

## Family Matters (helping families understand psychosis)

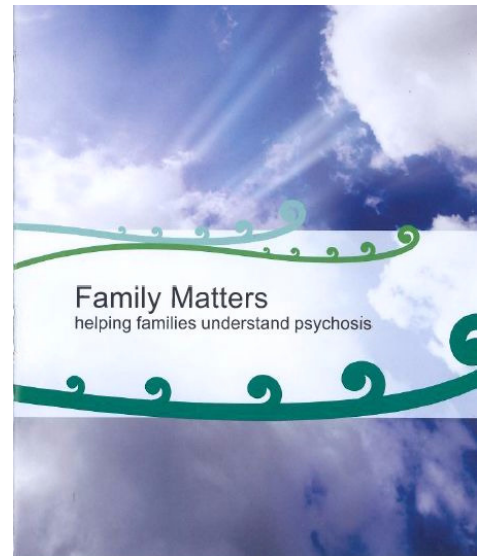
This DVD production has stories of New Zealand families and their experience of mental illness, which takes the viewer on a journey of understanding and insight into psychosis. Families share their experiences of distress, determination and recovery in relation to a family experiencing the condition.

These shared experiences promote strategies to cope with the condition and fosters hope for family members or primary caregivers. Mental Health professionals describe the condition; provide techniques to assist recovery and include practical advice for families. This resource enables family members to build their competence and resilience to cope with mental illness.

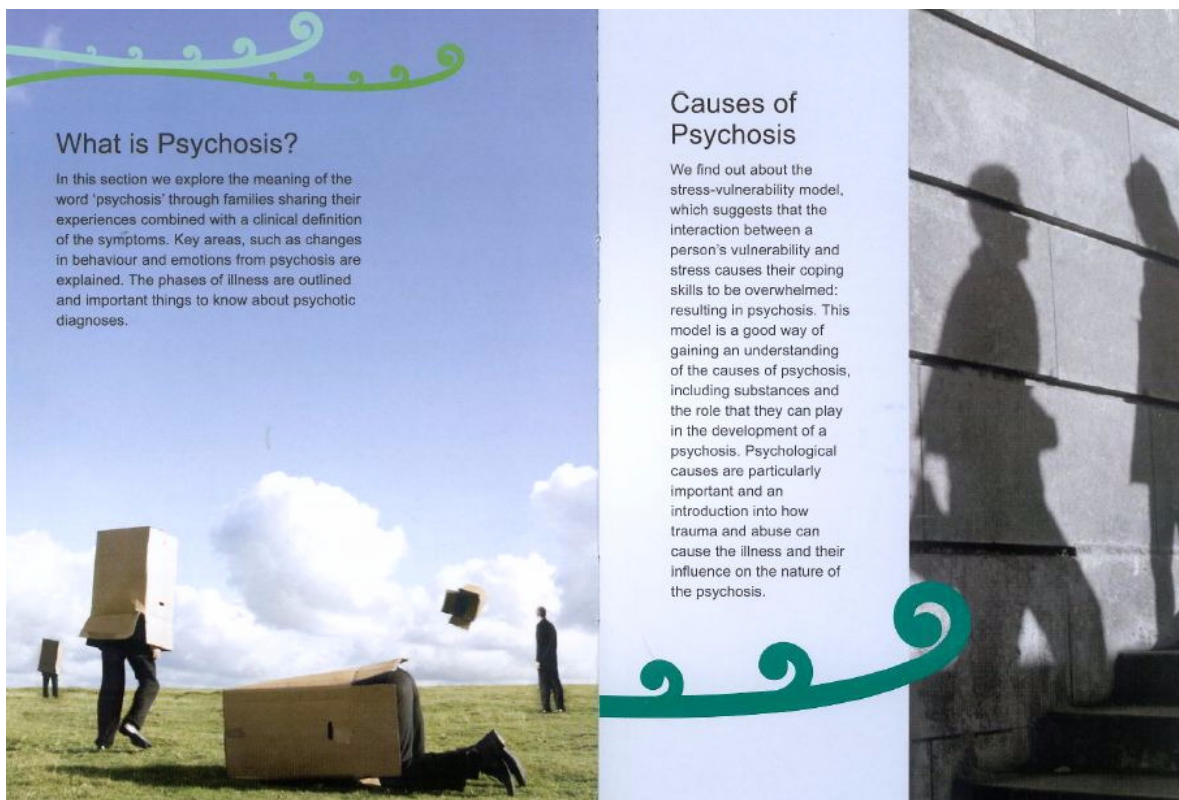
A strongpoint of this compilation is its New Zealand context and therefore its relevance to local experience with local health workers presenting. In addition, one gets the sense that clinicians have made a real attempt this time round to speak in plain language. The production is easy on the eye in terms of its graphics with important knowledge summaries through each chapter. These chapters cleverly thread together to create a 'big picture' understanding of relevant themes in a knowledge area often perceived as intimidating.

The compilation cuts from one family member experience to another at the beginning, channeling the viewer to follow four stories at once. As a result, some may find this process difficult to follow however, the beauty of DVD technology enables one to pan straight to particular topics for replays until the points are understood.

The cover title says 'helping families understand psychosis' and in my opinion it does exactly that. As a result I would recommend this DVD production as a valuable resource to gaining understanding and insight on Psychosis for family members, service users and mental health staff.



Ben Peckham  
Pacific Family Fieldworker  
Supporting Families in Mental Illness



## Promoting Recovery

Recovery is a process; it is about regaining what may have been lost: roles, responsibilities, decisions, potential and support. Learn how it is important to aim towards a trusting and supportive alliance between the person, their family and their clinical team. An assertive approach with a focus on what young people want to achieve can increase the sense of hope for the future and regain or develop skills, employment opportunities, other interests and life goals. This section also should provide an understanding of the role of medication, and how it assists recovery. Also psychological therapy is discussed and how it helps with psychotic symptoms and other problems that may have contributed to, or arisen from the psychosis.



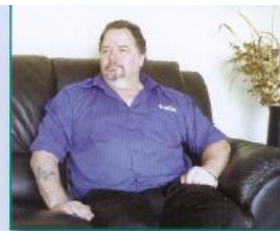
## Help for Families

Learning about mental illness, treatment and recovery are important to families who have been through psychosis. Families often find that some coping strategies for day-to-day can make a difference in helping their affected loved one. Family members also find that caring for themselves is necessary during a relative's recovery as the whole experience can raise everyone's stress levels. Challenging behaviours from a person with psychosis can sometimes occur and will require effective communication from family to manage the situation. We hear from the families directly talking about their experiences in conjunction with other helpful information and advice.



### Debbie -

*"Don't blame yourself for the persons psychosis, try not to blame your partner. Also just keep loving the person. They are still your beautiful child, even though they've gone through this they need even more of your love, alot more patience and care. Certainly alot more understanding."*



### Steve -

*"As a family its a big relief to find out that there's more than just Rowan out there like this and that you can get them to lead pretty much a normal life."*



### Robyn -

*"We've actually become closer than we ever were I think before her illness. Sometimes we used to just take her for granted but now we sit down and have good conversation with her."*



### Brian -

*"Although it was completely distressing as a father to have a son that had gone into a psychotic situation I was looking to see that some good would come out of it."*