**M6.WS3 - PSYCHOSIS**

***Activity – Experience of Hallucinations***

* Get two participants to sit down facing each other;
* Ask them to discuss a topic of their interest e.g. sports, cars, food, marital relationships, etc. The duration of the conversation must be at least two minutes long;
* Tell the participants to disregard the facilitator’s real-life presence and act as an invisible person in the room;
* The facilitator is to stand behind the chair of one of the participants. After one minute into the conversation, the facilitator starts whispering with a persistent and aggressive tone in the ear of the participant, phrases of suspicious nature such as:
* “what a bunch of lies are you listening to!”;
* “s/he is surely lying!”;
* “s/he wants to steal your mind”;
* “if s/he continues talking to you, your family will be in danger!”
* “maybe we should get rid of him/her. How about killing him/her now?”
* Repeat the exercise with a few more participants. After each role play, it is important to de-role each participant and bring them back again in their persona;
* When ready, ask the participants to whom the facilitator was whispering to share their experience of having someone *invisible* talking in their ears against the person in front of them;
* Encourage the participants to reflect on this exercise, and share their understanding of how someone with auditory hallucinations experiences life.

***Introduction to Psychosis and Common Symptoms***

Psychosis is a condition where the capacity to perceive, process, and respond to environment stimuli in an adaptive manner is radically impaired, with the result that the person would not be able to determine what is real and what is not real. An acute psychotic episode does not allow for some measure of adoptive functioning. People with psychoses are often hospitalized.

There are three main groups of psychoses:

* 1. The mood disorders, characterized, primarily by disturbances of mood (But not all mood disorders are psychotic);
	2. Schizophrenia, considered to be primarily a disturbance of thought;
	3. Delusional disorder, in which the essential, and possibly the only, abnormality is a limited system of delusions.

For any psychotic condition to be present, this would be mainly characterized by the following symptoms:

1. delusions (persistent false thought entering into the mind);
2. hallucinations (experiencing false seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, or touching);
3. difficulty concentrating;
4. depressed mood;
5. sleeping too much or not enough;
6. anxiety;
7. extreme suspiciousness;
8. withdrawal from family and friends
9. disorganized speech, such as switching topics erratically;
10. suicidal thoughts or actions.

