

6: THE SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF MENTAL DISORDERS

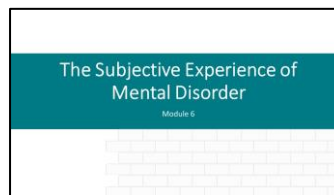
Time:	30 min.
Format:	Lecture, video, discussion
Materials:	PowerPoint, Video: "Chris in Prison," Video: "Through Chris's Eyes," flip chart and markers.
Competencies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand that the subjective experience of mental disorders may create challenges in daily living.

Description

This module will explore the experience of mental health from the perspective of an incarcerated person with a mental disorder. An animated, context-based, character-driven video will give perspective on the differences between outward behavior and inner motivation when mental disorders are involved.

During Training

Know That You Can't Know



Set Up

Present lecture:

Mental disorders may have common factors for diagnosis, but each person experiences them in their own way. They're highly unique.

You'll never know what another person is experiencing and feeling unless they're able to describe it to you. That can be very challenging for a person with a mental disorder and for a person who is incarcerated.



Correctional officers, like anyone, might have difficulty understanding what's going on when a person behaves strangely.

Ask:

Can some of you give examples of when an incarcerated person has behaved strangely and you didn't know why or what was happening?

Video: "Chris in Prison"

Introduce video:

Let's consider how a mental disorder can look to those around the person who have no idea what's going on inside.

Play the video "Chris in Prison."

Facilitate the discussion with the following questions:

- What behaviors is Chris showing that may concern you?
- What do you think he's experiencing to cause this behavior? (Hint: no way to know)
- How would you respond to this person if he were in your workplace?



Transition to the next video by saying:

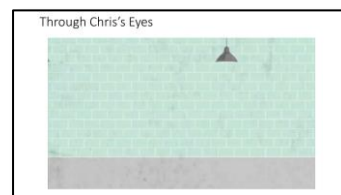
Now let's look at the same person but from their own perspective.

Video: "Through Chris's Eyes"

Play the video "Through Chris's Eyes."

Facilitate the discussion with the following questions:

- Now what do you think is causing Chris's behaviors?

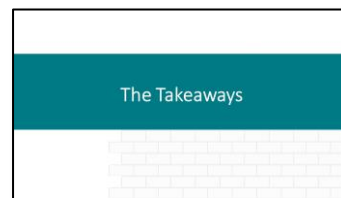


Correctional Mental Health

- What is he experiencing? (NOTE: List responses on the flip chart or board.)
- How severe are these flashbacks or hallucinations? Is it clear now why he's behaving so erratically?
- Do you think these symptoms will go away as Chris "settles in"?
- Would discipline resolve the behavior?
- What are some risks if Chris doesn't get treatment? To himself? To other incarcerated people? To correctional officers and staff?

Conclude by saying:

Mental disorders can be an important factor in unusual or dangerous behavior in prison. Understanding that a person may not be responding to reality as you experience it may affect your response.



SOURCES

Module 6

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