Please get support as soon as possible

Early treatment can be more effective in treating psychosis. If you think you, or someone you know, might be experiencing psychosis, you should speak to a medical professional, like your GP or mental health team, as soon as possible.

British Association for Dramatherapy (BADth) is the professional organisation for Dramatherapists in the United Kingdom. They develop, promote and represent dramatherapy in all national and international contexts, whilst working alongside other health care professions.

Dramatherapists are registered and regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

To find out more about dramatherapy services in your area, for support or learn more about dramatherapy, please visit www.badth.org.uk

For an audio version of this leaflet, or for research referenced in this leaflet, please visit

The British Association of Dramatherapists

Dramatherapy and Psychosis

Dramatherapy is a form of psychotherapy delivered by qualified professionals. Dramatherapists work with individuals and groups, using a wide range of techniques. Sometimes dramatherapy can involve a lot of talking, often using stories or metaphors to explore difficulties. Dramatherapy can also be non-verbal, using creative techniques such as drawing, moving, or making.

NICE guidelines recommend dramatherapy to improve negative symptoms of psychosis

NICE Clinical guideline CG178

Psychosis is a mental health condition understood within health services as having lost some contact with reality. Psychosis can present in various ways, which might include hallucinations (seeing, hearing or feeling things other people cannot), having delusions (thinking things which are not actually true), feeling paranoid, struggling with social functioning, and/or significant distress.

Individuals who experience psychosis are advised to get treatment to support recovery, and process the associated trauma. Often, treatment for psychosis is a combination of therapy and medication. Sometimes this treatment is based from home, sometimes in hospital, or a mix of both

How does dramatherapy treatment help individuals with psychosis?

Use of creativity - something like writing or talking out the story of what experiencing psychosis feels like, or processing trauma which could have cause mental health difficulties.

Talking - could be discussing experiences and emotions, or role-playing conversations which individuals have found traumatic, or want to feel prepared for.

Trust with therapist - therapists will follow individuals needs and capacity, not placing pressure on having to share details, or engage with certain conversations or techniques.

Having a choice - individuals can decide how they want to explore feelings and experiences, they could decide to talk, use creativity, or both.

Feeling listened to - therapists will show individuals they are being listened to, by reflecting experiences back to individuals or suggesting personalised ways to process feelings.

Using dramatic distance - individuals can speak about, or explore, their difficult experiences at a distance which can feel more manageable and safe than directly discussing the trauma.

What do individuals who have had dramatherapy for psychosis treatment say?

Symptoms of psychosis can reduce

Theo said: (The voices have) gone softer, not shouting, nice, kinder. The aggressive voice has gone.

Understanding of self can improve

Dr.K said: It helped you see how you were, visualising it really, visualising where you are, how you thought of yourself.

Relationships can improve

A client said: I liked being able to talk through my emotions and act them out in group therapy as it allowed me to get used to groups in general.

Ability to make choices can improve

A client said: Now I can differentiate between the ideas spouted by the voices and decide which voices are good and which are not, which ones to follow through with and which to not.