion between clients, families, and the care team?
7. What therapeutic approaches can be used to help clients develop a sense of agency, reframe their diagnosis in a way that promotes self-acceptance and long-term recovery, and reduce feelings of isolation in having psychosis?
8. What resources can clinicians provide families to help them support a loved one experiencing early psychosis?

Part 2: Seeking help

1. How can personal and familial cultural experiences, beliefs, and perceptions influence a client's willingness to seek treatment?
 - a. In what ways might these factors affect early intervention efforts?
 - b. How can clinicians navigate cultural and spiritual differences without invalidating or stigmatizing clients' beliefs?
2. What techniques can clinicians use to facilitate growth in treatment for clients and their families?
3. Many clients and families lack knowledge of psychosis when they begin treatment; What strategies can providers use to address this?
4. What strengths and challenges can be identified in the coping strategies participants used before engaging in mental health services?
5. What factors influenced participants' decision to seek care? What factors delayed their care?
6. How might clinicians' personal biases influence diagnostic decisions and treatment recommendations?

Part 3: Initiating treatment

1. How can clinicians empower individuals to take an active role in their treatment and recovery?
2. How might fear of judgment, misrepresentation in the media, or societal misconceptions of psychosis influence clients' willingness to seek help?
3. What role did the coping skills participants gained in treatment play in their recovery?
4. What are some less common therapeutic modalities which could be used in early intervention for psychosis?
5. How can combining multiple treatment components (such as medication, cognitive and behavioral therapies, creative therapies, and peer support) improve treatment outcomes?
6. How did participants describe the benefits and challenges of medication?

Part 4: Communication and understanding

1. How can providers promote trust in their relationships with clients?
2. What were some of the consequences of participants not feeling heard or seen in treatment?
3. How does coordinated care within an interdisciplinary team impact the treatment experience for individuals with psychosis and their families?
4. What methods can clinicians use to validate client experiences and actively work toward reducing bias in clinical decision-making?
5. What ideas do you have to create a safe and welcoming environment for clients?

Part 5: Family and support involvement

1. What strategies can be used to engage family members who may be hesitant or uncertain about their role in the recovery process?
2. How can clinicians navigate situations where a client's support system actively denies or minimizes their psychosis?
3. How can a family's mental health background influence a client's risk factors, symptom presentation, and response to treatment?
4. How can clinicians navigate situations where clients are unwilling to incorporate their family into their treatment?
5. What strategies can be used by clinicians to deliver information in a culturally sensitive way?

Part 6: Treatment reflection

1. What are common misconceptions about psychosis and how can providers challenge them?
2. What can clinicians do to reduce fear and feelings of hopelessness following a diagnosis?
3. How does psychoeducation contribute to the destigmatization of psychosis?
4. How does experiencing involuntary hospitalization impact clients' trust in the mental health system and their clinical team?
5. How did your own beliefs regarding recovery and remission in psychosis align with or differ from the experiences shared in the video?
6. How did participants' perspectives challenge or reinforce common assumptions about what it means to live with psychosis?

Part 7: Personal growth & guidance

1. How did participants describe their personal growth that emerged from their experiences and treatment related to psychosis?
2. What are strategies can clients can use to reduce the likelihood of ending up in a crisis?
3. What strategies can clinicians use to ensure their approach fosters empowerment?
4. What are your thoughts about the advice participants gave to future clinicians? What resonated with you the most?
5. What qualities of the treatment experience did participants describe as being essential for high quality care? ?

Overarching questions

1. How do the experiences shared in the videos challenge common stereotypes about people living with psychosis?
2. How do personal, cultural, and societal factors influence a client's willingness to seek and engage in treatment?
3. How can providers utilize person-centered treatment strategies to promote trust and recovery?
4. How did participants in the videos learn to cope with psychosis symptoms?
5. How can a recovery-focused approach shape the way clinicians support individuals living with psychosis?
6. What strategies can clinicians use to help clients develop coping skills and autonomy in managing their mental health?
7. What is one takeaway from the video series that will stick with you in your career?