What to Do If a Brother or Sister Develops Psychosis

✓ **Know you are not alone.** 1-3% of the population develops a psychosis, and chances are at least one or two of your friends share this experience.

✓ **Seek out someone you trust** to talk to. Keep looking until you find someone.

✓ Know this is a no-fault illness. Your sibling does not choose to experience it.

✓ Maintain a supportive, positive attitude. Recovery is a one step at a time, and can be slow. Sometimes people aren’t ready. Communicate to them what you value about them. Be honest.

✓ **Stay safe**, physically and emotionally. Let your parents and your sibling know if you do not feel safe, and insist on healthy boundaries.

✓ **Focus on your own strengths and goals.** Let your experience with the illness inform, not dominate your life.

✓ Seek counseling, especially if you have experienced traumatic situations. **Don’t be ashamed to ask for help.** Many people whose siblings experience psychosis end up making different choices in career and relationships because of that experience. Be aware that these experiences are affecting you.

✓ Stay in touch with a strong support network - friends, mentors, youth groups, extracurricular activities, etc.

✓ **Don’t try to act as a parent** or to solve the problem. You cannot. Just be yourself.

✓ **Don’t feel guilty** for your own joy or for your own success. Celebrate those, and encourage your sibling to take his or her own risks.

✓ **Don’t judge** your sibling’s progress by where you think he/she should be. Psychosis makes normal things very difficult, and can stop a person in their tracks. People who choose to actively manage their condition can do very well in life, but may take a little time. Honor your sibling for the challenges he/she is facing, his/her persistence and courage, and the real strengths and talents you value.

✓ **Educate yourself** about the illness and how it affects you and your family members.