Perth Voices Clinic

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING VOICES

Following are some practical strategies that can be used to help you control voices or at least reduce the interference and distress they may cause. The advantage of gaining control over voices is that it can help to reduce any associated fear. For more strategies please visit the **WA Hearing Voices Network** website: https://www.rw.org.au/community-services/hearing-voices-network-of-wa/

Technique	Helpful?	Comments (ie when helpful/unhelpful)
Distraction		
➤ **Naming objects** – One useful method of distracting your attention is to spend one minute looking around the room and naming all the objects that you see. You will find that this is actually quite a demanding task and may distract you enough to help "take the edge' off your distress.	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Being with others** - Being around other people, playing games or just talking can distract your attention from the voices.	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Engage in enjoyable activities –** choose activities that absorb all of your attention.	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Using aversive distracters** – Using aversive distracters (e.g. holding ice, taking a hot / ice cold shower, eating a sour lemon) can be useful to move your attention away from the voice and onto something else.	Y☐　N☐	
Auditory Stimulation		
➤ **MP3 player** - Listening to music through headphones has been found to be very effective for lots of people. It is thought to work two ways, 　　1. Music that is relaxing can decrease stress levels, 　　2. The music can be distracting and 'drown out" the voices.	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Earplugs –** Earplugs in 1 ear can be used to distort the sound coming into your ears from external sources e.g.; people talking to you. To overcome this, your brain works harder to focus on the external noise and so, less attention is paid to any internal thoughts or voices. This can help to reduce you awareness of any auditory hallucinations.	Y☐　N☐	
Vocal Activity		
➤ **Speak to someone**	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Singing, hum, or talking under your breath** – Singing or talking to yourself can help by interrupting auditory hallucinations and will draw less attention if done quietly rather than out aloud.	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Yawn or hold your mouth open**	Y☐　N☐	
Physical stimulation or reduction		
➤ **Relaxation** – Reducing your stress levels will also help to reduce any hallucinations.	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Exercise –** Exercise or physical activity has many positive benefits, including; positive effects on your mood and reduced tension.	Y☐　N☐	
Cognitive exercises		
➤ **Reasoning** – Reasoning can be done to set limits on voices. Try for instance limit listening to the voice to a specific time "voices, you can only talk to me after dinner".	Y☐　N☐	
➤ **Selective listening** – practice ignoring or dismissing the voice by saying "go away, I'm not listening" (with emphasis).	Y☐　N☐	
Other strategies		
➤ _____	Y☐　N☐	
➤ _____	Y☐　N☐	
➤ _____	Y☐　N☐	