

# BRIDGING THE GAP

*A newsletter for medical professionals*

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## MBMD™ Test in Practice: Helps People Navigate Through Life Transitions

Baltimore psychologist Russ Hibler, PhD, specializes in behavioral medicine, focusing on helping people who are making significant transitions. His clients include individuals who are facing life changes due to medical issues such as open-heart surgery, injury, or participation in a medically supervised weight loss program. In addition, Dr. Hibler works with non-medical clients, such as people who are changing jobs or moving into retirement. Dr. Hibler helps his clients shift from behaviors that will no longer serve them well to behaviors that will be better suited to their new circumstances.

As part of his protocol, Dr. Hibler administers a selection of psychological instruments, which he presents to clients as a joint effort, working under a theme of, "How can we work together to address your needs to help you get through what you need to do?" He explains to clients that these tools are designed to help gather information on how the individual deals with particular aspects of life. He then points out that this information will help him (and other members of the care team in the case of medical patients) determine how to work in partnership with the client to help the individual make the recommended behavioral changes.

His selection of tests includes the MBMD (Millon™ Behavioral Medicine Diagnostic) test, which assesses the psychosocial assets and liabilities that may support or interfere with a patient's course of medical treatment. "The MBMD test is the centerpiece of my selection of tests," says Dr. Hibler, "particularly because it includes specific scales related to health issues and coping styles." He appreciates that it provides a picture of how his clients deal with the issues in their lives. He also administers the QOLI® (Quality of Life Inventory) test, which helps measure factors related to quality of life, and the FIRO-B, which helps assess social interaction.

### Clients appreciate objective assessment

Dr. Hibler believes the MBMD test does an excellent job in helping clients learn more about themselves so that they can better adapt to life changes. "The MBMD test helps clients identify effective behaviors that they want to maintain as well as non-productive behaviors that they want to change," he says. "My clients like the fact that the test provides them with a reflection of themselves in a non-judgmental manner." His medical clients like the fact that the MBMD test is designed for use with medical patients. They say the test is dignified, appropriate, and addresses important issues.

Dr. Hibler discusses the test results with the client during a structured interview. "I love to watch clients' faces when I review the test profile with them," he says. "Most people's jaws drop when they see how accurately the MBMD test has pinpointed their attitudes and behaviors." As a follow-up, he asks clients to grade the test on how well it has captured them; most of his clients have given the MBMD test an "A."

## Report facilitates communication with physicians

Dr. Hibler also finds the MBMD test results to be helpful in communicating with physicians about patients' needs. His medical colleagues have commented that they especially like the one-page Healthcare Provider Summary because it spells out the data in a way that is meaningful to them. In addition, the physicians with whom Dr. Hibler works consider the Management Guidelines of the Interpretive Report to be very useful in helping them tailor their interventions to the needs of the patient.

For example, Dr. Hibler says it is very helpful to know upfront when a person is extremely independent or might have adjustment difficulties. He then might recommend more than the normal number of telephone calls to such an individual, to catch and discuss any difficulties that person may be experiencing before those difficulties become unmanageable.

## A versatile tool to support behavioral changes

Dr. Hibler has found the MBMD test to be a valuable instrument for use with both medical and non-medical patients who are working through transitions in their lives. He has been pleased to discover that his clients as well as his medical colleagues appreciate the insights and guidance that the test provides.

Russ Hibler, PhD, earned his doctorate in developmental psychology from Ohio State University and has been practicing psychology since 1976. A retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, Dr. Hibler started applying behavioral medicine techniques such as biofeedback and hypnosis when he worked with Air Force pilots. Most of Dr. Hibler's practice has been in hospitals where he has focused on helping individuals develop their own ways of dealing with illness while using as little medication as possible. He is currently the staff psychologist at Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore and maintains a private practice through EHP Behavioral Services.

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