



Insight: Shifting the Focus to Motivate Change

Elisa Payne, Ph.D.

Lyndsay Schmidt, M.A.

“Anosognosia?”

- **Anosognosia**, also referred to as ‘lack of insight’, is “an inability or refusal to recognize illness.”

What is Insight?

- Complex and multidimensional concept
- Challenges with insight are common in individuals with psychosis
- Varies throughout the course of recovery
 - Can have insight in some ways and lack insight in others
 - E.g. Individual has insight to recognize that the shadow figures (visual hallucinations) s/he sees are not real, and that taking medication everyday helps them to be less severe. However, s/he believes with full conviction that friends are out to get him/her and refuses to believe anyone that says it is not true.
- Is **insight** necessary for recovery?

Let's Discuss

- What might be the reasons why individuals wouldn't want to:
 - Discuss a diagnosis?
 - Discuss treatment?
- What might they think about themselves (and how others see them)?
- What would it mean to have that diagnosis/need treated?

Common Beliefs Associated with “Anosognosia”

Beliefs about Self

- I’m alone.
- I am broken.
- I have no control.
- I am flawed.

Beliefs about Others

- Nobody understands.
- People will control you.
- No one will want to spend time with me.

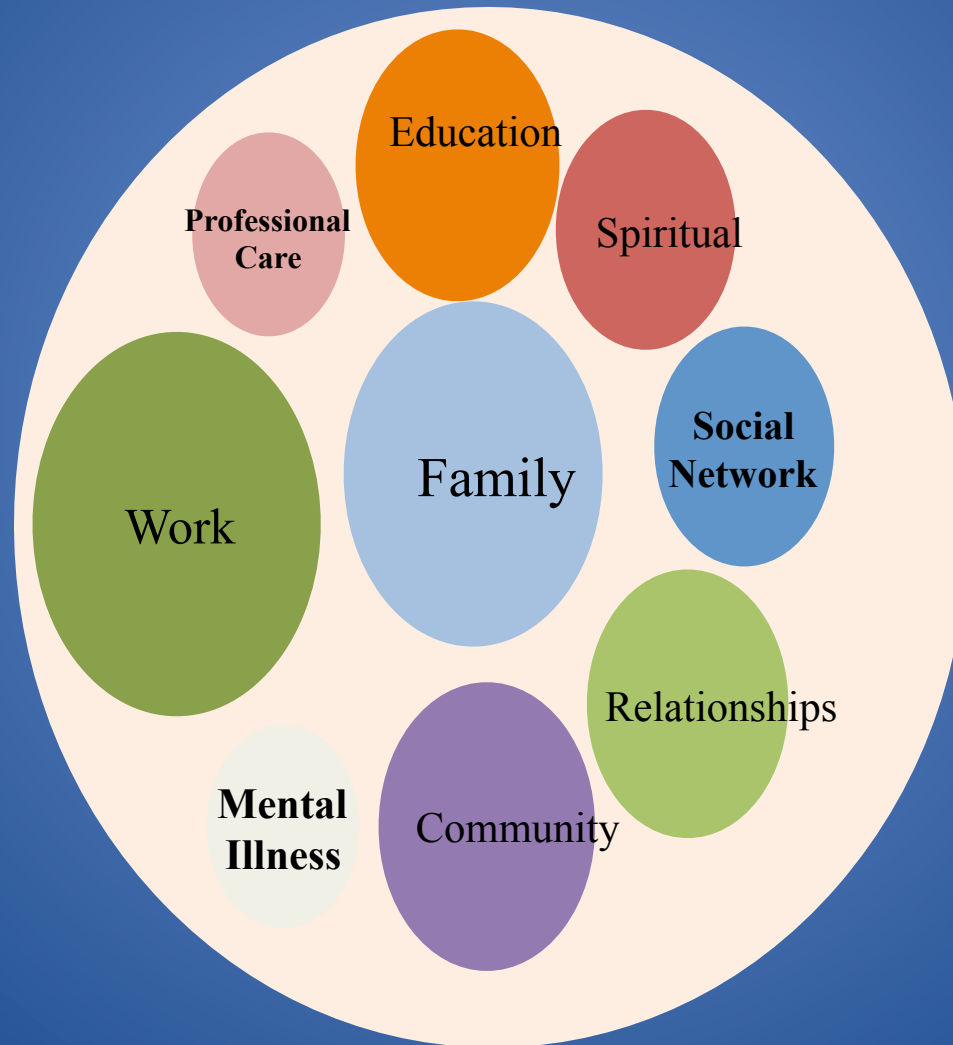
Beliefs about the Future

- I won’t be able to accomplish anything.
- My life won’t be meaningful.
- It's a life sentence, so the future becomes hopeless.

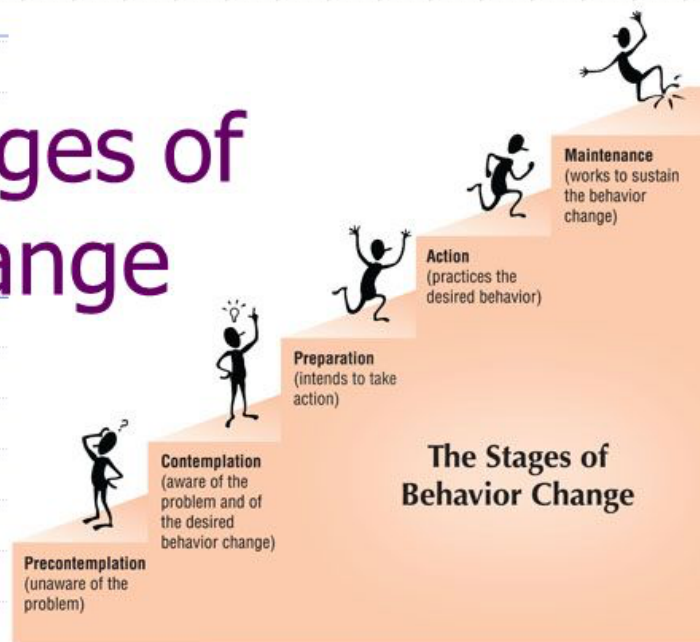
“I want a job, a house, and a social life”



“I want a job, a house, and a social life” (con.)



Stages of Change



Sources: Grimley 1997 (75) and Prochaska 1992 (148)

Exit & Re-entry can occur at any stage*

Discussing Challenges in the Context of Aspirations

- Identify a future aspiration
- Collaborate on things that help the individual get closer to the thing they identified wanting in his/her life
- Collaborate on things that keep the individual further away from achieving this

Let's Discuss an Example

- Context: Your family member is spending a lot of time in their room and not interacting with peers.
- *Approaching a challenge:*
 - “You have said that your friends are really important to you and you want to focus on spending more time with them. Have you noticed that anything makes it harder to do that?”
- When they identify things that make it difficult, you can collaborate on solutions together by identifying successes
 - “Are there times it has been easier? What helped?”
 - “Let's imagine this happened to somebody else, and you are giving them advice, what would you tell them to do?”

Empowerment

- Focus on interests, aspirations, and action
- Collaboration
 - **Produces success**
 - **Counters isolation**
 - **Provides context for challenges**

Empowerment

- What are the strengths of your family member?
- In what ways do you feel your family member has insight?

In Conclusion

- Insight is not always necessary for recovery
- Focus on mutual interests or activities before bridging the conversation about challenges
- Develop the why (i.e. aspiration)
- Focus on empowering your family member in regards to challenges
 - Times they have overcome challenges
- Remember the small successes...