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**Soteria in Jerusalem: replacing the hospital ward with a therapeutic community**

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**Learning Goal:**

To understand the history and principles of Soteria  
To learn about its current implementation  
To view psychosis as an extreme but accessible human experience  
To appreciate Soteria's potential to catalyze change in the system

**Abstract Text:**

Soteria opened its first home in Jerusalem in September 2016, and its second a year later. It operates according to the principles of Soterias everywhere: cultivating a therapeutic community; viewing extreme states as human experiences requiring humane responses; striving to be with the person in these states; a reduction of hierarchy and boundaries; open and honest communication. We also work intensively with families using Open-Dialogue-inspired approaches. We will discuss the special challenges of working in a home as opposed to an institution, softening boundaries while providing a sense of safety, reducing dependence on pharmacological interventions, and hearing the voices of all in the community.

What began as a semi-underground service funded by philanthropy and out of pocket payments acquired governmental recognition under the newly-minted category "stabilizing houses". Since then such houses have begun sprouting elsewhere in Israel and are challenging the institutional paradigm for acute psychiatric care.

**ON THE HEALING POWER  
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**