

EXHIBIT

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY FROM A RIGHTS-BASED PERSPECTIVE



STORIES TOLD THROUGH THE LENS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

“Finding light in
the dark: recovery
through the lens
of young people”

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information



Welcome to the photography exhibit "Finding light in the dark: recovery through the lens of young people"

Let's Talk About Mental Health—Differently

We often talk about mental health in numbers, diagnoses, and treatment plans. But what happens when young people themselves speak up? When they choose to share their own lived experiences through photos and words?

This exhibit highlights the creativity, honesty, and resilience of young adults who have chosen to express themselves differently. Here, art becomes a powerful tool for storytelling, connection, and awareness. What you'll discover are their perspectives, their voices, their realities.

Created at various stages of the project in collaboration with researchers and the participating youth, the exhibit explores how these young people understand and experience recovery in mental health—while emphasizing the importance of respecting their rights within the services they access.

While most research on mental health recovery focuses on adults, this project shifts the spotlight to young people aged 18 to 35. To bring this project to life, a participatory method called *photovoice* was used. Young adults from various community organizations in the northern part of Montréal were invited to take photos that represent their personal experiences of mental health recovery.

Each image is paired with personal reflections that emerged from group discussions on their rights, their challenges, their hopes, and their relationships with health professionals. The vivid colors, compositions, and textures express a wide range of emotions and diverse experiences.

The exhibit isn't arranged in a strict chronological order. Some photos are grouped because they tell a shared life story. Each image here tells its own story—one of strength, of truth, of a personal journey.

By scanning the QR codes, you can read or listen to the young participants' testimonies, in their own words.

Warmly,
Emmanuelle and the team



Exhibit



**Welcome to this unique photo exhibit
designed by social work researchers in
collaboration with young adults
aged 17 to 35.**

Using the photovoice method, participants captured images that reflect their experiences with recovery—a personal journey that is slightly differentiated from mainstream ‘adult’ conceptions of the process. It’s a path that is sometimes arduous, often marked by courage, and always deeply human.

Each photo is paired with a personal story or reflection to scan, offering a sincere and honest glimpse into each artist’s world.

... Take a moment to look.
Listen to the voices behind
the images.

📷 Discover knowledge
and perspectives of youth
through their lens.

📖 A limited number of
printed booklets are
available.

💻 To explore the digital
version : SMJaction.ca

Principal investigator : **Emmanuelle Khoury, PhD, TS**
Co-researcher : **Sue-Ann MacDonald, PhD**

Coordination : **Bianka Comeau, TS**
Student : **Noémie Castro**

The photos



The Nature of Connections

Photography, 2025



The Lights Are at Rest

Photography, 2025



Allow Oneself to Be Helped

Photography, 2025



From left to right
My Verdunoise Home
Beginning a New Life with DYP
My Chambly House

Photography, 2025





Bad Weed

Photography, 2025



Ave Maria

Photography, 2025



Qui peut Hide and Seek

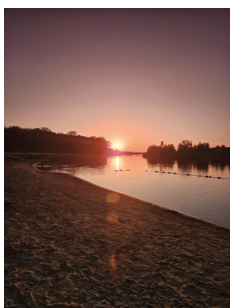
Photography, 2025



Making Flames in a Kitchen

Photography, 2025





Looking Through Different Glasses

Photography, 2025



Fuel

Photography, 2025



Move

Photography, 2025



Heal

Photography, 2025





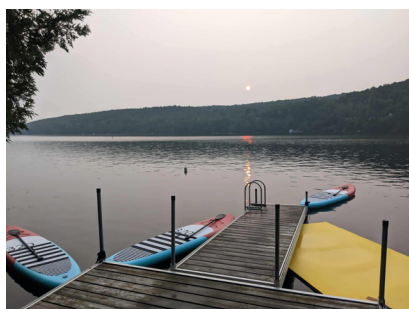
Fixed Reality

Photography, 2025



Impossible Summit

Photography, 2025



Untitled

Photography, 2025



From left to right

Dew 1 **Dew 2**

Photography, 2025





Notes

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more information



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Design : [PhDesign Agency](#)