

## **A study on the psychopathological condition, craving and quality of life of opioid-dependent patients treated with agonistic drugs.**

*Cannarozzo M. Angela<sup>1</sup>, Dell'Aera Stefano, Pintus Giancarlo*

Addiction, especially to highly saturant substances such as opioids, is defined by the WHO as a chronic relapsing disease. To all effects, substance addiction represents a disabling condition which increasingly impairs the quality of life and the history of an individual. Despite an effective treatment that might facilitate adaptation, persons' relationships and life experiences seem to remain irreversibly marked by the experience of addiction.

The aim of this study is to monitor, over a period of 12 months, the trend of the quality of life, the perceived craving for substances and the psychopathological picture of 25 patients in care at Ser.T (Enna), treated with methadone and buprenorphine. To this purpose, the sample group received a monthly evaluation protocol that consisted of the following tests and forms, which were administered by evaluators or by the patients themselves: ANAG, AbSo, SCL-90, VaC, GAF, QoL. Results, analyzed after 6 and 12 months, highlighted a close correlation between the various aspects of the quality of life, the craving for substances and the person's psychopathological picture. In consideration of the prevalent psychological characteristics of the sample group (hypercriticism towards others and paranoid tendencies), in most cases an inversely proportional ratio between the level of satisfaction with the individual's existential condition and the course of the symptoms of anxiety, somatization and mood disorders, while along with the increase of the latter, there is a proportional increase in craving, as suggested in "Self-selection hypothesis" by Kanthzian (1985a, 1985b, 1997).

Based on those results, we tend to consider addiction as a psychopathological dimension having serious relapses in the quality of life of the addicts and in their relationship systems. This consideration opens new perspectives for thinking and intervention on all the habits and rituals which, although not fully satisfying diagnostic criteria for substance abuse disorders, they set themselves up as forms of polarization of thought, capable of structurally modifying the value system, the ability of the individual to manage his or her time and relationships. One final consideration concerns the role of pleasure in life and relationships as a protective factor from the risk of addiction.

<sup>1</sup>*Ser.T. Az. U.S.L. n.4 Enna*

Indirizzo per la corrispondenza: Ass. no-profit "Olos, Psicologia – Psichiatria – Psicoterapia",  
Piazza F. Crispi, 3 – 94100 Enna. Tel–Fax: 0935–22723

E-mail: [ass\\_olos@tiscali.it](mailto:ass_olos@tiscali.it)