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Second stage development of an early screening tool for detection of vulnerability to schizophrenia, as an example of empathic action**Kate Ball**

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Statement of the Problem: The concept of empathy in psychiatry infers an understanding, concern or interest in a person's emotional state or experience. The experience of psychosis that usually precedes schizophrenia is often frightening; destabilizing a person's sense of self and confidence in reality. Empathic action calls for ways to diminish the likelihood of a person experiencing psychosis.

Methodology & Theoretical Basis: The current research tests the theory that vulnerability to developing this type of psychosis can be identified by an early-screening-tool (Schizophrenia-Traits-Questionnaire, STQ) in teenage, in a second stage of development by Flourish Australia. Originally developed in a PhD by the author, it is based on the neurodynamic/psychobiological theory of Robert Miller. Originally, 600 adults participated in the STQ to test both the theory and its power to predict whether someone would fit into the schizophrenia category or not. The current research trial is on teenagers.

Findings: The factor analysis supported the underlying theory and thirteen (13) of the items in combination, in the original sample, accurately predicted schizophrenia to 85% accuracy with no mention of psychotic symptoms. With early-detection and the appropriate education and resources, not only can the STQ potentially stop a psychotic episode from occurring, it also identifies the types of occupations to avoid, to prevent being overwhelmed by stimuli/environments that challenge.

References

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Biography

Kate Ball is a Senior Evaluation and Research Coordinator for Flourish Australia. She has obtained her PhD entitled "Non-psychotic trait abnormalities as a function of cerebral asymmetry in schizophrenia and related disorders: Development of a potential early screening tool".

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