



**Abstract Nr:** 121  
**Internet ID:** 336

**Type of Presentation:** Poster

**Auditory verbal hallucinations in schizophrenia: phenomenology of the mode of onset**

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**Learning Goal:**

To understand under what circumstances a person will disclose their auditory hallucinations to another person.

Aim: To bridge the gap between the hallucinating person and other people.

**Abstract Text:**

This study is a phenomenological investigation of a group of patients, diagnosed with schizophrenia and suffering from auditory verbal hallucinations (AVH).

We want to learn under what circumstances a person will disclose their AVHs to another person. We are also interested in the following questions:

The age of onset and duration of hallucinations before their disclosure and acquisition of their status as “voices”  
The patient's reaction to and her comprehension of these phenomena  
Reasons and circumstances for disclosure  
Description of preceding or accompanying experiences and the over whole sense of subjectivity  
The presence and nature of insight in the pathological status of AVH  
Methods:

Phenomenological oriented qualitative interviews with 20 patients diagnosed with schizophrenia and suffering from AVH. Patients were randomly selected from a psychiatric hospital in the the Copenhagen area in Denmark.

**Results:**

Average duration of AVH before disclosure was 6,5 years. Disclosure took place when there was a need for care, the person was reaching desperation, were suicidal, or the voices had a big negative impact of the patient's life. Psychiatrists were the primary receivers of disclosures. Other receivers were other medical doctors than psychiatrists or other professionals. None of the adults in this sample disclosed to family or friends. The patients learned the word “voices” from psychiatry. In this sample, the symptom of AVH were a part of a more comprehensive gestalt, and AVHs emerged from a partial dissolution of the structures of self-consciousness.

**Conclusion:**

The persons with AVH lived with their experiences for several years before disclosing. This lead to alienation from the social world, and immersion in the common world was almost impossible.

When a person starts talking about her experiences, it can be possible to bridge the gap between the hallucinating person and other people.

**ON THE HEALING POWER  
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**