



Nobody speaks my language.

Marcus Evans

Serious and enduring mental illness and/or personality disorder can make it hard for the individual to face the extent of their difficulties and suffering. This can lead to an evacuation of painful mental states, and a withdrawal from the world of shared reality into an internal world of the individual's own creation. These states of mind are often connected with fragmented thinking and concrete communications that lack emotional resonance. On the one hand, these communications can have a deadening effect on the recipient's mind leading to a concrete response, while on the other hand, it can provoke 'over forceful' attempts to control the psychotic mind. These responses can lead to a breakdown in communication that threatens the therapeutic relationship between patient and his/her relatives and mental health professionals.

An interest in the meaning of symptoms and behaviours should be seen as a cornerstone of mental health treatment and care. Psychoanalytic thinking and insight provide a model for thinking about the unconscious forces that operate within therapeutic relationships, as well as throwing light on the meaning of symptoms. While psychoanalysis is neither an appropriate nor practical treatment for many patients with a severe and enduring mental illness, it does offer a model for thinking about psychotic states of mind. As Richard Lucas used to say, it helps us "tune into the psychotic wavelength" thereby providing understanding of the anxieties that drive us 'out of our minds'. Above all, it encourages professionals to remain curious about their patients.

In this presentation, using clinical examples, I will outline some psychoanalytic ideas that can help throw light on the "Psychotic Wavelength". This understanding can provide a means of communication between psychotic and non psychotic states of mind, reducing feelings of alienation and isolation.

**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**