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How to connect during diagnostic interventions in psychosis?

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Learning Goal:

How can diagnostics create therapeutic opportunities?

Abstract Text:

How to achieve diagnostic relevant information without creating more of a threat in an already unsafe and fragmented world? To elaborate cohesion in psychosis is not to be confused with putting together different pieces of information. The different sources (anamnestic information, testing materials, questionnaires, and so on) surely are important, but the (long-term) journey that you make together with the patient even more. In our point of view, diagnostic interventions refer to the search of connections at a time where most connections are lost. In this search three concepts seem very important: presence, patience and trust. In our opinion, these concepts are required to provide some sort of mental space for the initially unthinkable connection and can lead to a much needed containment. To us, it seems important to procure this containment with significant others. At the same time, we try to attain sufficient information to understand what is happening to the patient and what the meaning of psychosis could be. Therefore, this whole process consists of a precarious balancing between the diagnostic view and maintaining the fragile cohesion. To do so, we get inspired by the concepts of Jim Van Os (2014). More specifically, we try to find answers to four questions in the diagnostic process: *What happened to you? What is your vulnerability and your resilience? Where do you want to be in your life? What do you need?* The first question refers to understanding the current mental state in a broader context. With the second question we search for biological vulnerabilities and strengths. Finally, we try to complete the diagnostic process by creating hope and space for recovery. In this search with the person we involve significant others to create an open dialogue.

**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**