I Started Hearing Voices in College

Back on Track:
Services to Support School & Work Goals
Sam got kicked out of school during his final semester after experiencing a first break.

He had to leave school, and ended up quitting his job.

He felt paranoid and isolated... hearing voices...

...and feeling like people were whispering about him.

He stopped talking to his friends and avoided places he thought he might run into his classmates from school.

Why do people always ask, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Previously a straight-A student, Sam worried that his parents were disappointed.
That civil engineering prof really knows her stuff...

You going to that pizza party?

Everyone is. I wouldn't miss it.

I got into that Advanced Psych class.

Great! You can join our study group.

Is it bad that their happiness feeds my misery?

Well, our misery needs company...

Your friends DO care, they just don't know.
Kara and Sam had a few classes together freshman year, and both are engineering majors. They would sometimes hang out with mutual friends and see each other around campus.

Oh, hey Kara. Didn’t see you there... I’m fine.

Ugh... ‘I’m fine’ basically means I’m high. I’ve given myself away...

He looks miserable. I heard rumors he got kicked out or something. Maybe I could help...

I remember Kara, we got an A on that project together.

These aren’t your friends? They don’t care?

When Sam and Kara were project partners in their business class freshman year, Sam mentioned his experiences hearing voices to Kara.

I haven't seen you around campus lately.

Yeah, I’ve been... not myself. Taking some time off.

I remember him telling me awhile ago about the voices he hears.

She ditched her friends to talk to you... let her in.

She's not a real friend? Just a random classmate?
Hey, I know we haven't had a class together in awhile, but remember that project we worked on freshman year?

Well, I just want you to know I'm here. I have a friend in another class who started hearing voices and thinking people were following her...

...but her counselor connected her with an Employment & Education Specialist who helped her get accommodations and deal with admin. She really likes him.

I really don't want to make him feel uncomfortable...just want to help. I know some people have horrible or generalized ideas about psychosis, but not all of us. Our friends want to see him...they're just not sure how to reach out. But they do care.

Awkward. I didn't know people knew...Idk. I guess it's nice to feel like people care.

Anyway, Engineering Club is throwing a pizza party for orientation...

I'm going to see you there.

I'll see you later, Sam!
Thinking about what Kara said, Sam remembered something a therapist gave him.

Sam, consider reaching out to them... they can help.

Your therapist thought it was a good idea.

Supported Employment & Education Services
503-926-4022
Call or Text

Look, there's a texting option... that's cool.

One text just send one...

Probably a robot on the other end.

Sam wasn't totally thrilled with the idea of professional help with school re-entry, vocational support, or peer support services. But for the first time in awhile, he felt encouraged and supported.

Hi, my name is Sam.

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Hey Sam. My name is Pete. I'm an Educational and Vocational Specialist. What's up?
I left school. The voices got too much to handle. Not sure where to start.

I used to get A+. Now I have only C's and F's.

And what do you think those F's are telling you?

Well, your grades don't reflect the whole you.

I hear ya Sam. I've been there myself, and I work with a lot of students...

who are trying to figure out their school/work goals, and identity.

It's not always easy.

In fact, our director at the Ed/Nec center was once in a similar spot as you...

People told her once she should give up on her dreams and settle, but she didn't.

So, now what's she doing?

She got her PhD, has a family, and speaks around the country as an advocate.

How about telling me more about yourself? Your interests? Let's start from there...

And then we can think about how we can get you back to school.

Cool?
How can a Employment and Education Specialist (EES) help?

- Applying for college or for college financial aid
- Accessing accommodations for support at school or at work
- Finding and applying for jobs
- Thinking through what you want to do career-wise, both short and long-term
- Exploring other aspects of career development that might be important to you

What are Supported Employment and Education Services (SEES)?

These services are for people who experience psychosis, providing support to get back on track with school or work. School support includes high school, GED, college or graduate school. Employment support includes full-time work, part-time work, or internships. These services are individualized, ensuring that the person feels supported in how they want to talk about their experience with psychosis and goals for the future.

Why do Felton Early Psychosis Programs provide these services?

A major goal of early psychosis services is the functional recovery and community integration of emerging adults with first episode psychosis. Our programs include dedicated supported education and vocational rehabilitation components so that many more young Americans will be encouraged and supported to enroll in institutions of higher education, including city and community colleges, four year universities, and graduate and professional programs and/or pursue competitive employment and start a successful career.

Need Support, or More Information?

Connect with your providers to see what options you have in your area. You may also contact the Felton Early Psychosis programs (re)MIND®, BEAM, and BEAM UP® at talktoremind@felton.org, or online at felton.org/early-psychosis for locations and program information.

To learn more about campus support, check out the series: Back to School: Toolkits to Support the Full Inclusion of Students with Early Psychosis in Higher Education by visiting felton.org/ccor