

PREVENTION OF ALCOHOL RELATED PROBLEMS

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Abstract:

The Clubs of Alcoholics in Treatment (CAT) are founded on the concept that alcohol related problems are to be considered as a different type of behaviour, a different life style, a difficulty arising from problematic relationships and interactions between the ecological systems in communities and families. The Club work is based on a systemic approach, which implies observing and identifying alcohol related problems inside the bio-social system where people live and work, the Club activity is addressed to families and to the local community where the families live and work, so, rather than being identified as "self-help" or "mutual-help" it can be better defined as a community programme. The families become able to grow and mature, communicate and interact more effectively with the community.

Keywords: alcohol, life style, families, The Clubs of Alcoholics in Treatment

Let's talk about prevention, even though in the social ecological approach we prefer to talk about Health Promotion (1).

At European level, the really effective policies that are recommended are (2):

1. Limitations to alcohol marketing (prices, number of outlets, opening time etc.)
2. Limitations to alcohol advertising (TV ban)
3. Restrictions to youth consumption (to prevent early onset)
4. Strict enforcement of drink & drive policies

To prevent alcohol related problems, the WHO. has suggested two strategies (3).

1. Support to self-help and mutual-help groups (or Community Programmes like the CATs)
2. Policies aimed at reducing the consumption of the general population

The C.A.T. approach satisfies both such suggestions given by the W.H.O.:

1. CATs represent a Community Programme with an access at very low threshold to treatment, as they are cheap, easy to set up and easy to duplicate
2. CATs address the life style of the whole local community, not only the people attending the CAT, the aim is to reduce the consumption of the general population

CAT (Club of Alcoholics in Treatment) and systemic approach From Vladimir Hudolin's works

The Clubs of Alcoholics in Treatment (CAT) are founded on the concept that alcohol related problems are to be considered as a different type of behaviour, a different life style, a difficulty arising from problematic relationships and interactions between the ecological systems in communities and families. Consequently, the "treatment" must start in the environment in which the "alcoholic" lives, as both the alcoholics and their families are not like patients cut off from society, but are integral components of it (4).