

**1. ASPECTS OF THE EXPERIENCE ITSELF**

*This interview is meant as a dialogue about your experience. You are an expert. Your own experiences. This interview will enable us to learn more about your experiences and the way you cope with your voices.*

1.1 I would like you to give me a broad view of any extraordinary experiences you have had recently or in the past.

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.....

1.2 Tell me about the first voices you heard, where were you, what were you doing, what or who did you hear, what was said?

number of voices ( ) now ( ) at the start  
age at the beginning ( ) years

1.3. Can these sounds/voices also be heard by other people? Yes/no  
Can you explain why?

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.....

1.4 Where do you hear the voice(s) (location)?

	<b>now</b>	<b>at the beginning</b>
In your head	yes/no	yes/no
Through your ears (left/right/both)	yes/no	yes/no
Somewhere else within your body	yes/no	yes/no
The voices appear to come from somewhere outside your body	yes/no	yes/no

1.5 Concerning the voices you hear:  
Are these voices coming from your own person or are they from somebody else?  
*(The point we are trying to establish here is how somebody experiences the voices at the moment of perception)*

The voices are coming out of my own person (*ego-syntonic/me*) yes/no  
The voices are coming from somebody or something outside of my person (*ego-dystonic/not me*) yes/no

Can you explain why?

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### 3. THE HISTORY OF HEARING VOICES

3.1. Let us go back to the start. When did you first begin hearing voices? (age) ..... year. How many years, months, have you been hearing voices?

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3.2. Can you describe for every voice the circumstances in which you first heard them?

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3.3. Circumstances related to the beginning  
Other voice hearers told us they started to hear voices after a life event. I will give you some examples other voice hearers have told us. Do you recognise one of the circumstances as happening to you?

**At what age did it happen**

**(note: follow the list)**

yes/no	circumstances	age and year
	The result of a serious physical damage or serious illness	
	An admission to a hospital or being put under narcosis	
	Living on your own for the first time	
	<b>Following:</b> a divorce or breaking up an intimate relationship	
	a pregnancy/abortion or the first menstruation	
	a major decline in the health situation of a lived one	
	admission to a psychiatric hospital	
	employment changes (starting work, promotion)	
	employment set backs retirement/unable to work	
	<b>After:</b> the death of a close friend or family member	
	beginning with a course or a study	
	you found yourself unemployed/fired/business closed	
	you had fallen in love and been rejected	
	a move to a new residence or school	
	problems within a religious circle/sectarian society	
	influential circumstances e.g. seances, satanic	
	church	
	when confronted with, or present at, a suicide	
	during severe tension in your home or relationship	
	when a child left the house/last child left the house	

3.4. Does one or more of these circumstances related to the fact that you began to hear voices? If so, could you describe how?

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3.5 Can you describe what was happening in your life around the time you first started to hear voices

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3.6 Are any of these things related to the voices that you heard, did they talk about it or were they from it.

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#### 4. TRIGGERS

4.1 Have you noticed that the voices are present under particular circumstances or activities? Can you describe what these are?

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.....

4.2 Did you notice that the voices are present when you feel certain emotions?  
**Let us check this list: When you are experiencing emotions such as:**

- |                          |                          |                               |                          |                          |                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | insecurity                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | jealousy         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | fear                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | grief            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | doubt                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | fatigue          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | in love                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | depressed or sad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | anger or aggression           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | happy            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | your own sexual feelings      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | lonely           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | the sexual feelings of others |                          |                          |                  |

5.1 Can you describe how the voices react? or make you feel (comfort; help; make you feel stronger?) Can you give an example?

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5.2. Do you hear negative (unfriendly) voices? What do they say; what do they do? Give an example

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5.3. Do the voices talk about specific subjects/persons? Can you describe them? What do the voices say? Do those subjects have your interests as well?

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**6. INFLUENCE OF THE VOICES**

*We would like to ask you what kind of influence the voices have?*

6.3 Are you afraid of the voices? Why? Have you always been afraid? Please give an example.

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6.4. Do the voices upset you? How do they do this? Please give an example

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6.5. Do the voices disturb your daily activities? How do they do that? Please give an example

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6.6. Do the voices confuse you? How do they do that? Please give an example

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6.7.	How do you experience the voices as:	<b>now</b>	<b>at the beginning</b>
	predominately positive voices	yes/no	yes/no
	predominately negative voices	yes/no	yes/no
	neutral	yes/no	yes/no
	negative as well as positive	yes/no	yes/no

6.8 Can you describe how the influence of the voices changes from time to time.

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6.9 How do you cope with voices that seek to influence you or to get you to do something.

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**7. ORIGIN OF THE VOICES/INTERPRETATION**

*As a voice hearer, you want an explanation for origin of the voices, as professionals do. However often you do not have the same frame of references or beliefs about your voices. I want to discuss the origin and it concerns two aspects. The identification: who is the voice and the origin: where does it come from. I would like to know what your ideas are about both. I want to discuss the identification first.*

7.1. Which identity do you give the voices? This is about perception, who do you think they are?

*The voices are from a living person*

- 1. Who is part of your daily life yes/no
- 2. Your parents or another family member yes/no
- 3. Who is unknown to you yes/no

*The voices are from a deceased person:*

- 4. Who was very well known to you yes/no
- 5. Who was unknown to you yes/no

*The voices are:*

- 6. Symptoms of an illness yes/no
- 7. One or more parts of your personality (from the unconsciousness) yes/no

*The voices are:*

- 8. A good guide yes/no
- 9. A ghost or from someone out of the past reincarnation yes/no
- 10. Gods, ghosts or angels yes/no
- 11. A good God yes/no
- 12. A bad spirit or the devil yes/no
- 13. Entities (a spiritual person or power that you cannot see but is there. You feel or hear the presence of it) yes/no
- 14. Extraordinary perceptions (telepathy, mediumistic) yes/no
- 15. Result from the pain of others or from something else around you yes/no

The voices are:

- 16. Something else Yes/No

7.2 Can you please describe in detail from the above where you believe the voices come from and why you hear them.

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7.3. Do any of the voices have a different frame of reference? (do they come from different places or for different reasons) If yes, why?

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7.4 Many people attribute the voices that they hear to a single trauma or series of traumatic events in their life such as physical punishment, racism, death of a loved one or friend, sexual abuse, unemployment etc, is this true for you? you do not have to say what this trauma is if you do not wish to do so.

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7.6 Have you ever told anyone about this trauma, who, what did they do, what happened. Yes No

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7.7 Have you ever received any help or therapy to deal with this trauma? Yes No

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**8. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VOICES**

*We would like to ask you what kind of relationship you have with your voices*

8.1. Are you able to influence the voices in any way? yes/no

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8.2. Do the voices leave you powerless? If yes, how do they accomplish this? Please give an example

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8.3. Are you in control of the voices? Has this always been so? Please describe

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.....  
8.4 Are you able to talk with the voices? Do you do this? Do you speak out loud or do you speak in your mind (or both)? How do the voices react? Have they always reacted in this way? If not, why not?

Please given an example

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.....  
8.5. Do you ever call the voices names? If yes, how do you do that out loud or in your mind? Are you able to call the voices?

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8.6 Are you able to refuse orders? If yes, which orders can you refuse and which not? What happens if you refuse to do what the voices order?

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8.7 Are you able to cut yourself off from the voices and to open up again?

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8.8 If you hear voices do you mainly concentrate on what the voices say or on what you are doing? Does this differ per voice or per moment?

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**9/10/11 COPING STRATEGIES**  
*We have just discussed your relationship with voices. I would like to know what exactly you do when you hear the voices. If the answer is yes, please ask how many times and what the effect is.*

**What do you do when you hear voices?**

**9. COGNITIVE STRATEGIES**

no.	strategy	yes/no	if yes, describe
1	send the voices away		
2	ignore the voices		
3	concentrate on listening		
4	selective listening pattern		
5	forcing your thoughts in another direction		
6	compromise (find a middle way)		
7	make a deal with the voices		
8	do you sometimes limit the voices		

**10. BEHAVIOURAL STRATEGIES**

no.	strategy	yes/no	if yes, describe
8	do you start to do something		
9	run or escape from the voices		
10	telephone		
11	to visit someone		
12	distract yourself		
13	keep a diary about the voices		
14	certain behaviour or rituals		

**11. PHYSIOLOGICAL STRATEGIES**

no.	strategy	yes/no	if yes, describe
15	relaxation exercises such as yoga		
16	medication		
17	alcohol and drugs		
18	Eat food		
19	Injure yourself		
20	Physical exercise		

**CONCLUSION COPING STRATEGIES**

12.1. What method do you use most? How often do you use it? Do you use it systematically? If no, why not

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 .....

12.2. What is the result (less power or do you gain additional power)?

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12.3. If you know that in certain circumstances the voices appear, do you seek a different approach (alternative, avoiding, try not to be influenced)?

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12.4. In the past, have you ever tried something that seemed to help?

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**13. QUESTIONS RELATED TO YOUR CHILDHOOD**

*Childhood can be a very different experience for people. Some people like to look back while others prefer to put it behind them as soon as possible. What is your perception of your childhood?*

13.1. Was your childhood stressful or pleasant? Can you tell me about it?

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13.2 Did you feel safe at school, in the streets and at home? If not, please explain why?

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13.3 As a child, have you ever been mistreated? How?

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13.4 As a child, did you ever receive strange punishments? For example, being locked in a toilet, kept without food or tied up?

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13.5 Have you ever, as a child or a teenager, been yelled at or belittled? Did you experience the feeling of not being wanted, or did you feel that you were never able to do anything right?

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13.6 Have you ever witnessed the maltreatment of another family member?  
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13.7 Have you ever been sexually abused by a member of your family?  
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13.8 Have you ever had sex against your will? A situation where you were unable to resist or escape from?  
.....  
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**14 MEDICAL HISTORY**

14.1. Did you ever get therapy? Did you ever get therapy because of the voices?  
Which kind of therapist?

<b>year</b>	<b>clinic/ambulant</b>	<b>kind of therapist</b>	<b>lengths</b>	<b>indication for treatment</b>

14.2 With which therapist did you talk about the voices?  
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14.3 What did the therapist do in relation to the voices?  
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14.4 What was your first contact with mental health services? who referred you, what had been happening, what did they say and do.  
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14.5 With reference to the response of the mental health services to you what things have helped you to get on with your life and why.  
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14.6 What things haven't helped and why ?  
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**15. SOCIAL NETWORK**

*Contact with others is an important part of life. First, I would like to ask you to tell me about the person with whom you had a personal relationship and other persons that are important to you. The order is not important and you are not required to give complete names. Initials or something like 'my son' is sufficient.*

RESPONSE FILE SOCIAL NETWORK

<b>NO</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>knows about the voices Yes/No</b>	<b>Talks about the voices Yes/No</b>
01			
02			
03			
04			
05			
06			
07			
08			

