

A young woman's description of thinking and over-arousal:

'My thoughts get all jumbled up. I start thinking about something but never quite get there. My trouble is that I've got too many thoughts constantly coming into my head. Sometimes I'll try and think about something like my car and a dozen different thoughts about my car would come into my head at the same time. I open my mouth and people say I just talk a load of rubbish.'

A description from a young man of the onset of an acute episode of schizophrenia with prominent delusional ideas (positive symptoms):

'I was living on my own at the time – working in a bank. I'd worked out a new master plan for a complete system of living which I'd written down in lots of special notebooks. It was based on very complicated scientific equations and messages transmitted from car number plates. I kept thinking the communists were after me and the British Secret Service were protecting me. I ran away with a copy of the Bible in my pocket but was soon picked up by the police. I told them I'd murdered my brother so they put me in jail to protect me from the communists. Some time later a doctor and a social worker took me to hospital. I didn't resist because it was all part of the plan.'

This young man describes some of the negative symptoms he experienced after his first attack of schizophrenia:

'I used to love going out to clubs and dancing. I'd buy all the records. I loved playing football and watching it on TV. But now I don't. I don't care anymore – I just can't see the point. I've got a son who's four years old – of course I love him, but I don't feel it here in my inside anymore. Every day is the same. A friend told me a joke the other day but I didn't laugh. It was funny but not funny enough. I can't be bothered to wash or brush my hair or even get up sometimes. I sleep all right most nights but sometimes I wake up in a sweat. I don't really see that there's much difference between being asleep and awake.'