

The Story So Far...

Personality Plus was established in January 2007 as a community interest company. Its aim was to celebrate creativity and challenge the stigma experienced by people given a diagnosis of personality disorder.



News Update

What we have achieved:

Regional participatory workshops engaged people from different counties, to tell their stories about recovery, their journey and their achievements. These formed part of a larger body of work shown at the National Event, and evolved into an acclaimed theatre piece written and performed by Theatre Tonic.

The national event held at Tate Modern in October 2007, formally launched the organization. The event was an excellent collaboration between Tate Modern, Department of health, CSIP and Arts Council England..

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This dynamic day showed work from around the UK, by artists with a diagnosis. This included images, poetry, photography, performances, and films. Innovative workshops were held; participative theatre, debates; an Open Space and Tate Modern ran 2 Art into Life tours

“ We see the event at the Tate Modern as a defining moment”

Service user quote

P+ is now going back out to the regions, as organizations book our mini Tate touring shows for conferences and events. In addition we are running regional events in London, York and Humberside and Eastern.



A Message from the Departing Chair of Personality Plus – Maria Duggan

The vision of Personality Plus belongs to the service users involved with the National Personality Disorder Development Programme, who first promoted it as an idea. It has evolved into a unique, arts-based, anti stigma initiative with the primary aim of challenging

entrenched, negative perceptions of people with a diagnosis of personality disorder. These negative stereotypes and lack of awareness and understanding by both the general public and professionals alike are key causes of the chronic exclusion suffered by people with personality disorder and similar complex needs.

In its first year, Personality Plus has already proved its value and effectiveness in challenging these perceptions. Launched at the Tate Modern in October 2007, P+ provides a robust platform for a more positive set of images, drawing on the artistic and creative works of individuals with the diagnosis and showcasing the innovative therapeutic work of the services, which have been established by the National PD Development Programme.

In the coming year, there is a more ambitious set of aims, reaching out into the regions to involve PD service users and their networks in creative activities on a sustained basis. It is an entirely new concept and approach to user involvement, which I am proud to have been associated with.

It is time now for me to step down from my role as Chair to ensure that the principles at the heart of P+ regarding the possibility of recovery and the leadership role of experts by experience are clearly demonstrated in how we work. I welcome Diane Bardsley, the new Chair who, I am sure, will lead the organisation to greater levels of success in the coming year.

Personality + enables all of us to see that people with personality disorders are not monsters, but individuals suffering severely with mental distress. This understanding needs to be promoted vigorously to policy makers, clinicians, the media and society more generally, to enable us to learn how we might tackle the factors that create these disorders in the first place - and then to deal more inclusively and humanely with these who have been damaged. I shall miss everyone involved in P+ but take great, personal satisfaction from the role that I have played, alongside many others, in helping at its birth.

Maria Duggan

Welcome from the New Chair of Personality Plus – Diane Bardsley



I would like to say hello to you all in my new role as Chair of Personality Plus. I feel privileged to be part of an exciting and growing organisation, which I hope will be able to reach out to more people across the country and build on the first major and unique event held at the Tate Modern during 2007.

As a current service user I am only too aware of the difficulties many people with this label struggle with. Also I have felt that creativity through the arts has been a very important form of meaningful expression in my personal journey and that of others whom I have met.

Therefore to be part of an organisation that will promote the wonderful creative abilities of people with a personality disorder and help understanding and awareness of some of the complexities and issues to many others is very important to me personally. But essentially I hope Personality Plus will continue to grow, strengthen and develop to bring many benefits both to those with a personality disorder and the wider community. I hope you will wish to be kept informed of our developments and perhaps become involved in the future. Should you wish to contact me I am based in the South West and currently work for the Care Services Improvement Partnership in the South West.

Diane.bardsley@csip.org.uk

Regional Work:

Personality Plus has successfully secured funding from
3 regions to embark upon some exciting work.



Yorkshire & Humberside region:



We are delighted that the voluntary organisation, 'Community Links' is the host organisation for Personality Plus in York and Humberside. The centre piece will be a vibrant combined arts public event at the Carriage Works- Leeds, Millennium Square; on January 30th 2009. This will be preceded by a month long 'arts preview' (also at the Carriage Works) showing a selection of work that will be exhibited on 30 January. All artwork will be by artists who have been given a diagnosis of personality disorder. The carriage Works is an arts venue that endeavours to present a culturally diverse programme in a contemporary, fully accessible combined art space.

Continued overleaf:

Yorkshire and Humberside continued:

The event will be showcasing:

- An exhibition and artists talks of emerging artists who have been given a diagnosis of personality disorder
- The P+ national Event shown at TATE Modern, London 2007: art show, film showings, drama- 'The Story so Far', Participatory creative workshops
- An Educational workshop around PD with discussions and debates led by artists who have been given this diagnosis (especially for health professionals)
- Before the event there will be a 'Call out for art' for people interested in challenging PD through creativity
- We are hoping to secure money to run an outreach and networking programme which may include creative workshops
- Drama/ performance workshops- led by local drama co. 'Shoe Strings' in various

Eastern Region:

P+ in Eastern will try and meet the P+ Aims through: Outreach, engagement, access, inclusion, networking and promotion.

What we aim to do:

- Hold 3 Open Space events across the regions- the first one will be in July 2008. These events will bring people together to decide how best to develop Personality Plus in Eastern region
- Run creative workshops to outreach communities, engaging and promoting routes to recovery through the creativity of people with a diagnosis of PD.
- Develop and support some of the creative initiatives resulting from the Open Space events

Vibrant partnerships, collaborations and links will be made with existing creative and well being services/ initiatives to 'join up' the region, build on existing work and capacity, creating dynamic networks, ensuring longevity and enabling greater inclusion. We have chosen to work in 'Open Space' because the process will bring people together to decide how they would like to celebrate the creativity of people with a personality disorder diagnosis.

Open Space connects personal responsibility with fresh thinking by creating structured opportunities for passionate & powerful conversations that inspire meaningful action. 'Open Space helps when a major issue must be resolved, characterised by significant complexity and diversity, the pressure of potential or actual conflict and a decision time of yesterday' Harrison Owen, designer of the Open Space approach

'If you give people the right conditions, people will do it for themselves... All my experience of working with change taught me that unless people do it for themselves nothing moves anyway!' (Participant in open space event)

London:

P+ in London will create 3 'hubs' of activity, in the South West, South East and North London linked to existing Personality Disorder services or sympathetic arts organisations. Through these hubs Personality Plus will run a set of creative workshops, which will be the focus for the London project. These workshops will engage people interested in celebrating the creativity of people with personality disorder and challenging the stigma and discrimination of the diagnosis. Many people have remarked upon the power of working with creativity as a route to recovery for us with a diagnosis of PD.

There will be 'A Call Out' for art, inviting people with a PD diagnosis to send in their art works, for public showing.

Public events (performances + workshops) and exhibitions will be held at high profile arts sites in London will promote and challenge stigma (sites tbc)

Each 'hub' will be encouraged to devise and develop its own programme of creative activity, short and long term (with some P+ support). This may include running projects in collaboration with P+, or hosting P+ projects. This will encourage sustainability of the initiatives when P+ has gone.

Vibrant partnerships, collaborations and links will be made to 'join up' the region, build on existing work and capacity, creating dynamic networks, ensuring longevity and enabling greater inclusion.

Some activities include:

- Social arts network; quarterly meetings in London art venues and events (dates and locations tbc)
- A mental well being impact assessment – to establish the effect of Personality Plus on mental wellbeing in the region
- Theatre Tonic performance 'the story so far'
- Performances/ films/Spoken word developed from workshops
- Artists talks + educational discussions/ debate at TATE Modern, November 2008

Watch out for our posters, flyers and booking forms due out in the next few weeks!

If you would like us to send you our flyers, or want some information on any of the above events please contact:

tapatpplus@googlemail.com

An Extraordinary Journey: – Andy Brooker

I see my role in Personality Plus as a facilitator in a healing, cathartic and collaborative process to transcend and distract me from the challenges of life with a diagnosis of Personality Disorder.

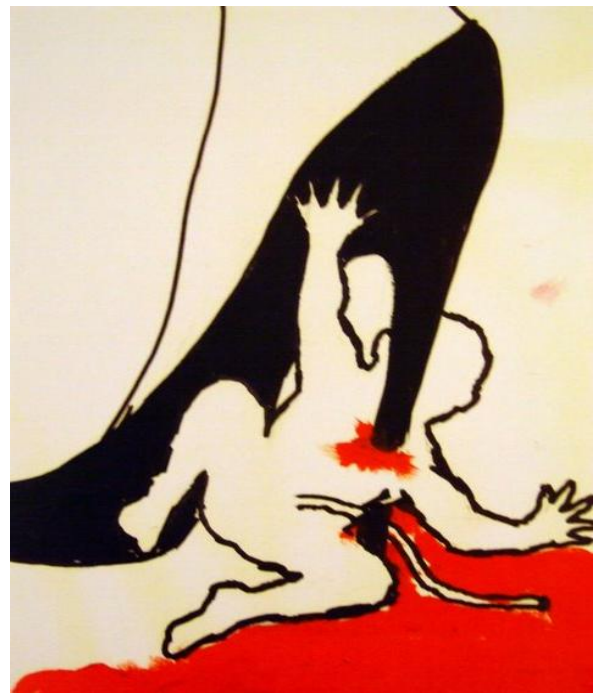
I welcome it as a necessary pressure release from the almost endless struggles I have encountered to secure any type of after care or community support following completion of my treatment at the Henderson Hospital two years ago...

I think that Personality Plus has multifaceted role to help people experience something joyful even spiritual in a more supportive self creative and self fulfilling way! An opportunity to interact with fellow sufferers outside of the almost repetitive cycle of therapy-lite therapy-shite relaying our well worn and over rehearsed scripts of the HOWS and WHYS of an unwanted label.

I hope Personality Plus will further enhance the quality of my recovery and become part of a collective voice cutting away the misconceptions around Personality Disorder by celebrating our extraordinary creative strengths and ingenuity...building positive new alliances with professionals and organizations that may for a very long time have held very stigmatizing and self defeating views about our diagnosis and treatment. Personality Plus is a golden gateway... a rainbow made up of a very colourful and radiant spectrum of creativity and ingenuity that our diagnosis has given us. The bonus being it has a REAL pot of GOLD at the end.

The opportunity for sufferers to see "over the fence" and realise they can have what they want! Be who they want to be and go wherever they want to go rather than remain stuck in the quicksand of diagnosis and the limitations of ineffective treatment and under resourced/untrained healthcare professionals.

We hope to achieve this with peer-to-peer support and constructive feedback on work as an aid to inspiration and an awakening of our pure creative forces. To build peoples confidence by informing, validating and affirming their creativity and opening the door into a diversity of pathways be that further or higher education, voluntary work or employment opportunities if people feel able.



"A Matter of Life and Death"

My painting expresses the living death of abandonment. I was separated from my mother @ ten days old every day from then on has been a matter of life and death, the chronic pain of that event is replayed perpetually in my head, a discordant symphony of a baby screaming as its soul is murdered kills me every time I hear it. Me the body survives but the dead baby's ghost is trapped inside me unable to rest he tries to murder me and attack me everyday to get revenge on his murderers and the world that stood by passively and did nothing help. His name is Gary McKnight 2.9.66 - 12.9.66 may he rest in peace.

This painting was shown with 2 others at the Tate Event in Oct 2007 and has featured in the Mini Tate shows seen most recently at the National Personality Disorder Conference in Manchester, November 2008.

Working in Partnership.....

Personality Plus has worked closely in its inaugural year with the Department of Health's National Personality Disorder Programme and with Borderline UK, the largest and oldest PD service user organisation in the UK. Indeed four Directors of Borderline UK are also Directors of Personality Plus.

The work that Personality Plus is undertaking over the next year in the regions affords the opportunity to work with a number of organisations. CSIP (Care Services Improvement Partnership) and NIMHE (National Institute for Mental Health In England) funded most of the work in the different regions and we are applying for further funds from the Arts Council, from whom we secured a successful grant last year to launch Personality Plus.

The exciting regional work sees Personality Plus working closely with Community Links and the Carriage works in Yorkshire and in London we are building upon our relationship with the Tate Modern and other high profile arts venues.

Dates for your Diary:

- Autumn 2008 – Launch of the London Arts and Social Network
- November 18th 2008 – Tate Modern Artist Talks
- January 30th 2009 – Yorkshire and Humberside Exhibition event
- More Dates to come...

Want to get involved?

Do you want to contribute to the next Personality Plus newsletter or get involved with your regional events?

Where would you like to see Personality Plus go to next?

Would you like to be updated with new information?

Send your requests, thoughts and ideas to:

tapatpplus@googlemail.com or kathlovell@mac.com

Acknowledgements:

Personality Plus would not be possible without the extremely valuable contributions from a diverse range of people. The launch event at the TATE last October became a reality through the submissions of outstanding videos artwork and the volunteers, staff and directors who worked tirelessly to ensure the day was a success.

Special thanks are due to Maria Duggan who has lead the organisation over the past 18 months towards a bright new future, Roma Iskander and Belinda Sosinowicz who have worked before and after the launch event to make dreams and ideas a reality.

Crucially without the contributions and submissions of service users we would not be here at all. Art can be a window to the soul and can expose sensitive vulnerabilities, we acknowledge and respect that it takes courage to submit artwork or participate in workshops and for this we thank you deeply and personally.

With the continued support of our funders and partner organisations, Personality Plus has a bright future and a promise of much more to come.



Care Services Improvement Partnership **CSIP**

National Institute for
Mental Health in England

