What I would like friends and family to know

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Intro

- You have been thrown into a new experience of learning how to deal with psychosis and brain changes.
- You, your family and your friends have also been thrown into this and are trying to figure this out also.
- It may be very hard to understand what they are going through.
Experience and Impacts

• There will be ups and downs while in EASA – not going to be a smooth path

• This occurs at a time when they are trying to figure out who they are developmentally

• You are all developing new ways of communicating, relating and interacting with each other
Delusions, Hallucinations and Changes

- Psychosis is changes in the brain that alters the way I experience the world.
- It is significant changes in how I experience reality and makes it harder to understand the world and myself. It is characterized by:
  
  - Delusions or beliefs that are not true. They may believe that they can achieve things that aren’t real or possible.
  
  - Hallucinations or hearing and seeing things that others don’t. They may hearing voices or see things.
  
  - Changes – disorganized thoughts and behaviors. Thing such as having a harder time staying on topic, communicating or pay attention or have disorganized thoughts.
I am still the person I was before

The diagnosis does not define me

When I learn about it or get information, it makes it easier to understand

The person I am, is still there, I am just trying to deal with these changes right now

I am trying to make sense of my world
Families

This a totally new experience for you and your family. The family system has changed and they are dealing with changes also.

- They may deal with it a different way than you need to.
- Communication is key
- What may have worked before, may not work now
- Use the family guidelines
- Have family check in= meals, 1 x a week, with EASA team
- Listen when they set their own boundaries about what they need
- Learn about psychosis
Friends

- You need to re-establish relations with them
- Help them to see you are still the person you were, but have some changes
- Use your EASA team to learn how to deal with them
- May need to have new friends
- Know your boundaries for your friends
  - Disclosure
  - Relationships
Things that help

- Communication
- Education
- Reconnect with strengths and interests
- Support - be part of the team
- Listen to your youth -
  - Get to know what they are going through
  - What they need now
Communication

- Do short check ins
- Listen and not commenting
- Not to argue with delusions
- Avoid anger
- Encourage and don’t put down
- Keep it simple
- Give space when needed & it is okay
Communication

- Break things down into smaller steps
- Slow down talking and use short phrases
- Be open and honest
- Share information
- Be positive and instill hope
- One day at a time
- Keep HOPE alive
- Put the family guidelines into action
Reconnect with strengths and interests

- Help to get involved –
  - Hard to take first step & take a risk
  - Encourage gently, the more they do it, the easier it becomes
  - Support them, they are not alone- others are going through this
  - When around others they feel better & build social connections
  - Try new things together
  - Do it gradually- start slow, go at their pace
  - Remember, they cannot jump back into old life right away
Reconnect with strengths and interests

- Doing things and being involved helps them and you on many levels-
  - Feel better
  - Helps brain heal and organize
  - Helps with recovery
  - Gives you hope
  - Figure out what you want and make a plan
  - Builds self esteem
  - Helps you to meet others that are going through this
Reconnect with strengths and interests

- Engage in healthy activities for you and your youth
  - Exercise
  - Eat healthy
  - Good sleep
  - Balance in your life
  - Go outdoors
  - Do something you enjoy doing
  - Do things that were fun in the past
  - You do not have to do everything together - work out a plan
Reconnect

- Do things you have done in the past that you enjoyed together
  - Board games
  - Cooking together
  - Playing music
  - Hiking
  - Going out to dinner
Taking a Risk

- Encourage them to get involved – trust self again
- See how they have changed
- See how they have not changed
- You may have missed people and want them back,
- It is okay to set certain ground rules
  - Friends
  - Family
  - Others
Experience and Impacts

- Learn What it looks and feels like when I am doing well-
  - Happy, joking
  - Socializing
  - Going outside
  - Doing things to enjoy life

- Learn What it looks and feels like when I am struggling-
  - Withdrawn/isolating
  - Afraid
  - Indecisive
  - Not taking care of myself
  - Not normal self
Supports

- Know my warning signs - share with others around you
- Encourage me but don’t criticize or argue
- Educate others - EASA workshop, appointments, know when to share and how much
- Encourage to do a little at a time - start slow
- Walk along side me
Supports

- EASA Team – know who they are and what they do
- Know who you can trust around you and how much to share
- Friends - trial and error as to what works, educate, work with EASA to determine this
- Family – get involved with EASA, know what EASA can do and provide, use the team for support and problem solving
Supports

- **Resources:**
  - PCC - crisis lines, crisis teams, etc.
  - Your EASA Team
  - Prescriber - write down notes for appts. Be open and honest with them.
  - School - accommodations, counseling, aware of issues, supported education
  - Work - EAP, supported employment
  - Church - personal strength, groups. Involvement
  - Self - know yourself and what works for you
Moving Forward

- Everybody is an unique individual and will have different needs and experience
- Listen to them and help them to learn what works for them
- Walk along them and at their pace
- Be patient
- Remember they are still the youth there were
- Learn what you can to understand
Disclosure

- When you share, you risk the chance of stigma
- Know why you want to disclose to someone and how much you need to disclose
- If you decide to share, set boundaries around what you are willing to share
- Be aware of how other’s may react to your disclosure
- Work with you EASA team to discuss disclosure and make decisions
- Once you share, you cannot go back
- Think about it ahead of time
Disclosure

• May help others to understand you better

• May make communication easier

• May help to get supports at school and work

• My introduce you to someone else that is struggle

• May help you to see how far you have come and accomplished
Stigma

- Assumptions others have about you
- Prejudice
- People look at you differently
- Scared to share and trust
- You are seen as less capable – can’t do things
- You don’t have the same privileges
- Discrimination
- Mental health in Social Media - more information available than in the past & more positive information
Ways to stop stigma

- Learn as much as you can and want to
- Listen – and don’t judge
- Believe in yourself
- Help others to understand what you are experiencing
- Get involved – YALC
HOPE

- Always have hope – you will come back
- Take care of yourself
- Do things you enjoy
- Be patient
- Future focused
- May be slower than you want, be patient
- Believe in yourself