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What Language Is Best To Speak Of Psychosis?

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Learning Goal:

Attendees will develop an enhanced appreciation for the interpersonal impact of the language (vocabulary) used when discussing psychosis.

Abstract Text:

It can be said that when one group aims to exert control over another, defining what language is permissible is a high political priority. Most, if not all, ISPS members would agree that viewing psychosis as a biological illness diagnosed as “schizophrenia” can do considerable harm to an individual’s personhood. Nevertheless, it is a fact of life that the word “schizophrenia” has dominated medical discourse for a century, and currently dominates clinical practice, research, and reimbursement for medical services for psychosis. What language is to be preferred by whom? If “psychosis” better than “schizophrenia” is “extreme states” better yet? Is “expert-by-experience” better than “client” better than “patient”? Should we speak of “recovery” rather than “treatment”? Is any “clinical” language permissible? Is there a consensus about when and how different language may be used to forward the cause of a psycho-social perspective? The panel, which will include mental health providers and experts-by-experience, will examine what is lost and what is gained by the use of particular language when speaking of psychosis.

**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**