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The Personal is Political

The Personal is Political

The experiences, feelings, and possibilities of our personal lives are not just a matter of personal preferences and choices but are limited, moulded, and defined by the broader political and social setting. They feel personal, and their details are personal, but their broad texture and character, and especially the limits within which these evolve, are largely systemic.



Jacqui aged 5

Experiences

Abuse
Betrayal
Neglect
Denial
Blame
Threats



Survival Strategies

Hearing Voices
Self Harm
Eating 'Disorder'
Creativity
Resourcefulness
Sense of Justice

My experiences of the Mental Health System

- **Pathologised**
‘You are ill. Everything that you say and do will be seen as a consequence of your illness.’
- **Denial**
‘It never happened’ or ‘It did happen but you will never recover’.
- **Medication**
‘You are resistant and the fact that you don’t want to take medication is evidence that you are ill’ .
- **Dependency & Compliance**
‘You must accept the psychiatric diagnosis and medication and we will give you benefits and a bus pass’.
- **Disempowered**
‘You will never recover. You will always have this illness. You won’t be able to work’.
- **Passive**
‘You do not know what is best for you. We know what is best for you’.

Finding a new paradigm

- Trauma & Recovery
- Understanding Dissociation
- Attachment Theory
- The Personal Is Political

Trauma and Recovery

(Judith Herman)

- Safety
- Remembering & Mourning
- Reconnection

Trauma and Recovery

- **Safety**
- **feeling safe and feeling protected**
- To talk - need a language to describe what has happened – time, space, safety, protection and an empathic witness
- To know that I am not alone
- To know that I am not crazy
- To know that my responses are normal in abnormal circumstances
- To know that recovery is possible as others have recovered
- To accept support as an act of courage and commitment to life and the future rather than as a sign of weakness

Trauma and Recovery

- **Remembering & Mourning**
- *‘When the truth is finally recognised, survivors can begin their recovery’*
(Herman, 1992).
- Restorative power of truth telling
- Reconstructing the story of the trauma in the presence of an empathic witness/witnesses
- Mourning, to truly honour what has been lost
- **Integrating** the experience – putting the new and the old together and moving through to the future

'Voices'

Dissociated selves that became internal representations of my external world

- **Children/Teenagers**
 - **Abusers**
 - **Deniers & Blamers**
 - **Comforters & Protectors**
 - **Intellect guides**
 - **Spiritual**
- Hold memories of trauma - victims
 - Hold memories of trauma – perpetrators – mother, father, 'main abuser', selves created to handle the abuse,
 - Mother, grandmother, main abuser, confused selves, psychiatrists, society
 - Imaginatively created selves i.e., 'great mother', old man,
 - Pure intellect...free from feeling
 - Higher power, connection to the world, nature, my own innocence, my survival instinct, love is my religion!

Changing my relationship with my 'voices':

- Needed to listen to them and understand them and the context in which they emerged
- Greet them with compassion and understanding
- Honour them - they helped me to survive
- Work towards supporting and understanding each other
- Increase the sense of connectedness and wholeness
- Life becomes a shared, mutual collaboration

Trauma and Recovery

- Reconnection
- *‘Helplessness and isolation are the core experiences of psychological trauma. Empowerment and reconnection are the core experiences of recovery’ (Herman).*
- Reconnecting with ordinariness and the sense of being like others
- There is more to life than the trauma
- Finding a ‘survivor mission’

Hearing Voices Network

HVN is a network of people who hear voices, their friends and relatives, carers, support workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and others, who work together, to gain a better understanding of hearing voices, seeing visions, tactile sensations and other sensory experiences and work to reduce ignorance and anxiety about these issues.

Hearing Voices Network

The aims of the network are:

- To raise awareness of voice hearing, visions, tactile sensations and other sensory experiences
- To give men, women and children who have these experiences an opportunity to talk freely about this together.
- To support anyone with these experiences seeking to understand, learn and grow from them in their own way.



- Information
- Self- help groups
- Publications
- Newsletter
- Training
- Help-line for voice-hearers
- Individual & Group Membership
- Website
- Research
- Media
- Intervoice

INTERVOICE

International Network

for

Training, Education

and

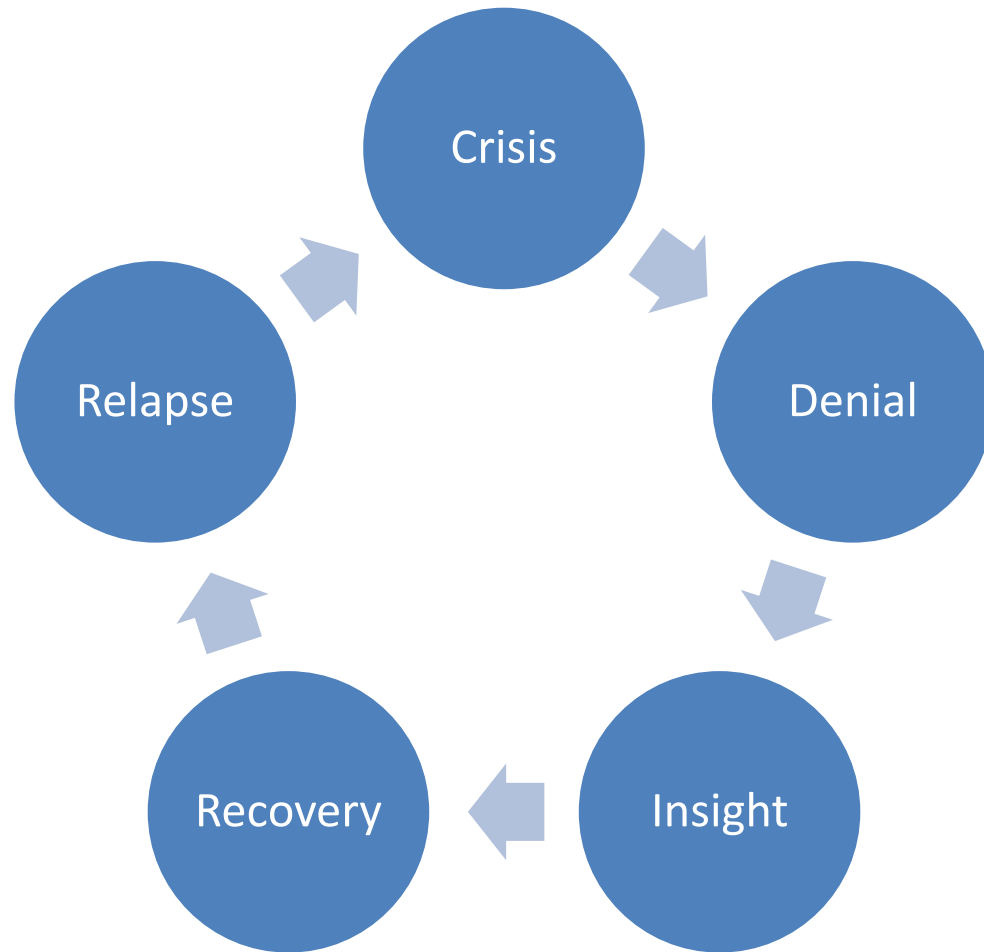
Research into Hearing Voices

International Developments

- Austria,
- Finland,
- Germany,
- Holland,
- Italy,
- Sweden,
- Norway,
- UK: England, Scotland & Wales,
- Ireland – North & South,
- Greece,
- Switzerland,
- Denmark,
- Spain,
- Australia,
- New Zealand,
- USA,
- Palestine,
- South Africa,
- Japan,
- Malaysia.
- Canada

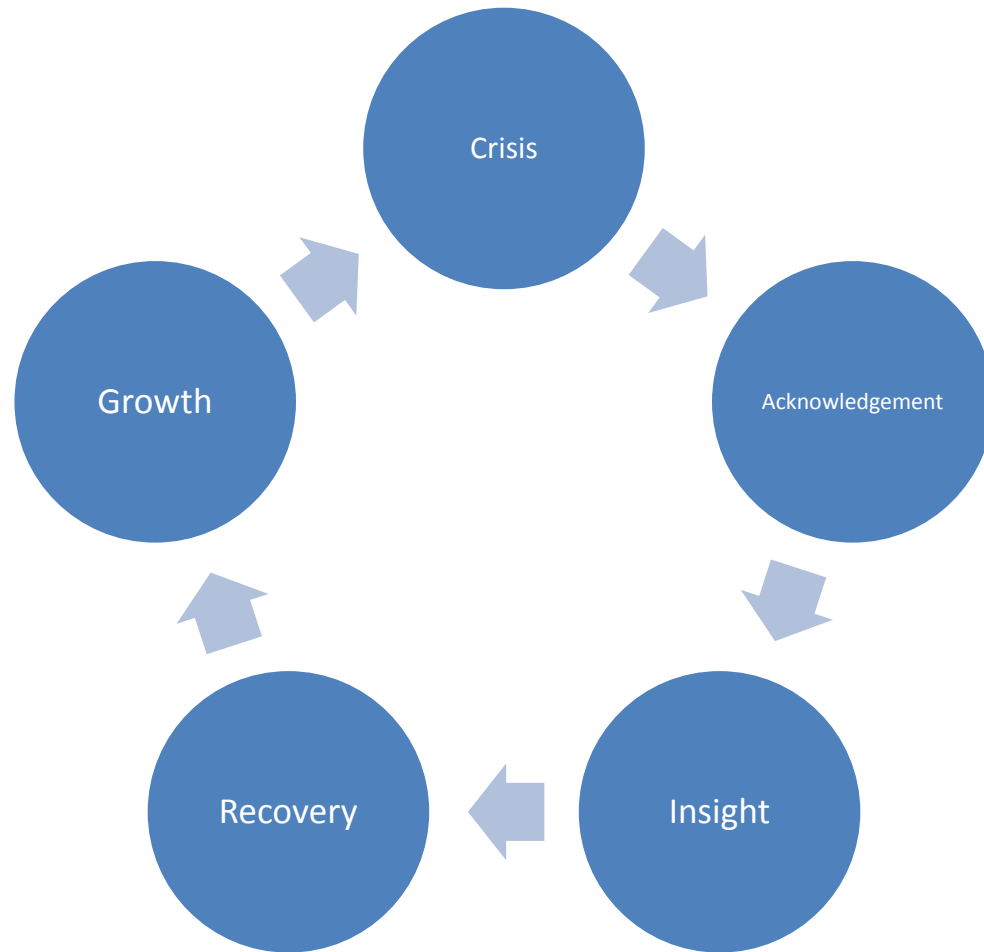
Recovery Model

Bio- Medical Version



Recovery Model

Hearing Voices Network's Version



Join The Last Great Civil Rights Movement!

- **Collective Responsibility:**
Responsible Society, Responsive Citizens
- **Awareness of dominant ideologies that redefine reality**
- **Oppression, power, social norms and inequalities**
- **Paradigm Shift**

Further Information:



www.hearing-voices.org

intervoice

www.intervoiceonline.org



www.jacquidillon.org

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