

W05-04

FAMILY COHESION, PSYCHOEDUCATION, AND INSIGHT IN SCHIZOPHRENIA

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The speaker will describe the first two modules of the culturally informed family therapy for schizophrenia, as well as some of her own research on insight in severe mental illness. The first module of the treatment is Family Collectivism. This module is based on strong research linking perceptions of family cohesion to decreased psychiatric symptoms and less general emotional distress (Weisman, Rosales, Kymalainen, & Armesto, 2005). This module is aimed at fortifying a strong sense of family unity and helping members to view themselves as a team working towards a mutual goal with the objective of tapping into the protective effects of experiencing a cohesive family unit. A demonstration of this module will be conducted using volunteers from the audience.

The second module, Education, is based on earlier psycho-educational programs of Falloon et al. (1984) and Miklowitz and Goldstein (1997). The Education module discusses the known causes of schizophrenia, the exacerbating factors, and ways in which family might influence the patient's mood, thoughts, and behaviors. This speaker will discuss patients' insight into having a mental illness, which is an important variable when conducting psychoeducational programs. Many individuals suffering from schizophrenia have limited or no insight into the fact that they have a mental illness. This speaker will explore possible mediators and moderators of the relationship between insight and distress and discuss how these factors may be important during treatment, particularly in the psychoeducation module.