

GET TO KNOW YOUR ED PATIENTS

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The Stories and Life Journeys of People Who Use(d) Substances

"They looked at me like I'm not an addict, I'm actually someone who came here to get help."

"You can't bundle everyone into one group. Addicts are different. Look at the bigger picture and meet the person where they are at, where they come from, and their individual situations."

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I don't know what it is that keeps me using, but I'm not willing to give up either. I'm gonna keep trying until I get it, or I die.

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MR. K



Mr. K, an Indigenous man from Red Deer, had a difficult childhood, facing abuse and abandonment by his adopted family. He left home at the age of twelve and had to learn how to fend for himself. When he turned 26, he knew it was time to make a change in his life. As he was trying to reconcile relationships with his adopted family, the pressures of juggling work and raising his newborn baby, led him to start using crystal meth. He soon left his family in Alberta and moved out to Vancouver. He has visited the St. Paul's Emergency Department for various health concerns and feels appreciated when staff take the time to figure out what's wrong and listen to his complaints. "Thanks for treating me like a person, that made me feel cared for, and I don't get that a lot." He feels strongly that people should be treated with respect no matter their background. One day, he hopes to reconcile with his children and stay clean.