

Referrals to the program from hospitals, community clinics, and clinical practitioners are welcomed. Referral forms and information requests are to be addressed to:

The MUHC Personality Disorders Program
Telephone: 514-934-1934; extension 35532
Fax: 514-843-1644



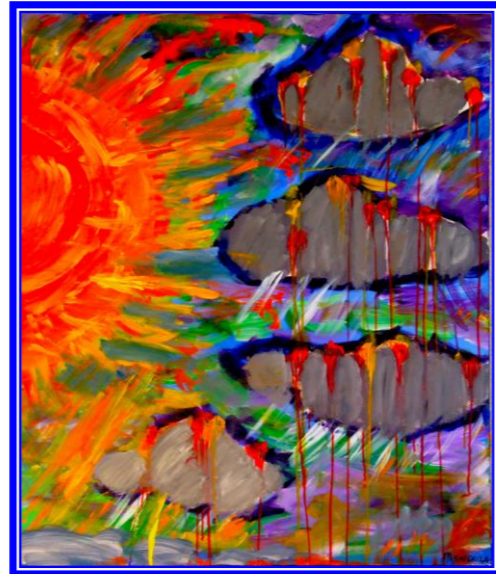
The MUHC Personality Disorders Program

1025 Pine Ave. West.
Montreal, QC
H3A 1A1

Art Credit: "Bleeding Cloud" by legally blind artist
George Mendoza



The MUHC Personality Disorders Program



*An Outpatient Program
of the
Department of Psychiatry
at the
McGill University
Health Centre*

*From alienation to connection;
From impulsivity to responsibility*

THE PERSONALITY DISORDERS PROGRAM

The MUHC Personality Disorders Program consists of three clinics: a Short-Term Borderline Personality Disorder Clinic; an Extended-Care Borderline Personality Disorder Clinic; and a General Personality Disorders Clinic, which offer assessment services and treatment to people with a severe personality disorder. Staffed by a dedicated team of mental health professionals who specialize in the treatment of personality disorders, these clinics provide comprehensive services for people who require out-patient care and promote psychoeducation for their families and significant others.

To be accepted into one of the clinics, a person must be at least 18 years old, and be motivated to make constructive changes in his/her life. Each person receives a thorough assessment, and if appropriate, is offered a treatment plan designed to meet his/her needs. The conceptual frame for the program is trans-theoretical, encompassing psychodynamic, dialectical-behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, and psycho-educational techniques based on established best practices.

THE BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER SHORT-TERM CLINIC

Individuals diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder who are receiving treatment for the first time, or do not have an extensive psychiatric history, may be best served in the Short-Term Clinic. Treatment at this clinic aims to increase intrapersonal, social and occupational health, bringing the patient to a level where they will not require hospital based interventions. This twelve week program includes weekly individual and group therapies. The starting dates are in September, January and April. Each group can accommodate ten patients.

The clinic accepts referrals from outside the MUHC sector.

The limited duration of treatment makes it important for its patients to be connected to community health care facilities. Although medication recommendations may be made at the time of the assessment, the patients of the Short-Term Clinic will continue to have their medications followed by physicians in the community.

Individuals who have been living with the effects of their shifting moods, angry outbursts, impulsivity, difficult inter-personal relationships and self-damaging behaviors, are provided the opportunity for learning skills and strategies to manage their intense emotions and impulsive behaviors.

THE BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER EXTENDED-CARE CLINIC

This clinic provides treatment to people with a diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder whose level of functioning obstructs autonomous participation in daily activities.

Treatment is offered in six month blocks up to a maximum of two years and consists of several components which include: individual and group psychotherapy; a life skills group; an after-care group, as well as regularly scheduled psychiatric consultations. All patients of the clinic are simultaneously followed by a psychiatrist or general practitioner for medication management.

The program can offer treatment to 40 patients at any given time. Openings occur periodically, with new patients being integrated as vacancies occur. The clinic accepts individuals from outside the MUHC sector.

However, if hospitalization is required patients are directed to their sector area psychiatric facility. Every effort is made to maintain a short waiting list for each of the therapeutic components.

Individual treatment plans are developed for each patient with the following goals: improving quality of life; fostering a positive personal identity; promoting accountability and increased mastery over themselves and their lives.

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THE PROGRAM PROVIDES:

Multi-channelled interventions

- A container for impulses, affect, ideas, and behaviours
- A safe environment to ventilate and react
- A safe environment to revisit history
- A laboratory to safely experiment new attitudes and behaviours
- Peer-based learning
- Safe opportunities to challenge, confront, identify and empathize with others
- Reparative relationships with authority figures and peers
- Opportunities to experiment with emotional intimacy
- Opportunities for a peer support network
- Peer assistance with situational coping
- Life event celebrations
- Creativity shared with the group

PATIENT GAINS:

- Increased ability to contain and regulate reactivity
- Decreased impulsivity; increase in spontaneity
- Decreased rage and healthier anger management
- Reduced frequency of self-destructive behaviour
- Greater positive investment in self
- More positive and stable identity
- Increased effectiveness in social and work relationships
- Movement from ambivalent/avoidant attachment toward connection
- Greater relationship stability
- Non-disruptive resistance to intimacy; patients feel less empty, isolated, and lonely
- Increased self-esteem
- Clear and more stable boundaries between self and others
- More evolved developmental level of functioning
- Ability in reality-testing
- Inspired creativity

«You are those who will hold on to the bicycle until we are steady enough to ride on our own. You are the ones who will be honest and tell us that we may never be able to keep our balance on two wheels, but you will also be quick to remind us that we can travel just as far without ever removing the training wheels.»

THE GENERAL PERSONALITY DISORDERS CLINIC

This clinic offers treatment to people who either have a severe personality disorder other than BPD and/or people who are diagnosed with BPD and are either unable or unwilling to adhere to the structure of the treatment process offered in the Extended-Care Clinic. The treatment consists of medication management and individual therapy.

CONSULTATION SERVICES, RESEARCH AND TRAINING

An important aspect of the MUHC's Personality Disorders Program is to provide consultation for community health professionals who have diagnostic and treatment questions.

The program also has an active research component and offers training to residents in psychiatry, psychology interns and mental health professionals from the MUHC network.