

Understanding beliefs

- Accept that some people will never agree
- Partners may not believe or believe less strongly
- Respecting others' views and beliefs even if one doesn't share them

Some implications

- Rather than focus on the truth of beliefs, focus on the relationship (the 'fit) between the person, their beliefs and the life they wish to lead

•Key themes from research on those who have unusual beliefs suggests important therapeutic factors are:

Developing an explanation of their experiences which allows someone to make sense of their experiences (and does not unduly distress them)

Being in contact with a community which shares these meanings (e.g. spiritualist churches, paranoia & unusual beliefs groups etc)

Engaging in certain group-related practices (e.g. meditation, political action etc)

Take The Power Back

- Many overwhelming/paranoid beliefs hinge on the person feeling out of control of themselves or their lives
- The beliefs, themselves, aren't the problem. The problem is the fear and powerlessness the person experiences
- Fear and powerlessness can block recovery and keep people stuck in cycles of distress
- Finding some power within the belief system can be a great leap towards personal recovery
- **NEVER ATTACK BELIEF SYSTEMS – THEY ARE IMPORTANT**

What can family and friends do?

Controllable factors

If the person is also hearing voices, try to help them get control of the voices as they could be reinforcing the paranoia.

Foresee difficulties

Try to anticipate problems rather than wait for them to happen. For example is there a stressful event coming up? Is it a certain time of year?

Don't be confrontational

Telling the person they are talking rubbish is never effective as it damages self esteem and looks like you don't care.

Allow independence

Try not to be overprotective or over involved. Give the person space to live their life and show them love and respect.

Sharing beliefs

It is acceptable to say to a person I don't share your beliefs but what do they mean to you. This helps us understand where the person is at this time in their life, it also helps them make sense of what can be a confusing reality.

Avoid negativity

People who experience paranoia are often intelligent, sensitive and perfectionists. They can also be very imaginative. On occasions the paranoia can be an unfortunate misuse of the imagination. Try to look beyond the paranoia and try to identify the person's qualities outside of the paranoia.

How can the TV or radio refer to you?
Ideas of reference

Date/Time	Who referred to you?	What did they say?	What do you think it meant?	What else could have been meant?

Thought reading (or interference with thoughts)

Date/Time	Who seemed to read your thoughts?	What were you thinking?	What made you think that they had read your thoughts?	Were there any other possible explanations?