

## **Activity 8.1**

### **Families with High Levels of Expressed Emotion & Schizophrenia**

Families with high levels of Expressed Emotion (EE) exhibit:

1. High levels of criticism
2. Hostility towards the individual diagnosed with schizophrenia
3. Intolerance of the sufferer's problems
4. Inflexible strategies for dealing with the symptoms of schizophrenia
5. Blaming the sufferer themselves for their symptoms and behaviour
6. A tendency to attribute the sufferer's behaviour to global, stable causes, making it difficult to conceive of change and improvement

Can you identify these characteristics in the fragments of conversation below? These are statements made by members of families with high EE talking about the individual who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia.

*"Four days ago he told my wife that he was going to kill the police... now whether that's just bravado, that's just childish, the sort of thing a child would do."*

*"He has this thing that he is the most important person and they'd have to wait for him, so he'd have to miss appointments."*

*"He knows I don't like swearing, so he would continue to swear.... I think he did it just to be difficult".*

*"When he came back with his funny ideas about blacks' persecution and natural health I just thought it was typical Nicholas picking things up en route, he's not too strong a character and tends to absorb other people's views."*

*"The other day she threatened to top herself. Now that is not her, that is not an expression that she would use. It's completely out of character with her .... It's a bit of emotional blackmail; she wants me to take her home."*

*"She's a bit on the lazy side, and she's not very logical. If you are cleaning a place out, she'll help, but she won't finish things."*

*"He was smoking very heavily, which he hadn't been doing before ... he really wasn't the smoking type, you know, he got with some friends who smoked and he kept on smoking".*