

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Verbal Cues

Illogical thoughts

- Sharing a combination of unrelated or abstract topics
- Expressing thoughts of greatness
- Indicating ideas of being harassed or threatened
- Exhibiting a preoccupation with death, germs, guilt, or other similar ideas

Unusual speech patterns

- Nonsensical speech or chatter
- Word repetition
- Pressured speech
- Extremely slow speaking

Verbal hostility or excitement

- Talking excitedly or loudly
- Being argumentative, belligerent, or unreasonably hostile
- Threatening harm to self or others

Behavioral Cues

Physical appearance

- Inappropriate to environment
- Bizarre clothing or makeup (taking into account current trends)

Bodily movements

- Strange postures or mannerisms
- Lethargic, sluggish movements
- Pacing, agitation
- Repetitive, ritualistic movements

Seeing, smelling, or hearing things that cannot be confirmed

Confusion about or unawareness of surroundings

Lack of emotional response

Causing injury to self

Nonverbal expressions of sadness or grief

Inappropriate emotional reactions

- Overreacting to situations in an overly angry or frightening way
- Reacting with the opposite of expected emotion

Environmental Cues

Decorations

- Strange trimmings, misuse of household items
- “Packratting” – accumulation of trash
- Presence of feces or urine on the floor or walls

Childish objects

Source: Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police Mental Health Ad Hoc Committee to Address Mental Health Issues in Law Enforcement, Mental Health and Law Enforcement Encounters: A Review of Current Problem and Recommendations, http://www.gachiefs.com/pdfs/NEWS_GACP%20Mental%20Health%20Report.pdf (accessed August 15, 2013), pages R-4 - R-6.