

# The SEL Model: Phase-specific Treatment of Psychosis

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The greater the congruence between...  
the person's psychological needs and capabilities  
*AND*  
our understanding of those needs and capabilities



*The more effective our therapeutic responses*

# The Surviving, Existing, or Living (SEL) Model



Surviving

Existing

Living

Sense of self

Interpersonal relating

Threat Appraisal

Prominence of distressing hallucinations/delusions

Awareness of thinking

Logical Speech

Awareness and Expression of Emotions

Adaptive and Goal-directed behavior

# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SURVIVING PHASE

- ▶ UNCERTAIN OF EXISTENCE
- ▶ LIMITED AWARENESS OF OTHERS
- ▶ CONSTANT SENSE OF THREAT
- ▶ HIGH AROUSAL
- ▶ PROMINENT HALLUCINATIONS OR DELUSIONS
- ▶ LIMITED AWARENESS OF THOUGHTS
- ▶ ILLOGICAL AND/OR DYSFLUENT SPEECH
- ▶ LIMITED AWARENESS OR APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS
- ▶ LIMITED ADAPTIVE AND GOAL-DIRECTED BEHAVIOR

# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXISTING PHASE

- ▶ AWARE OF EXISTENCE/EMERGING SENSE OF SELF
- ▶ GREATER AWARENESS OF OTHERS
  
- ▶ TENDENCY TO PERCEIVE EVENTS AS THREATENING
- ▶ MODERATE AROUSAL
  
- ▶ LESS PROMINENT HALLUCINATIONS/DELUSIONS
  
- ▶ INCREASED AWARENESS OF THOUGHTS
- ▶ MORE LOGICAL AND FLUENT SPEECH
  
- ▶ EMERGING AWARENESS AND APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS

# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LIVING PHASE

- ▶ WELL-DIFFERENTIATED SELF
- ▶ INCREASED EMPATHY / AWARENESS OF OTHERS
- ▶ LOWER AROUSAL
- ▶ MORE ACCURATE APPRAISAL OF THREAT
- ▶ REALITY-BASED COPING
- ▶ METACOGNITION
- ▶ LOGICAL, FLUENT SPEECH
- ▶ INCREASED AWARENESS and APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS
- ▶ INCREASED ADAPTIVE and GOAL-DIRECTED BEHAVIOR

# SURVIVING

# EXISTING

# LIVING



UNDIFFERENTIATED SELF

EMERGING SENSE OF SELF

DIFFERENTIATED SELF

LIMITED AWARENESS  
OF OTHERS

GREATER AWARENESS  
OF OTHERS

INCREASED EMPATHY/  
AWARENESS OF OTHERS

CONSTANT SENSE OF  
THREAT

TENDENCY TO PERCEIVE  
EVENTS AS THREATENING

MORE ACCURATE  
APPRAISAL OF THREAT

PROMINENT HALLUCINATIONS  
OR DELUSIONS

LESS PROMINENT  
HALLUCINATIONS/DELUSIONS

LIMITED DISTRESS OR  
IMPAIRMENT FROM HALLUCINATIONS/BELIEFS

LIMITED AWARENESS  
OF THOUGHTS

INCREASED AWARENESS  
OF THOUGHTS

INCREASED SELF-REFLECTION

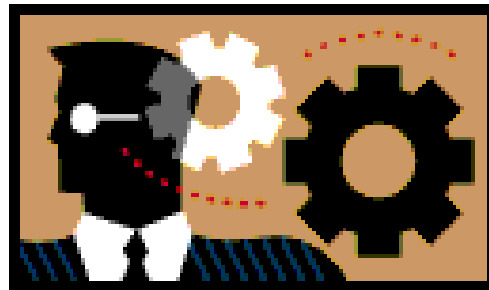
LIMITED AWARENESS OR  
APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION  
OF EMOTIONS

EMERGING AWARENESS  
& APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION  
OF EMOTIONS

INCREASED AWARENESS &  
APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION  
OF EMOTIONS

# WHAT IS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN?

Tailoring interventions to  
client status





# TREATMENT IN THE SURVIVING PHASE

- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Support
- ▶ Increase self-definition/Fortifying
- ▶ Stress reduction
- ▶ Identification of thoughts and feelings
- ▶ Focus on present

# TREATMENT IN THE EXISTING PHASE

- ▶ Continue to emphasize safety
- ▶ Basic psychoeducation/skill-building
- ▶ Continue enhancing self-definition
- ▶ Begin to explore the development of psychotic experiences
- ▶ Conduct basic self-other work
- ▶ Primarily focus on present and future

# TREATMENT IN THE LIVING PHASE

- ▶ Advanced skill-building
- ▶ Emotional and cognitive processing
- ▶ Focus on past, present, and future
- ▶ Trauma Work

# PHASE-SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS

SURVIVING

EXISTING

LIVING



FORTIFYING

CONTINUED FORTIFYING /  
LIMITED UNCOVERING

MORE UNCOVERING /  
PROCESSING

SELF-DEFINING WORK  
(*DIFFERENTIATING*)

SELF-DEFINING & SELF-  
OTHER WORK

SELF-OTHER WORK  
(*COLLOBORATING*)

PRESENT FOCUS

PRESENT, FUTURE FOCUS

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE FOCUS

NORMALIZATION

PSYCHO-ED/SKILL BUILDING

PSYCHO-ED/SKILL BUILDING

LABEL & CONTAIN  
EMOTIONS

INCREASE AWARENESS &  
MANAGEMENT OF EMOTIONS

ENCOURAGE MORE  
EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

INCREASE AWARENESS  
OF THOUGHTS

COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL  
THERAPY

COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL  
THERAPY

PSYCHODYNAMIC THERAPY  
(modified)    PSYCHODYNAMIC THERAPY

PSYCHODYNAMIC/OTHER  
EXPLORATIVE THERAPIES

# Application of SEL Model

- ▶ Determine the general phase in which the individual is functioning
- ▶ Select interventions
- ▶ Maintain flexibility to adjust interventions and the therapeutic relationship

