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After the storm: conversations on psychosis and identity.

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Learning Goal:

The listener gets inspired on a theme that is crucial in therapeutic sessions during the recovery from psychosis. Casuistic excerpts are alternated with theoretical findings to illustrate the process of the restauration of the identity after a psychotic episode.

Abstract Text:

After the psychotic storm, when the dust is settled down, people have to move on with these new experiences. Initially, the impact of an episode on someone's identity and self-concept can be enormous and patients are confronted with a deafening silence and a big void. In the past years, the authors became fascinated by the divers ways in which young people are able to reinvent themselves and overcome this crisis.

For this lecture the authors interviewed people after a psychotic crisis, on what helped them bridging the gap: the gap with whom they were before the crisis and the new gap between them and the environment. Special attention goes to the role of the environment: was the person 'a stranger in the city', or were the people around the first step to recovery? What is the role of the city in building up an identity?

Bottom-up, we studied every story on what were the key-elements in the restauration of the self-concept. What was the impact of the psychotic symptoms on the continuity of the self-concept. Inversely, top down, we studied the literature looking for inspiring models of identity. Models that could support the patient in dealing with the fault line a psychosis can be in the story of one person's life.

The authors all work in VRINT, an outpatient early psychosis treatment centre, located in the city of Louvain, Belgium, as a psychologist/therapist within a systemic and psychodynamic framework.

**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**