



nami

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Marin County

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Informed Care for Serious Mental Health Conditions

Interactive Webinars

With Dr. Douglas Turkington, MD



Workshop topics:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Principles of recovery | Time: 9:00 – 11:00 am
January 20 th , 2023 |
| b) Working with lack of insight | February 17 th , 2023 |
| c) Making sense of psychosis | March 17 th , 2023 |
| d) Managing challenging symptoms | April 21 st , 2023 |
| e) Talking about medicines | May 19 th , 2023 |
| f) Working with cannabis and substance abuse | June 9 th , 2023 |



Making sense of psychosis

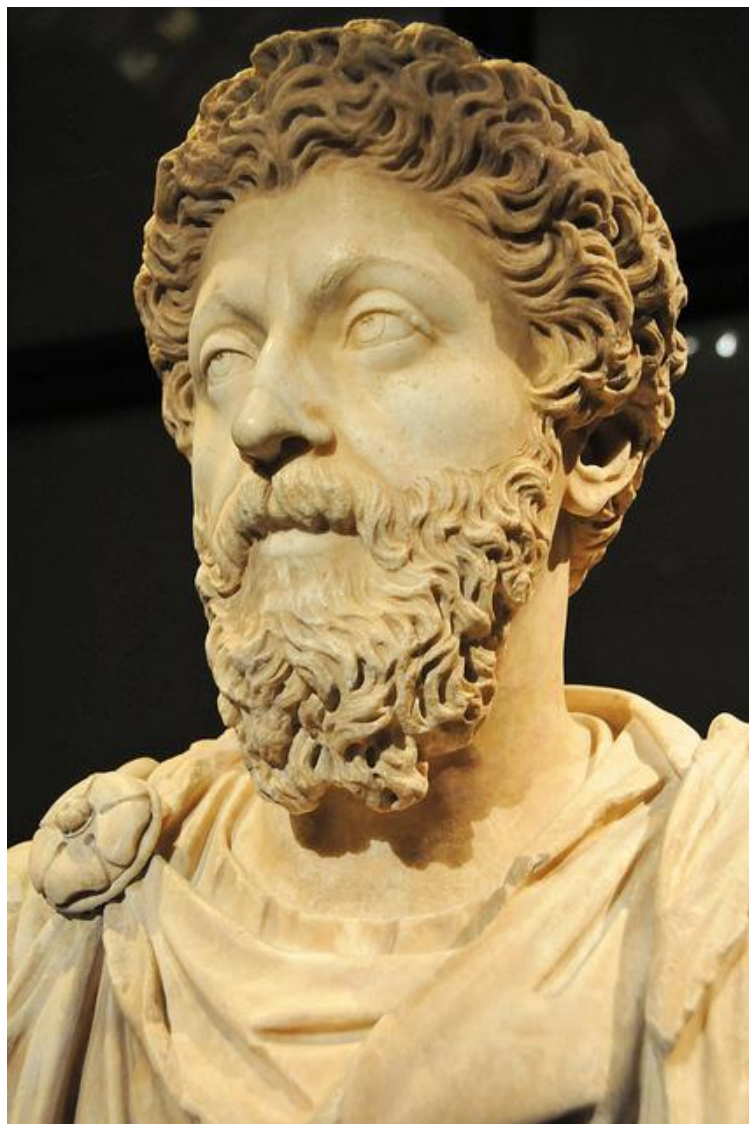
Doug Turkington, Psychiatrist, UK
Friday 17th March 2023

Making sense of psychosis

1. Why bother making sense of psychosis?
2. Normalising explanations
3. What's in a name?
4. Using the A-B-C
5. The circle of maintenance
6. Developing a timeline
7. Understanding why psychosis has helped

Why bother trying to make sense of psychosis?

- A diagnosis of schizophrenia usually leads to pessimism, resentment and anxiety
- Delusions and voices result in extreme social isolation
- Magical and terrifying explanations replace logical ones
- Anxiety drives communication problems which can lead to loss of friendships and hobbies
- Stigma leads to shame
- Many give up all activities due to misunderstood negative symptoms
- Low self-esteem and reduced self-nurture predate and are further reduced by the emergence of psychosis.



CBT history: the Stoics...Marcus Aurelius (121-180 AD)

"you have power over your mind not outside events"

"the soul becomes dyed with the colour of it's thoughts"

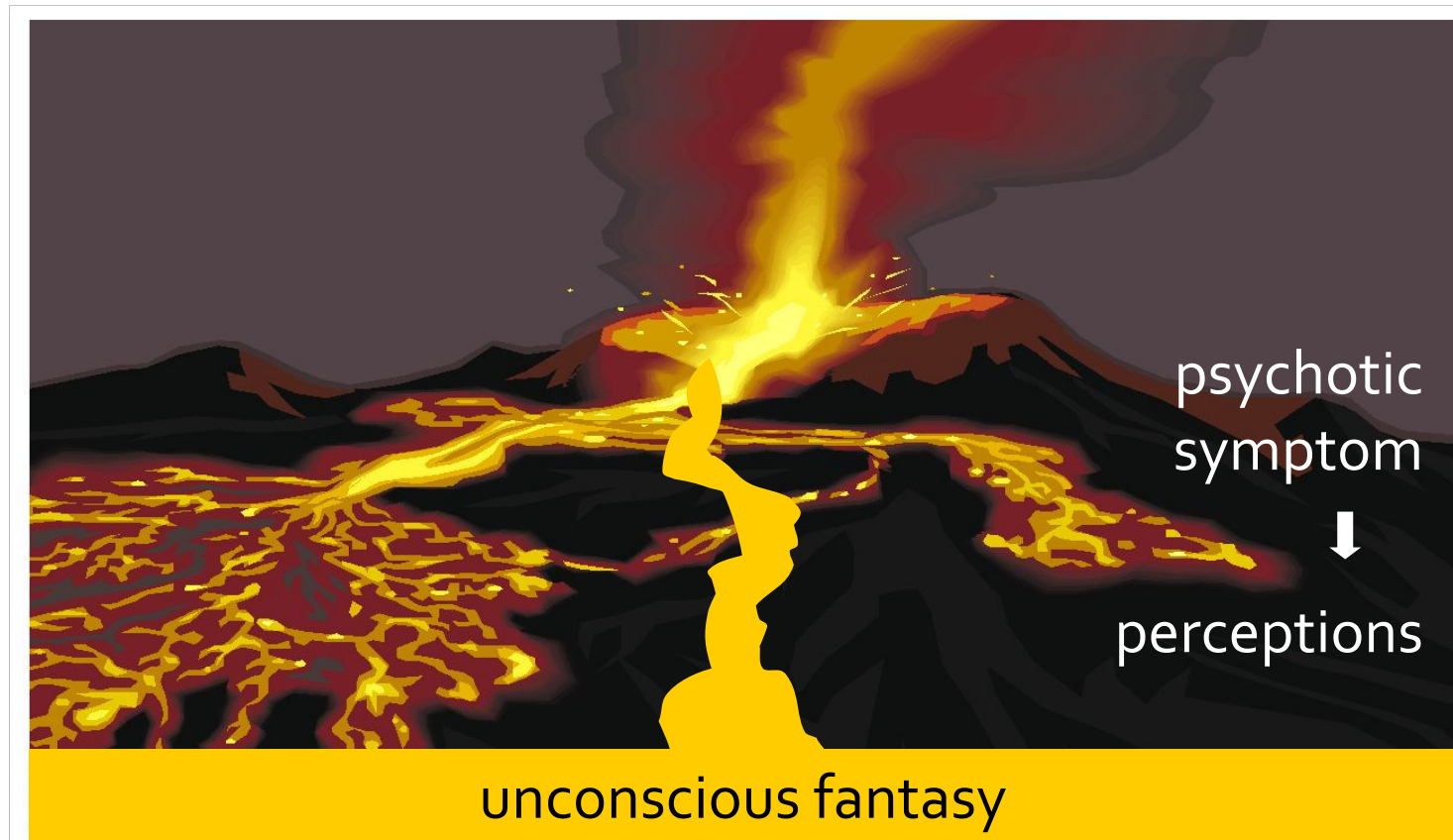
"our life is what our thoughts make it"

"everything we hear is an opinion not a fact"

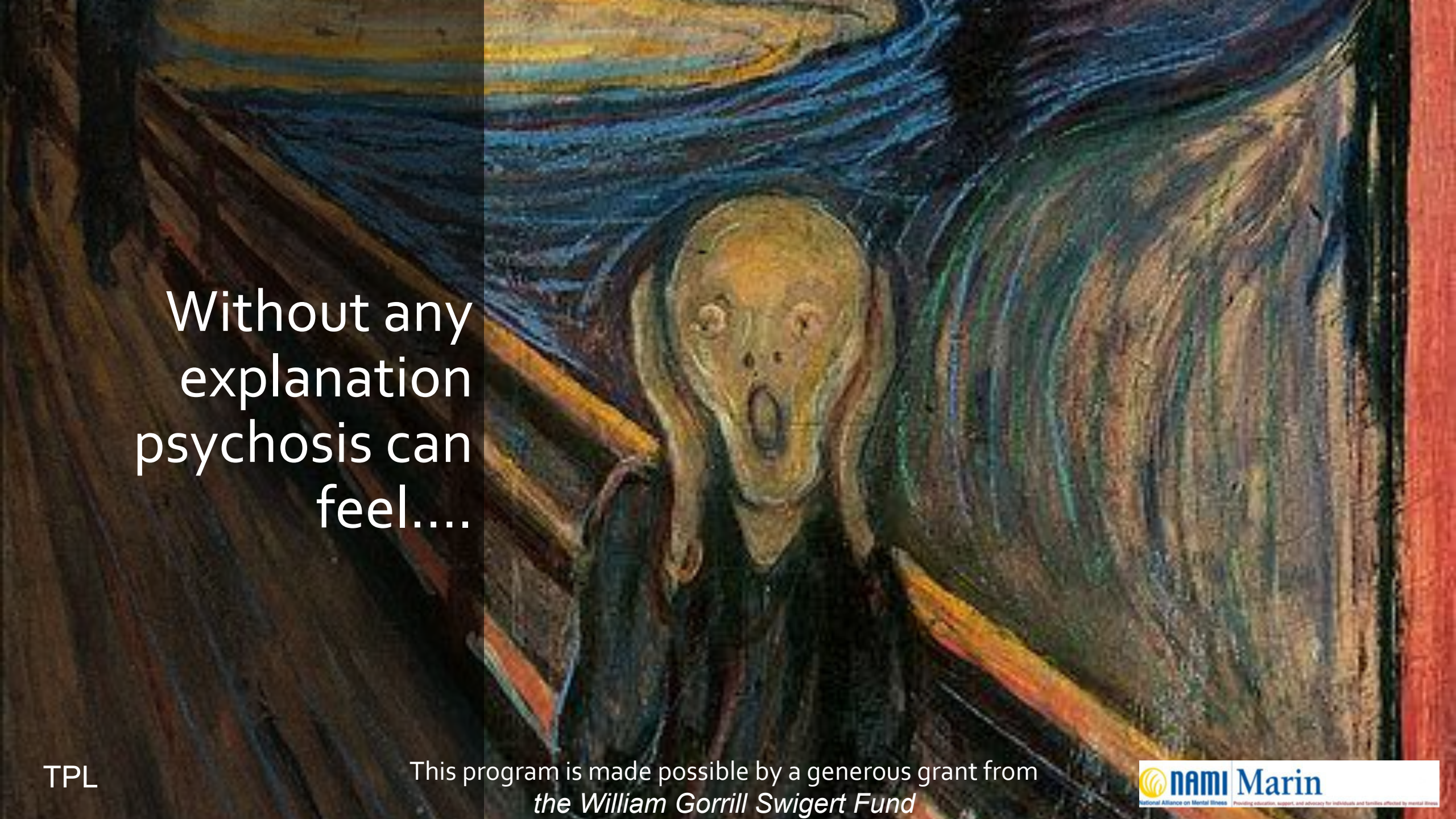
"everything we think is a perspective not the truth"

"fear of death is the root of madness"

Psychoanalysis: A Volcano Metaphor



Unconscious mental life boils over into psychotic symptoms, then hardens into perceptions, which are no longer connected to their dynamic origin.

The background of the slide is a reproduction of the painting 'The Scream' by Edvard Munch. It depicts a figure in the center with a pale, yellowish face, wide eyes, and an open mouth in a scream, set against a turbulent, swirling sea of dark blue and green. The overall mood is one of intense psychological distress and mental anguish.

Without any
explanation
psychosis can
feel....

The explanation I was trained to give...Glasgow (1986)

- 'You have schizophrenia..it is a severe long term mental illness, and it mostly has a genetic cause....the brain has not wired correctly in adolescence and stress has triggered voices, delusions, thought disorder and negative symptoms. There is treatment including medicine by intramuscular injection (which you will need to take for life), psychoeducation, social skills training and rehabilitation. The symptoms will probably always be there to some degree and hospital care will be needed from time to time...you will have a psychiatric nurse who will support you and your family.'

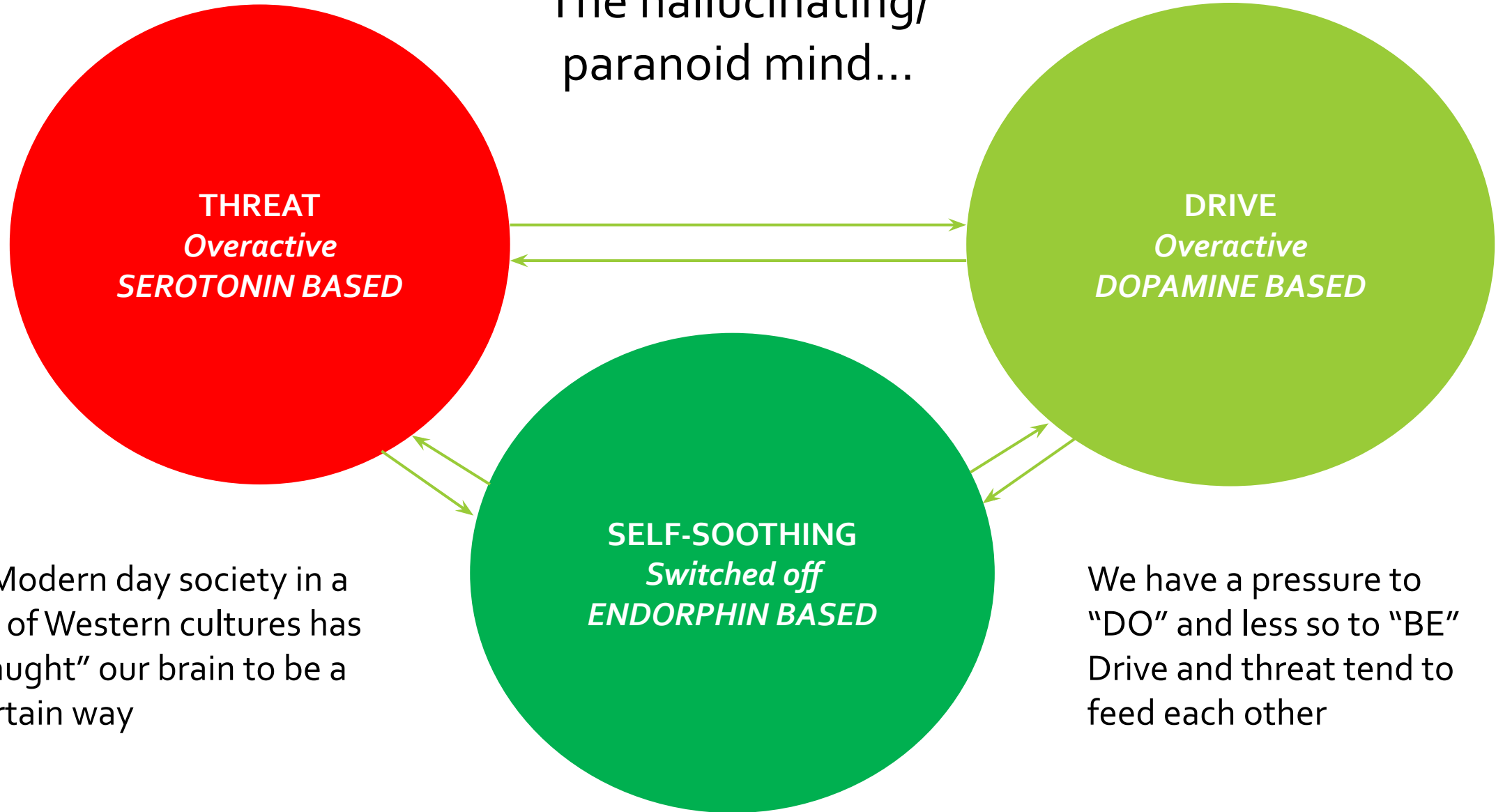
The "Normal" Mind... or the way nature intended....



...But our primitive and newer systems don't always work in sync. One can trigger the other.

Additionally, the way our brain is "taught" to be is driven by culture and society

The hallucinating/
paranoid mind...



...Modern day society in a lot of Western cultures has "taught" our brain to be a certain way

We have a pressure to "DO" and less so to "BE"
Drive and threat tend to feed each other

- Genetic based
- Not really about life events
 - Failure of wiring
 - Chronicity
- Need for long-term care
 - Medication for life
 - Long-term support
 - Too pessimistic?

Difference between the 2 explanations

- Based on brain systems we all have reacting to life events
- No mention of wiring failure or genetics
- Medication for a few years to balance overactive systems
- Therapy to aid the endorphin system.
- Recovery expected
- Too hopeful?

With a poorly explained biological formulation psychosis can feel...



How do people explain voice hearing?

Bereavement

30% heard the voice of a deceased spouse within a month of their passing (Grimby, 1993)
Stands across cultures (Kamp et al., 2020)

Trauma, brain biology and stress

For one-third in the clinical population (Varese et al., 2012)
In normal and clinical populations VH often preceded by a trauma, or something that re-activates a trauma (Romme & Escher, 1989)
Read et al (2001) neurodevelopmental model of increased stress sensitivity systems creating re-traumatising loops

Lack of sleep

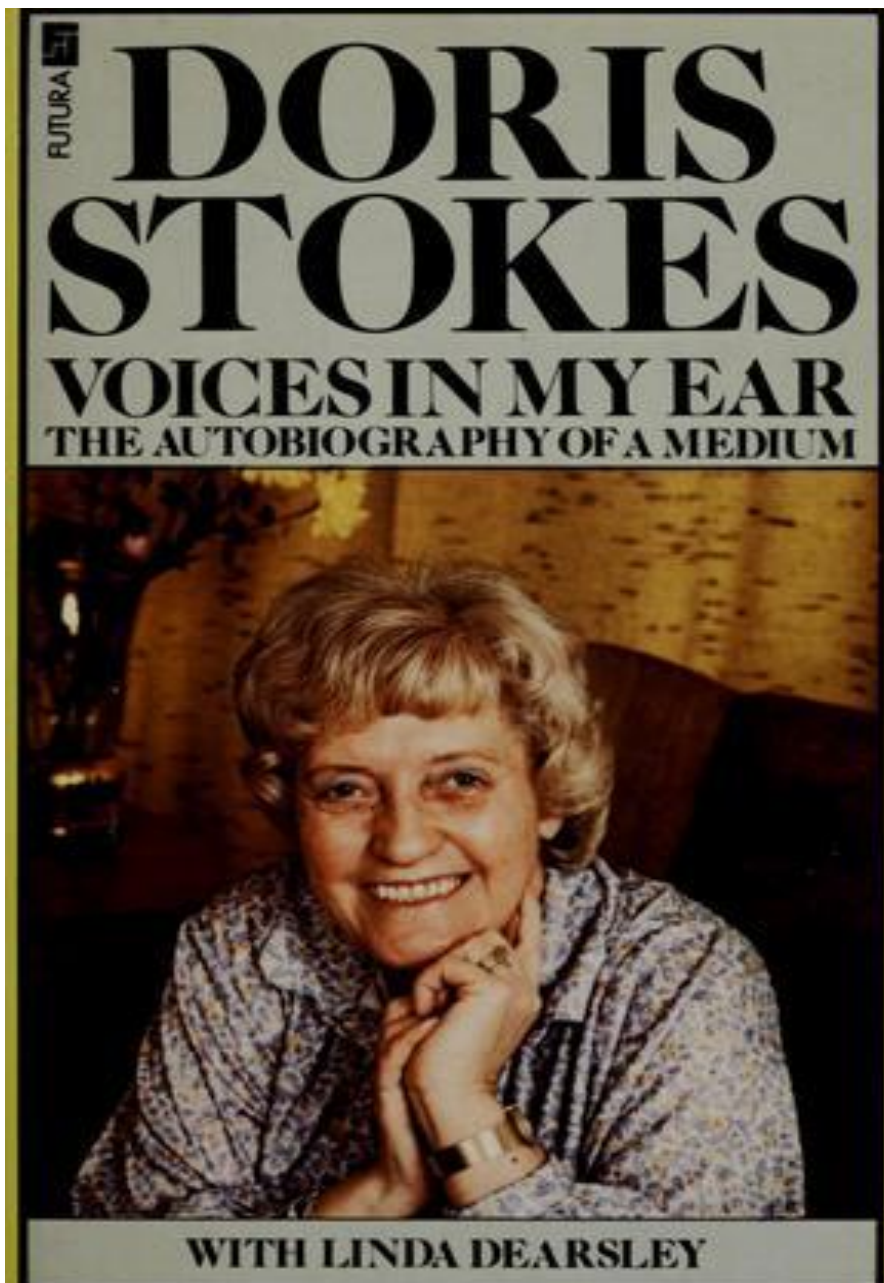
Known risk factor for development of Psychosis (e.g. Kaskie, Graziano & Farrarelli, 2017)
Healthy individuals deprived of sleep will develop hallucinations (e.g. Waters, Chiu, Atkinson & Blom, 2018)

Para-psychological, Shamanic and other spiritual explanations

Romme & Escher (1993)
McCarthy-Jones, Waegeli & Watkins (2013)
Powers, Kelley and Corlett (2017) – Psychic/Psychosis continuum

Temporary disruption to psychological processes





Doris Stokes

- The late Doris Stokes, the renowned English medium heard the voice of what she regarded as her spirit guide, the guide was called Ramonov, a Tibetan monk.
- At first, she didn't know where he came from until whilst watching a travel film on BBC television, she said "It was all about the Table people. Ramonov said "That's where I come from. Tibet." She first heard the voice of her deceased father when she was 13 years old when she herself met a medium.
- She always understood her experience to be a spiritual one.



Anthony Hopkins



Saul of
Tarsus



Zoe Wanamaker



Sigmund Freud



Beethoven



Brian Wilson



Joan of Arc



John Frusciante

Lifetime prevalence estimated as high as 40-60% in the general population, but rates can vary over time
- Jenner et al. (2008)

Significant proportion of voice hearers not "ill"
- Honig et al. (1998)
- Intervoice, Hearing Voices Network

Voice hearing (VH) more common in the general population than other psychotic experiences (e.g. other perceptual and positive symptoms)
Toh, Thomas, Robertson & Rossell (2020)

What distinguishes the two?

Non-clinical voice hearing:

- More positive voices (Jenner et al., 2008)
- Interpretations/beliefs about voices less threatening/powerful (Baumeister et al., 2017)
- Higher perceptions of control and less distress (Powers, Kelley & Corlett, 2017)

VH in 5-15% of the population (median 13.2%), from a review of 17 surveys across 9 countries
- Beavan, Read & Cartright, 2011

Median prevalence of VH in the general population (Linscott & Van Os, 2013)

Mean VH of 9.6% with higher rates in children and adolescents (12.7%, 12.4%)
- Majjer et al. (2019)

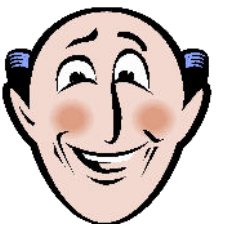
But what about other experiences ... Paranoia

Trust

Mistrust

Severe Mistrust/Paranoid
Delusions

- 30-40% weekly paranoid thoughts e.g. negative comments being circulated about them.
- 10-20% brief paranoid beliefs that they firmly believed and caused significant distress e.g. I can detect coded messages about myself on TV/ radio.
- 3.3% of general population developed paranoid delusions over an 18 month period.
- Paranoidthoughts.com



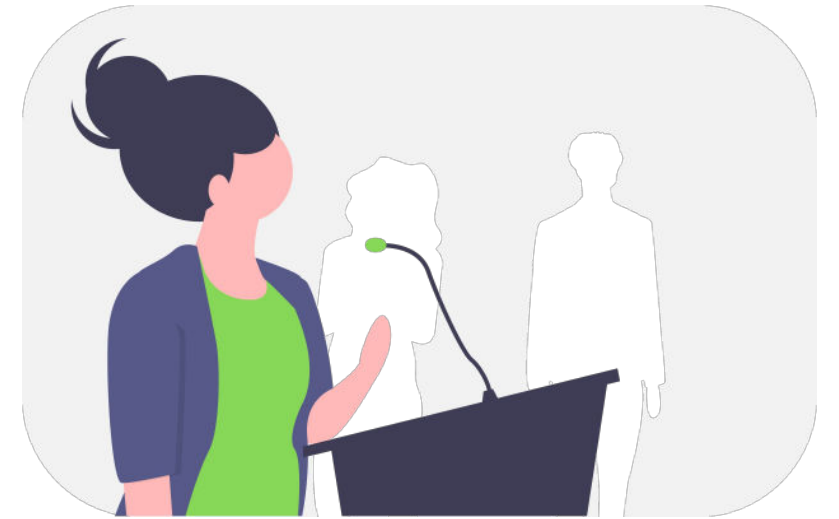
Bebbington et al. (2013), Freeman & Garety (2006),
Spauwen et al. (2006), Gracie et al. (2007)

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Normalising explanations for thought disorder and negative symptoms

- When giving you first speech in public....
- When a politician answers a question....
- The most stunning poetry/rap breaches syntax and language rules
- After certain illnesses there is a period of slow recovery during which you don't attempt to do too much or you just relapse....
- At certain times of life you do much less (eg puberty/adolescence)
- Bears hibernate for the winter....so certain environments will trigger negative symptoms



What's in a name? Normalising mental health diagnoses

- Schizophrenia is an old diagnosis (mind-split as in emotional incongruity). The evidence is that psychiatrists sometimes can't agree on who has it and who doesn't!
- Some countries don't use it anymore (Japan uses 'integration disorder'). Resulted in reduced stigma and increased recovery across society. Sir Robin Murray has said 'the diagnosis of schizophrenia will be consigned to the garbage bin of medical history'
- Psychosis is a better term as you can put the cause in as well..eg traumatic psychosis, amphetamine psychosis. Psychoses can recover and anyone can get a psychosis. Maybe there is a bit of psychosis in everyone...it's a bit of being human and creative.

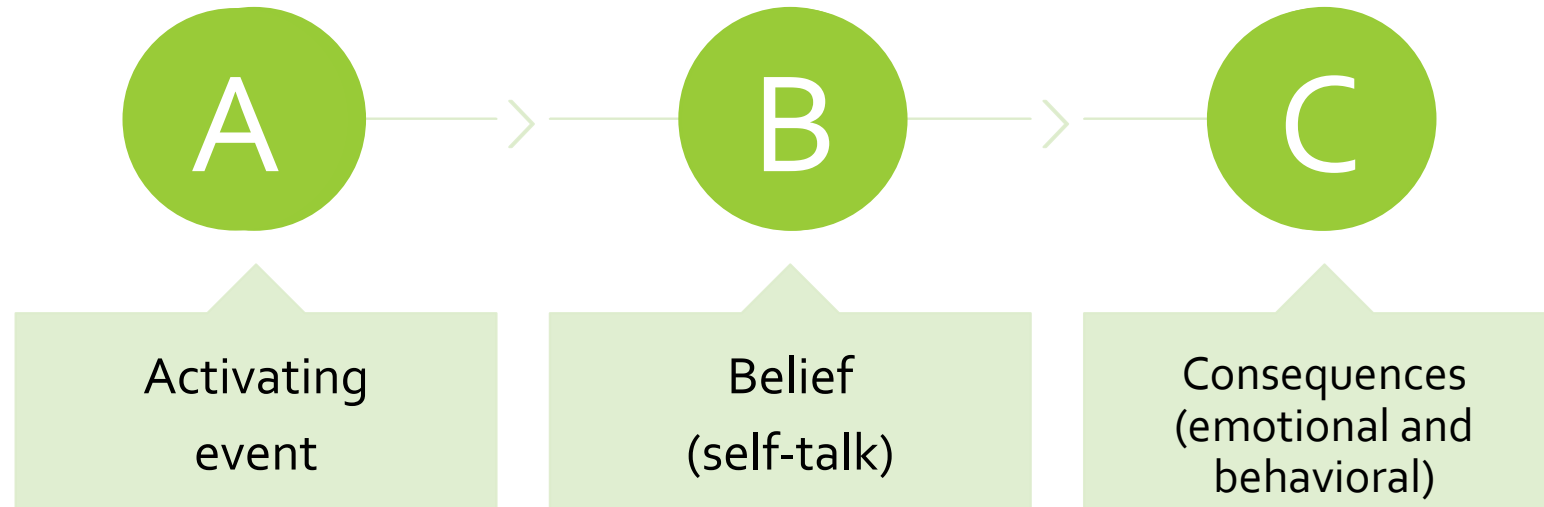
An A-B-C conversation

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The A-B-C model



- Hearing a loud critical voice- “other people can hear it” “that just isn’t true....how dare he say that about me”anxiety/shame and anger....don’t leave the house...shout back....buy a weapon.
- Hearing a loud critical voice-“it’s just the psychosis playing up...I’ve been stressed”phone family...take an extra medicine (if allowed)...get a good night’s sleep.

Changing the B changes the C and the A!



NEED TO CATCH THE
THOUGHT OR IMAGE LINKED
TO VOICE HEARING.



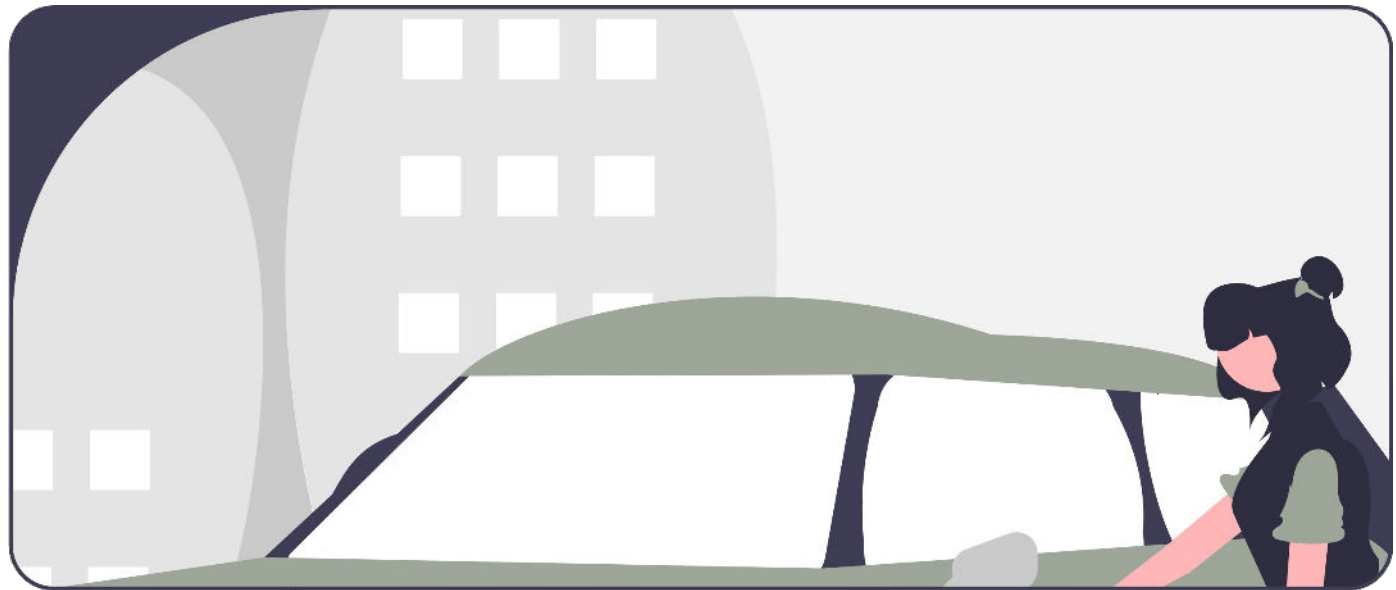
WHEN THE VOICES START UP
WHAT THOUGHTS PASS
THROUGH YOUR MIND?



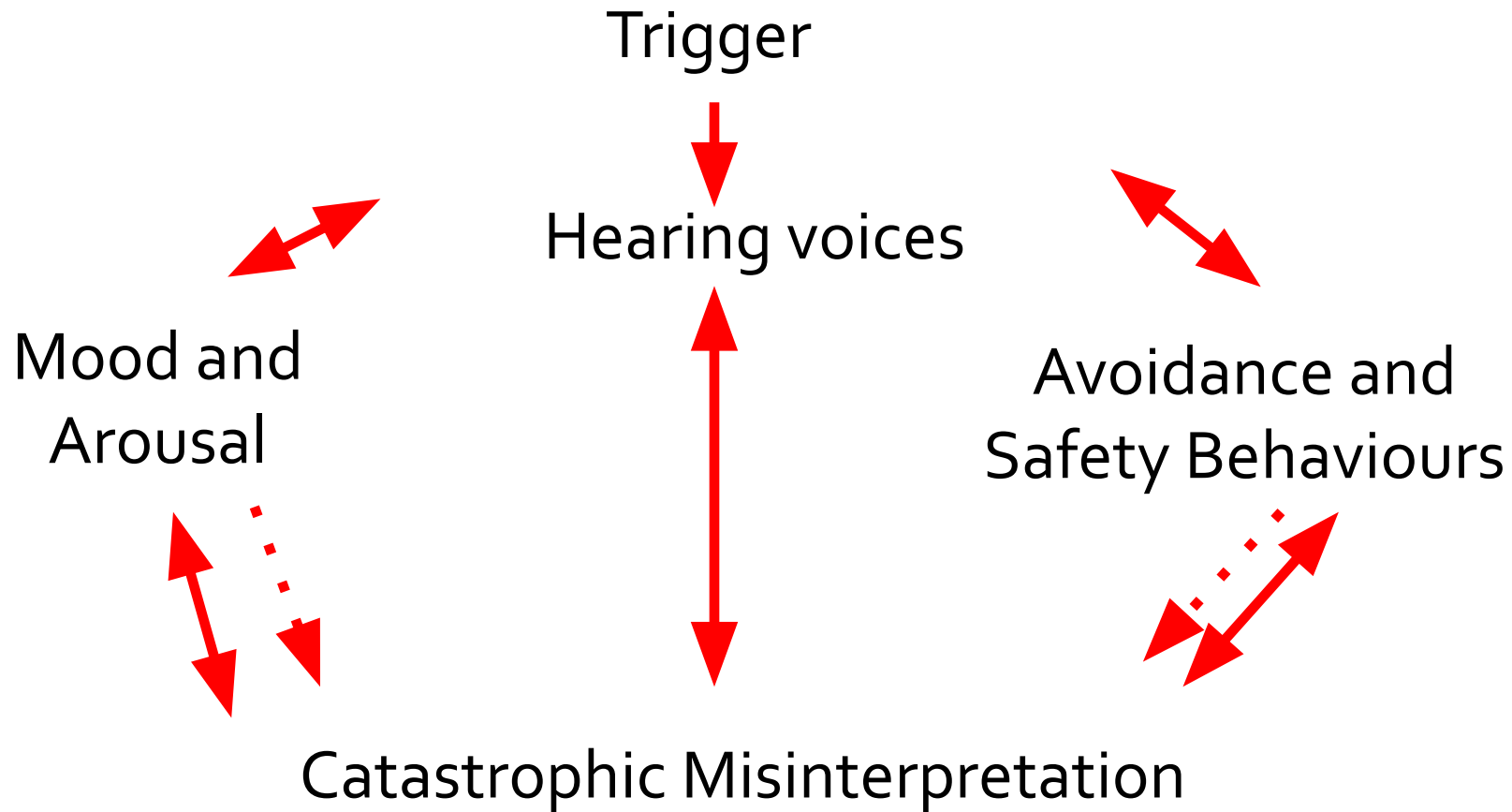
DO YOU HAVE AN IMAGE IN
YOUR MIND?

The A-B-C model for delusions

- See a silver car.....they are following me again....run away, worry about it, go a different route to the shop, wear a face covering and different clothes
- See a silver car...I once saw a silver car at the time of my friend being assaulted but this is probably a coincidence.....check it out a bit more... only one driver... she looks friendly

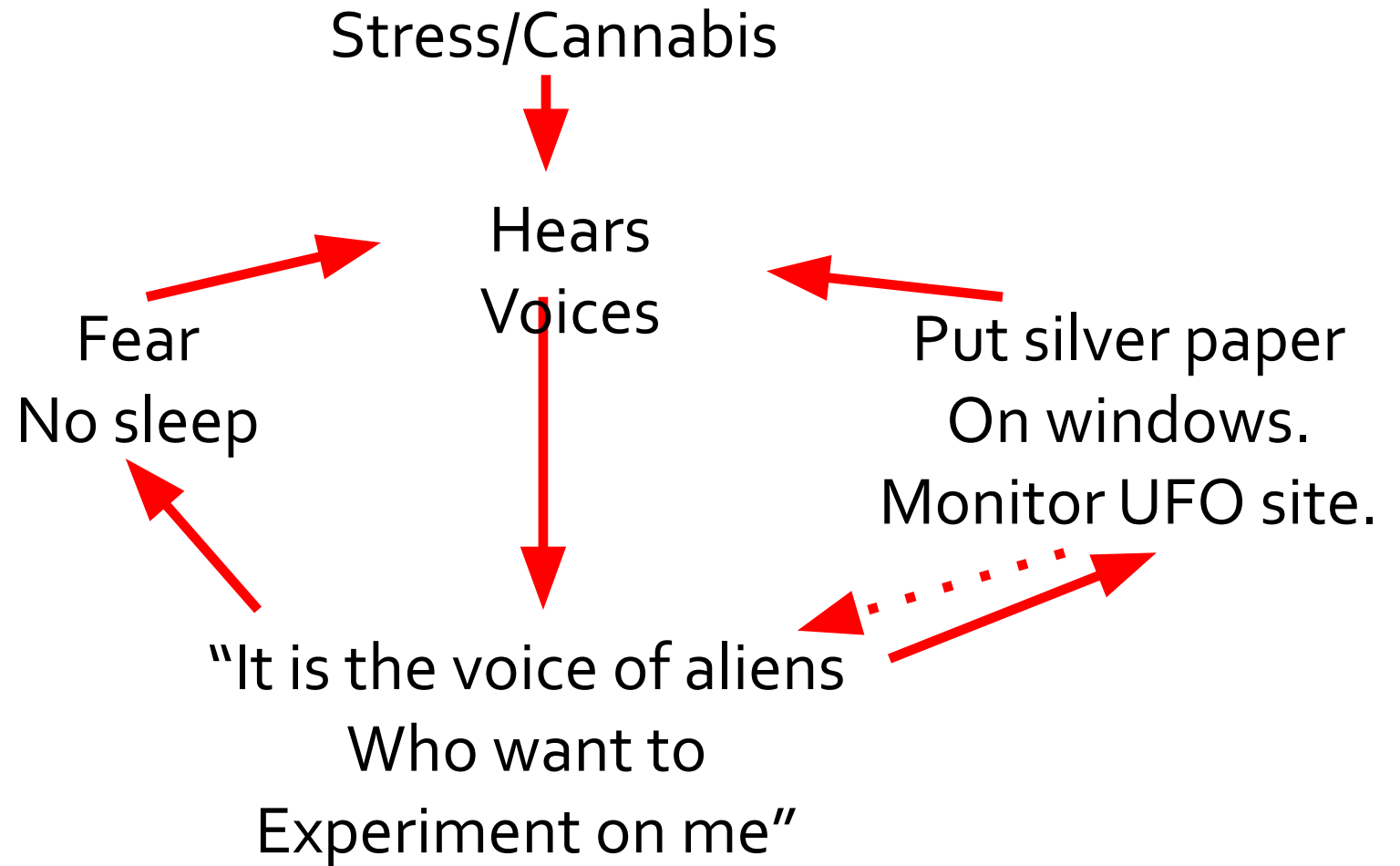


Voices Model (Morrison, 1998)



Maintenance
model

Voices
Model

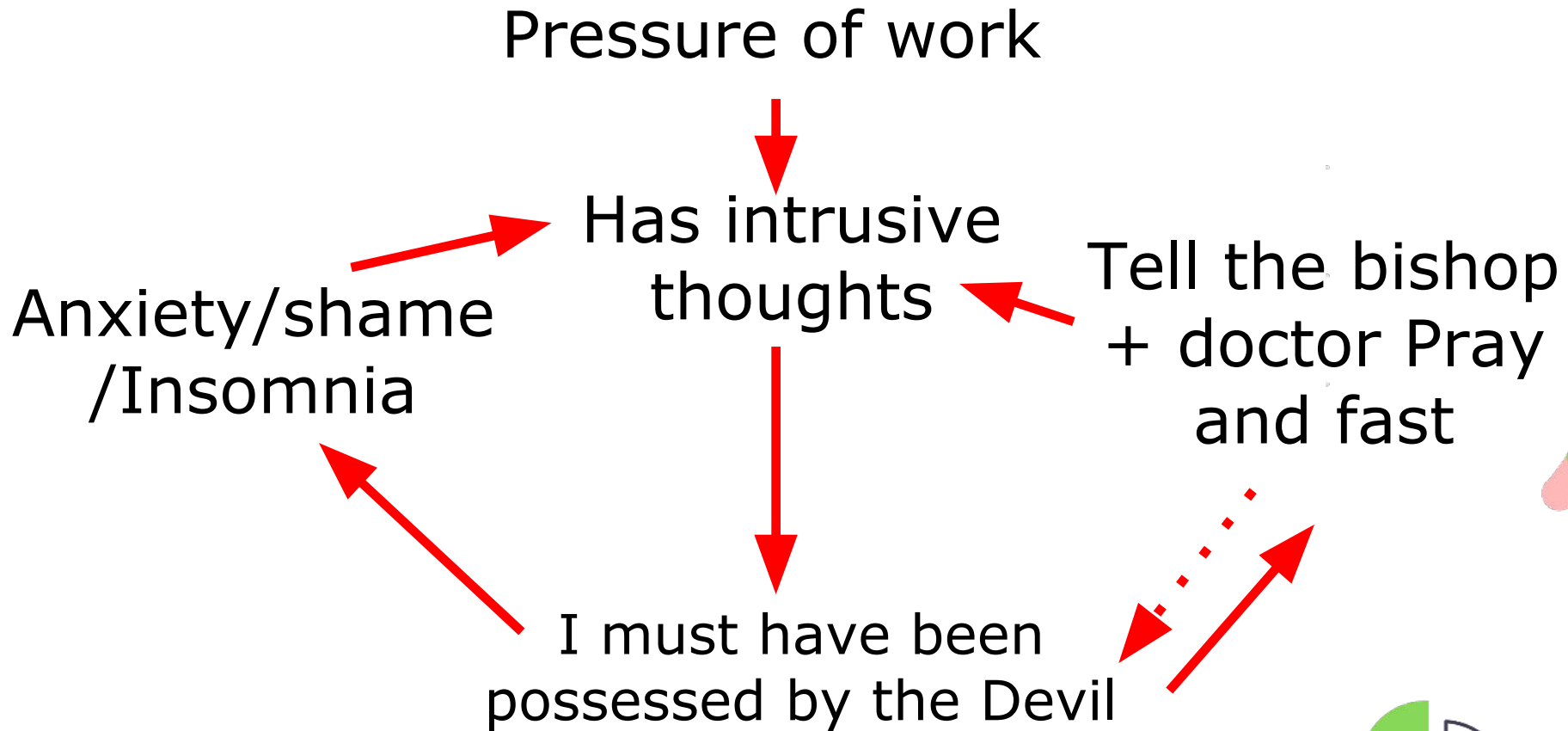


Roleplay

- Bob is seen at home and is terrified of the aliens which are visiting and talking to him ...he sees UFO's.... in the sky and is waiting for the greys to attempt to abduct him and implant genetic material
- Doug using guided discovery will attempt to help Bob make sense of this bizarre experience....



Example



Timeline tips



The 5-star general

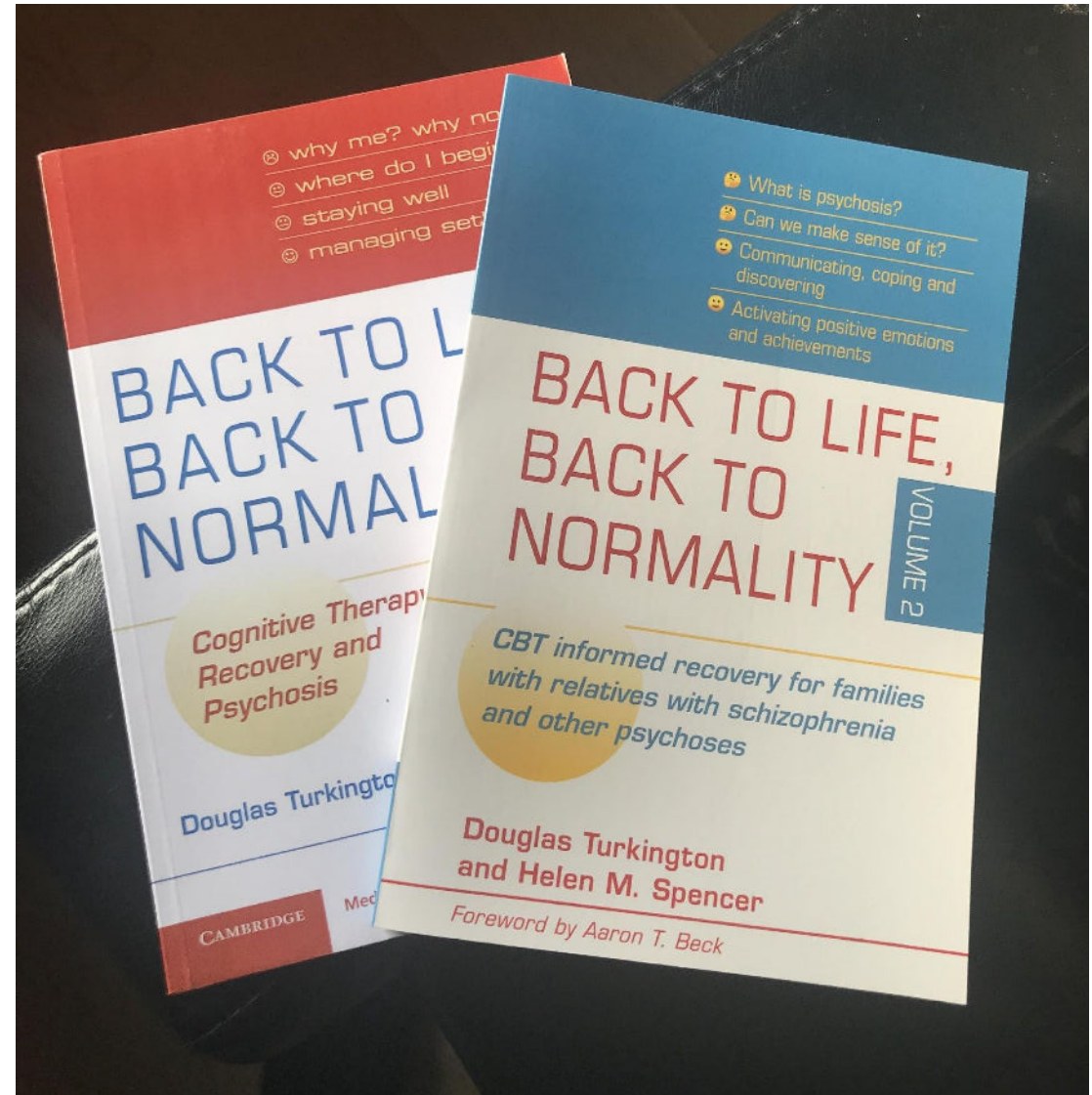
- John currently believes that he is in charge of all NATO forces.
- Bob is called to see him as he is not paying his rent and sending 100's of letters each day to Jo Biden and various senators....
- Bob tries to make sense of it all by doing a timeline....John says that he was 'the runt of the family', he remembered being a bit of 'a rebel without a cause'....he said that he always stood up for anyone who was bullied...he said that he needed the discipline of being a Prison Officer*in the lead up to the delusion*one of the senior staff was dismissed for allowing drugs into the prison but he knew that his friend was totally innocent.....the sniffer dog and handler were the problem...



Conclusions

- Families are in a great position to use normalizing explanations and materials but need to ensure that medication isn't stopped.
- The A-B-C can be a dramatic intervention.
- Circles of maintenance are more for therapists, but triggers, safety behaviors and emotional/behavioural reactions can be pointed out and helped.
- Families normally can co-produce an excellent timeline but probably need a therapist involved as painful memories may need to be worked with.

Two recovery guides (2009 & 2019) for families with a loved one with psychosis....volume 2 has an excellent chapter on making sense of psychosis.



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