

Symposium:
***"Transformational change
in families and other systems with addiction issues,
perspectives from the front line"***



9th EFTA Congrès
*Origins and Originality
in Family Therapy and Systemic Practice*




Athens 2016

"Transformational change in families and other systems with addiction issues, perspectives from the front line"
9th EFTA Congrès, Athens 2016

***Abstinence or autonomy?
What tools to facilitate a change?
Reflections on a second order change
in addiction.***

**Thomas Schwab,
IPEC, Forcalquier, France**

Summary :

- 1) **Brief presentation of the clinical and research context**
- 2) **Our model of change : Beyond Addiction**
 2^{ed} order change in addiction
- 3) **An example : Couple A.**
- 4) **The “*Systemic Goose Game*” (board game), one of those “*Floating objects*” (Philippe CAILLÉ & Yveline REY) that facilitates change in the field of Addiction**
- 5) **Some reflexions and opening perspectives**

Δεν υπάρχει θέμα να λένε πως δεν επηρεάζομαι. Αυτό ξέχνα το.

Όλοι επηρεάζονται, όλοι θγαίνουν από κάπου.

There's no point in people saying that I haven't been influenced. Just forget about that. Everyone gets influenced, everyone comes from someplace.

GEORGE ZONGOLOPOULOS

« *Interminable pleinitude in the vastness of abstraction* »

Museum of contemporary Art, Hora Andros, 19.6-.25.9.2016

What is in between
BLACK AND WHITE ?

A certain number of persons say:
« grey »

A patient said:
« AND »

Using *black, white and grey*
in a dialectical way, I say ...

... the color !

As sytemiciens we know:

$$1 + 1 = 3$$

**The third element belongs
to another category**

Beyond black, white
and grey are...
...a multitude of
colors

THESIS, ANTITHESIS, **SYNTHESIS**

Beyond **Thesis** and **antithesis** are...
...**emerging qualities**
that belongs to another category

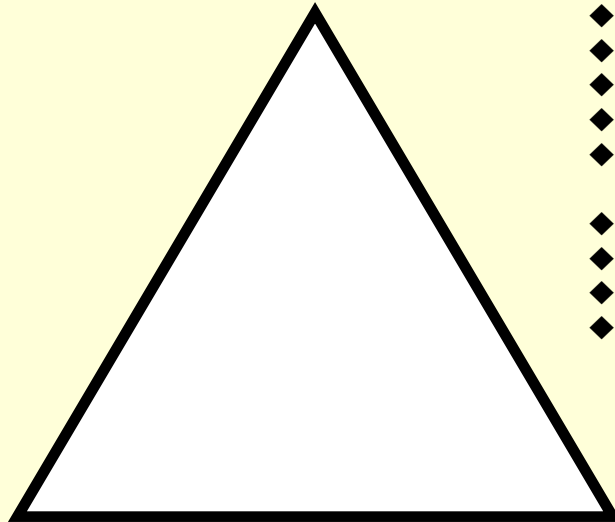
In a systemic thinking
Synthesis

Would never be « grey »

Bateson told us:
2 categories of change which are
fundamentally different.
We transposed it in the addiction field....

BEYOND ADDICTION (color ; synthesis) **(Alcohol or other psychoactive products)**

Aim : autonomy



- ◆ 2^{ed} order change
- ◆ Qualitative change
- ◆ « Change the Game » ;
- ◆ Question the role of the interactive game
- ◆ Discontinuity; epistemological break; logical break
- ◆ Logic of Choice
- ◆ Liberty, creativity, « third way »
- ◆ Evolutionary spiral
- ◆ Meta

WITH ADDICTION
(Alcohol & other products)
(Black ; thesis)

WITHOUT ADDICTION
(Alcohol & other psychoactive products)
(White ; antithesis)

Aim : Abstinence

- ◆ First order change
- ◆ Quantitative change
- ◆ “Change the actors” without questioning
The roles of the interactional game
- ◆ Identic Reproduction : the interactional
function of the product remains identic ;
repetition of the old fashioned interactional
game
- ◆ Logic of "repairing a breakdown" and / or
logic of “battle” and/or" control"
“unhappy abstinence”

*IPEC 2004
EFTA, Paris 2010
Jean-Jacques Tillier
et Thomas Schwab*

WITH ADDICTION

(Alcohol & other psychoactive products)

→ Black

→ Thesis

WITHOUT ADDICTION

(White ; antithesis)

Aim or target:

abstinence, being without consumption

- ◆ **First order change**
- ◆ **Quantitative change**
- ◆ **“Change the actors” without questioning the roles of the interactional game**
- ◆ **Identical Reproduction : the interactional function of the product remains identical ; repetition of the old fashioned interactional game**
- ◆ **Logic of "repairing a breakdown" and / or logic of “battle” and/or "control" → “unhappy abstinence”**

Aim or target : autonomy

- ◆ 2^d order change
- ◆ Qualitative change
- ◆ That means:
 - Patients question the role of the interactive “game” ; Change the Game ;
 - Overcome (exceed) relational patterns related to consumption but also those related to control
- ◆ Discontinuity; epistemological break; logical break
- ◆ Logic of Choice
- ◆ Liberty, creativity, « third way », emerging qualities
- ◆ Evolutionary spiral
- ◆ Meta

Remind : First order change

- Important change, but often not efficient effective or successful enough.
- « Survival strategy » (Short-term strategy)
≠ « life strategy » (Long-term strategy)

Limitations of First order change

(some examples)

- Stop alcohol but increase consumption of cigarettes
- Replace heroin with alcohol; both: heroin & alcohol might have the same functions
- Alcohol or other products « present », despite the absence of consumption. Examples:
 - Checking or controlling by the spouse (doing traits on the bottles)
 - Complaints or reproaches about past consumption
- Repetition, re-consumption (15-20 years later); example
 - A person of a former drinkers Association,
 - In the board of directors for about 20 years, very engaged, he daily spoke of alcohol...
 - Retirement from office of this association at the age of 60 or 65 years → heavy drinking, as if he had never stopped...

Remind difference between these two types of changes

First order \neq second order change

Metaphor of the theater :

- **Change the actor** = replace him
→ **First order change**
- **Change game** = play something else
→ **Second order change**

First order \neq second order change

Another example :

- Mop up under the faucet that continues to flow; it will be dry for a few minutes ...
➔ **first order change**
- Replace faucet ➔ **second order change**
- **“Joint” ➔ see next slide**

First order ≠ second order change

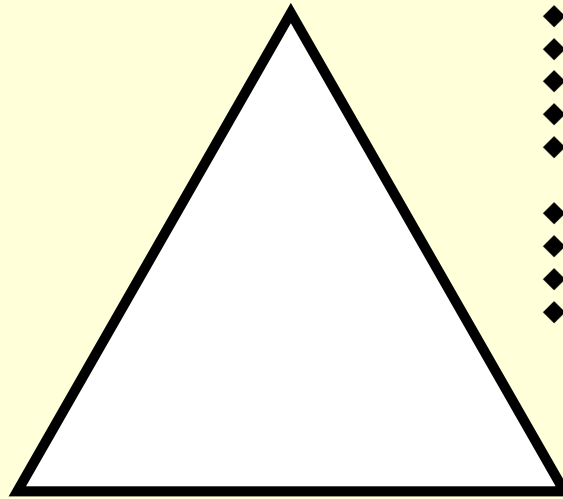
- Once a patient said to me: « **Often it is not necessary to replace faucet, you can also use a joint ...** » In french there are 2 meanings for *joint* =
 1. *gasket*
 2. *marijuana joint*
- I doubt that smoking a marijuana joint is a **second order change, but I appreciate the humor of this patient...**

- I hope that this model : ***Beyond Addiction*** is now quite clear to you.
- If not, please ask me questions.

The systemic model : Beyond Addiction

BEYOND ADDICTION (color ; synthesis) **(Alcohol or other psychoactive products)**

Aim : autonomy



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WITH ADDICTION **(Alcohol & other products)** **(Black ; thesis)**

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Aim : Abstinence

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Example : Couple A.

Couple A

about 55♀ - 65♂ years

Mrs.A request/demand :

Stop drinking alcohol because her husband does not longer tolerate her consumption / does not longer tolerate her being drunk.

Arrêter l'alcool car son mari ne la supporte plus alcoolisée.

Couple A

- Frequent absence of Mr. for professional reasons and / or various mistresses
- Both have a Sixty-eighter speaking about freedom and dependence (Discours soixante-huitard autour de la liberté et de la dépendance)
- Madam: abandonic problematic that is reactivated by circumstances, lack of confidence in him and in her
- (Madame : problématique abandonnique, réactivée par les circonstances, manque de confiance en elle et en lui)

x slides : 2 situations

Couple A

N°	SITUATION OR EVENT	FUNCTIONS	BENEFIT FOR THE FAMILY OR OTHER ENTOURAGE Here: her husband
1	<p>Drinking OH in the morning helps me for working I am alone in my atelier/shop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gives courage and energy, stimulating <input type="checkbox"/> Allows me to work <input type="checkbox"/> OH as a "life buoy" <input type="checkbox"/> Allows me to exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I let it go = passivity (J'ai laissé faire = passivité)
2	<p>My husband goes to his mistress When he leaves / goes sleeping with his mistress, I drink...</p> <p>(Mon mari part chez sa maîtresse Quand il s'en voit / va, je bois → lapsus)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Anesthetic function - OH allows to support / to accept intolerable or unacceptable things <input type="checkbox"/> Homeostatic function = nothing changes - balance (equilibrium) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Because she drinks, I can continue → Justification → Removes the guilt, déculpabilisant ➤ Allows him to consume THC

SITUATION OR EVENT N° 1

Drinking OH in the morning helps me for working/creating

I am alone in my artist atelier (shop)

FUNCTIONS

- **Gives courage and energy, stimulating**
- **Allows me to work**
- **OH as a "life buoy"**
- **Allows me to exist**

BENEFIT FOR THE FAMILY OR OTHER ENTOURAGE

- **I let it go → My passivity allows him to act on his own business**

Couple A

SITUATION OR EVENT N° 2

- **My husband goes to his mistress
When he goes sleeping with his
mistress / When he leaves , I drink**

Lapsus:

« il s'en voit/
il s'en va,
... »

PARADOXES :

- **He: I want to stop it for her** (Lui : Je veux bien arrêter pour elle)
- **She : I can not deprive him of his freedom, which is so dear to him, even if I suffer ...**



it turns
around ; it
can last
long...

SITUATION OR EVENT N° 2

My husband goes to his mistress

When he leaves / goes sleeping with his mistress, I drink

FUNCTIONS

- Anesthetic function - OH allows to support / to accept intolerable or unacceptable things**
- Homeostatic function = nothing changes - balance (equilibrium)**

BENEFIT FOR THE FAMILY OR OTHER ENTOURAGE

- **Because she drinks, I can continue**
 - ➔ **Justification**
 - ➔ **Removes the guilt, removes feeling guilty**
- **Allows him to consume THC (*marijuana*)**

Events or facts:

Consumption of products

Extramarital affairs

Mutual reproaches →

Lead to : Temporal lock (blocking), repetition of the same games, nothing changes

Enables: Supply of "meaning" (sense) in the relationship

→ Allows the economy to consider a redefinition of the nature of the couple's relationship

→ **Homeostatic function**

This question of the **place of each other behind this utopian discourse,**

- 1. let the other stay in suffering**
- 2. produces suffering**

Together with Jean Jacques TILLIER, we have spoken or written about related concepts like ***existence, recognition, otherness (alterity)*** and their importance in the field of addiction ...

Function of consumption of psychoactive substances

Hypothesis :

- It must be of some use for the person and for his entourage.
- It must allow and / or prevent something.
- It is for us (it is up to us) to **decode** together with our patients **the sense** that it may have **in their individual and relational psychic economy**.

The symptom...

The use of psychoactive substances

... a solution

Therapeutic practice

I consider Addiction as **disease of relationship**
(disease of link)

Very frail / vulnerable individuals, so:

➔ First therapeutic emergency or consequence:
Establish a relationship of "trust" as the basis of
therapeutic relationship, therapeutic alliance,
affiliation

Therapeutic practice

The product or addictive behavior occupies the role of a **“third person or a third object”**, (in the sense that it **structures relationships**)

Therefore we can:

- Develop **other "relational third objects"** than psychoactive substances.
- The "floating objects" and especially the **"systemic goose game"** can play this role of **therapeutic third object (= mediator, intermediary)**

The “Systemic Goose Game”

(a board game)

- Can be used for
individuals, couples, families or groups
- Is one of those
“FLOATING OBJECTS”
(Philippe CAILLÉ & Yveline REY)
- Can be transposed
In the field of Addiction for to facilitate change
- There is a special
ADDICTION VERSION FOR GROUPS

(One of my favorite tools)

The Systemic Goose Game is
at the same time:

- + Mediator of communication = therapeutic tool
- + And a metaphor or model of the therapeutic process in progress (co-construction between patient and therapist)

The Systemic Goose Game

The « *classic* » systemic goose game

→ Explores the major events of family history

The Addiction Version of the *Goose Game*

→ Explores the product Consumption Course

→ Explores the path of addiction

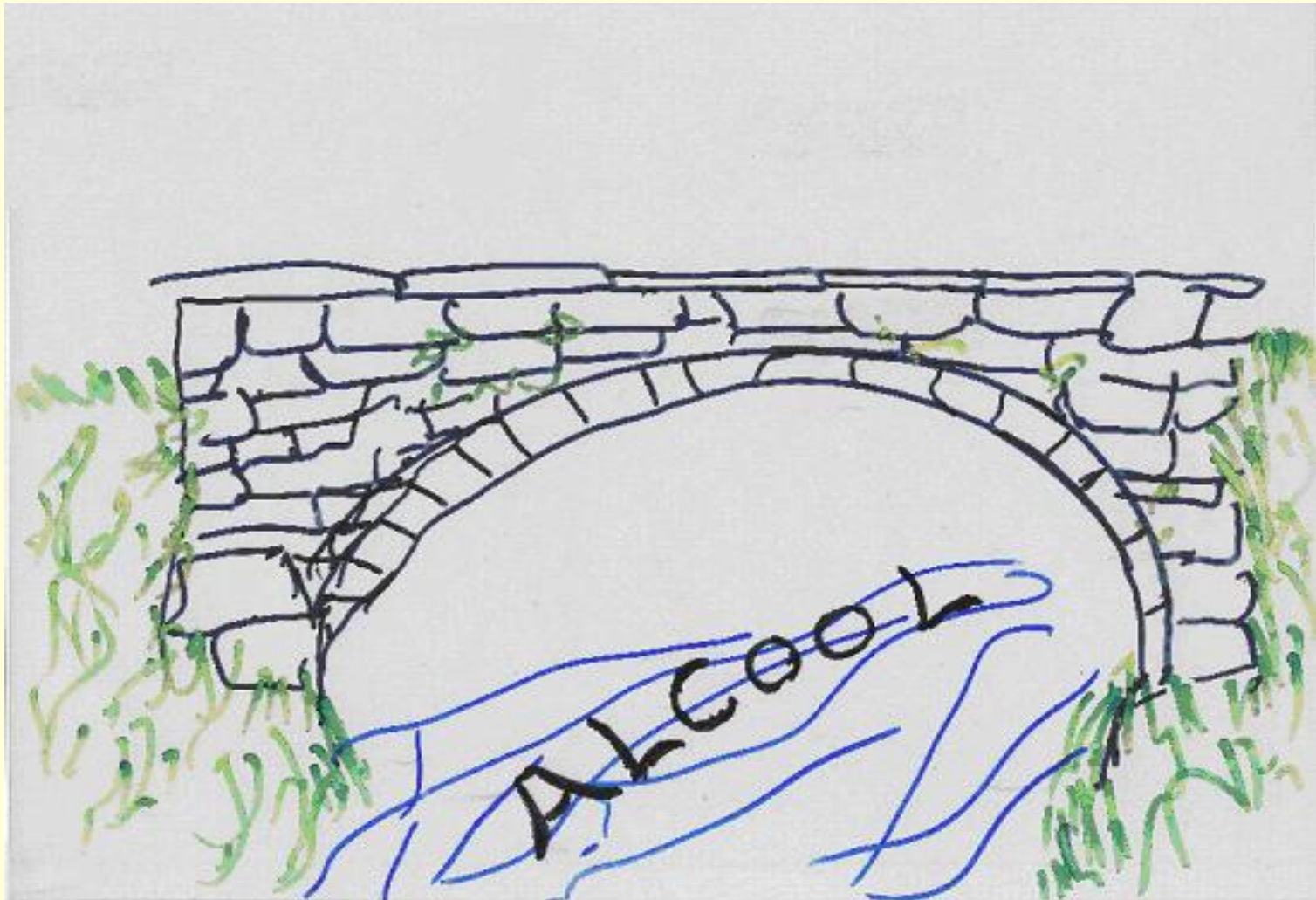
- **What is under the bridge?**



What is under the bridge?

- **Water?**
- **Felt traits?** (remark of a patient who knew my sense of humor...)

Not always...



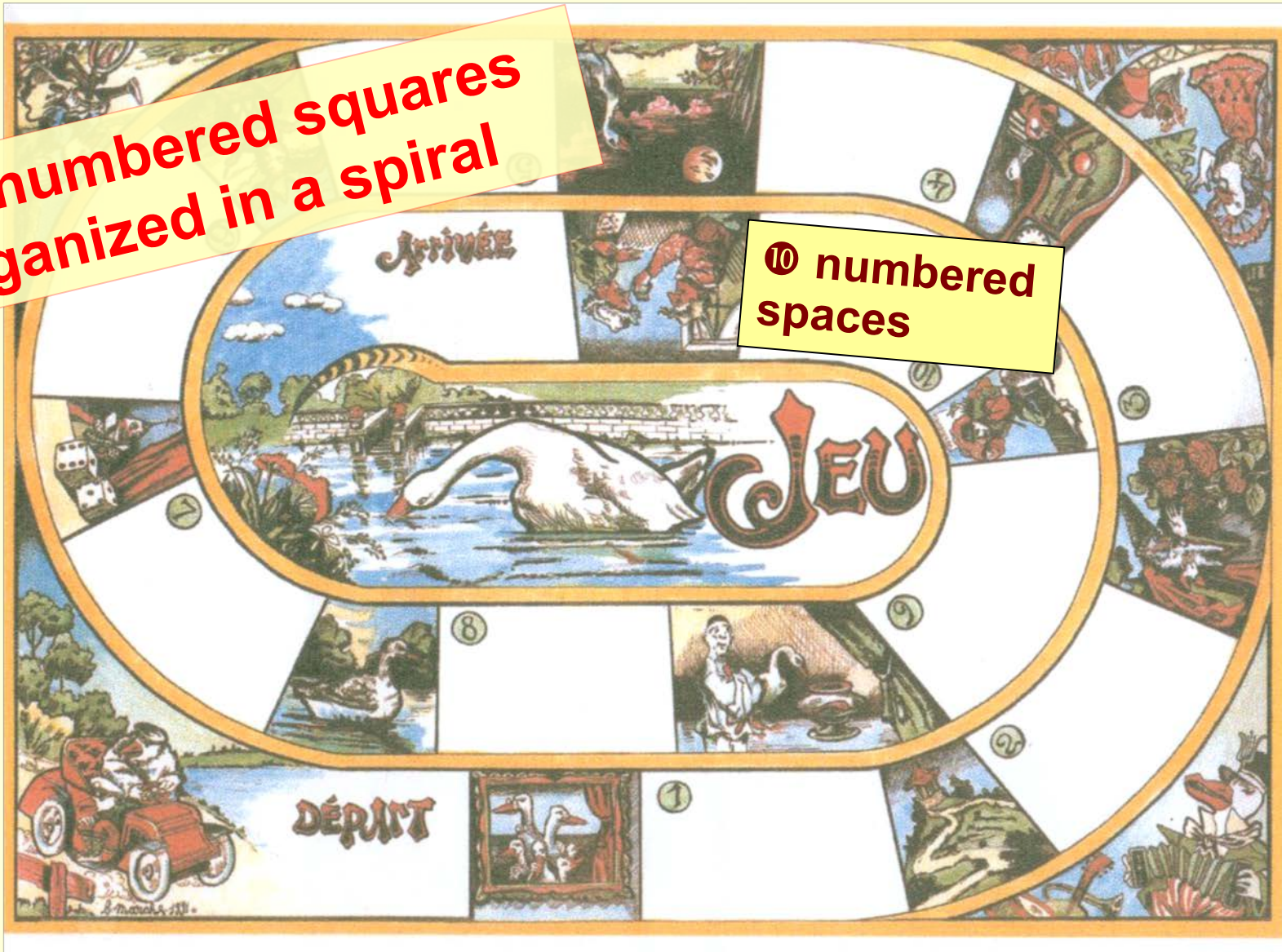
The Systemic Goose Game

**Let's now see the board
With 10 numbered squares.
It is used for both:
classic and Addiction version**



10 numbered squares
organized in a spiral

10 numbered
spaces





The Systemic Goose Game

**The 7 symbolic cartes that we will see now
are also used for both versions**



The Goose



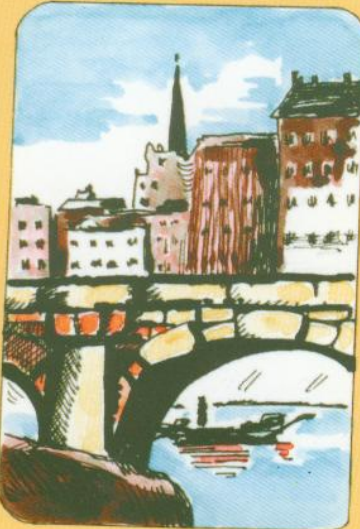
The Well



The Prison



The Hotel



The Bridge



The Labyrinth



The Death

Brief description

With the Addiction version of this tool, patients explore:

- Their **10 most important situations or events of consumption**
- An **emotional color of each of these events** (= by the symbol cartes)
- The **individual and the relational functions of consumption**
- Different aspects of **dependence (Installation and awareness = becoming conscious of dependence; at what moment they are situated in the course ?**

Example : group N° 6

**Product consumption Course
Including symbolic cartes**

Jeu de l'oie – groupe 6



- We don't have time today to develop this very interesting Addiction version of this tool.
- This group Addiction version is richer than the individual Addiction version
- I spoke about this group Addiction version it in the EFTA congress in Paris (2010)...
- **Right now, just a latest example:**

Mister F.

When he was 8 or 9 years old, he was given as a « slave » to a couple of farmers.

His parents were very very poor and did not have enough money for giving to eat at all of their children...

The young boy had to work very very hard (16 hours a day).

He slept in the barn on straw. (dans la grange sur la paille)

He could not have friends or other relations...

Mr. F.

When he had heard the other patient's history, he said with a great emotion:
« That's a history like this that I could have had, if my parents had not given my body and soul to this farmer ... »

This man touched me very much and when I heard this, I understood not only this man, but also 2 other things:

1. The deeper sense of addiction
2. The power of this tool that is **the systemic goose game ...**

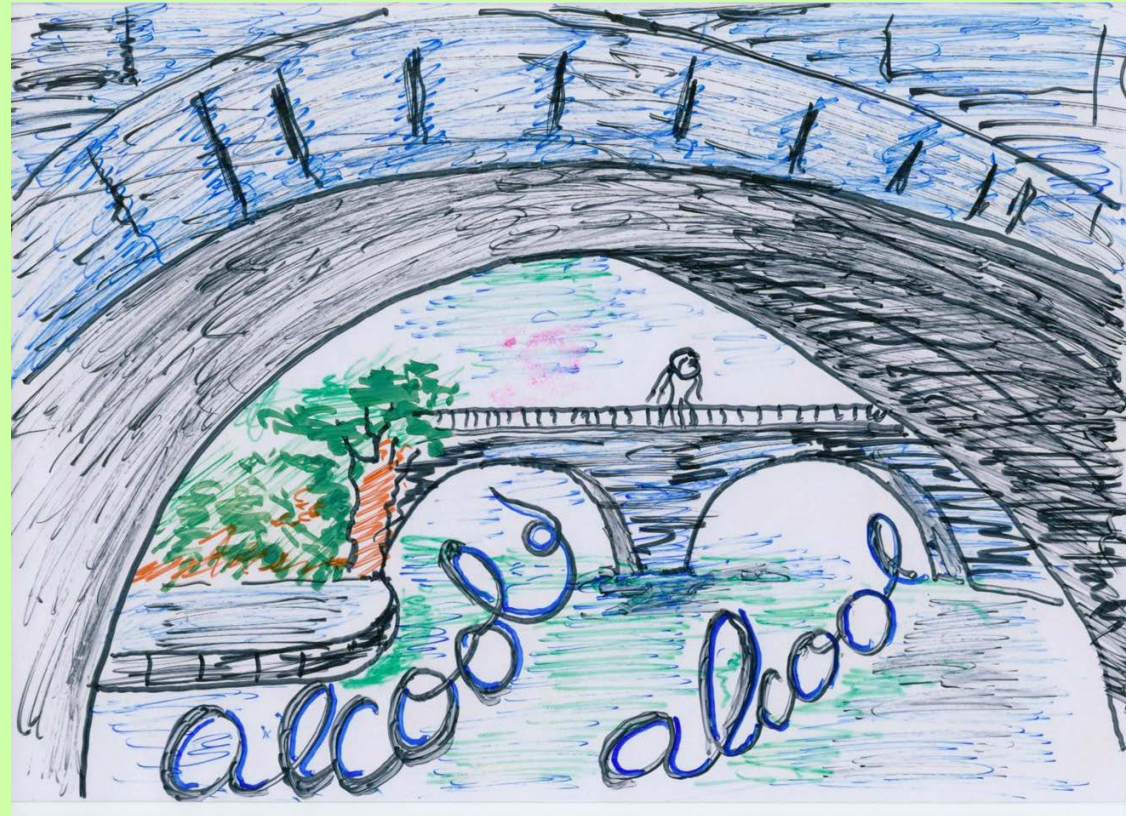
Some reflexions and opening perspectives

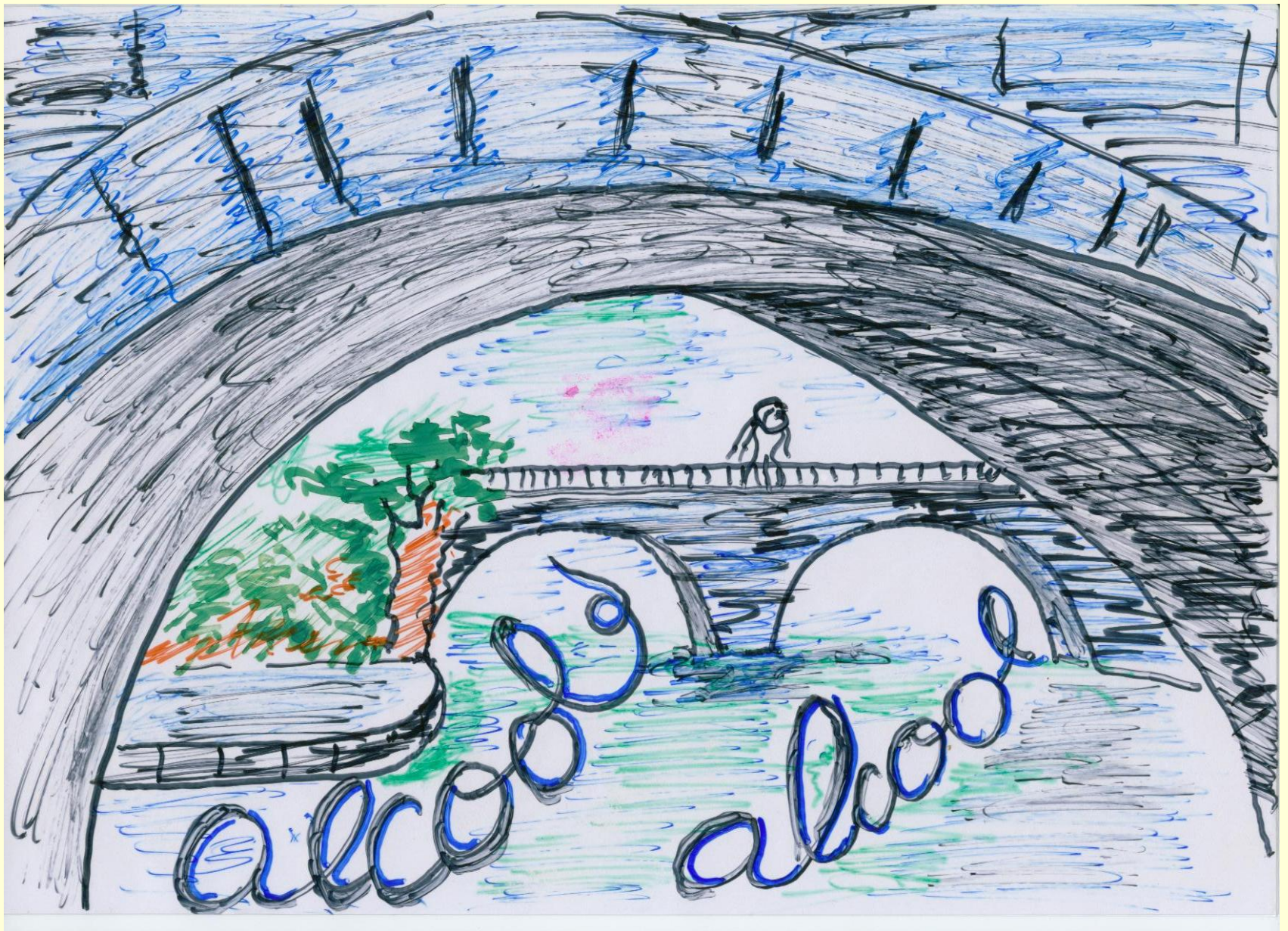
With this conference I wanted to show how patients observe, act and progress, as we do (or have to do) as well. If not, we could not be therapists. Our tools also have to progress.

We all (patients and therapists) are required to be creative. In our daily clinical practice we help patients to write an alternative narrative (an alternative story tale) of their history. By this way, a certain number of them have access to a second order change. In other words: in place of the usual “dead end street” they can choose now one way out of their Addiction.

Some reflexions and opening perspectives

As you can see on the following slide, there are always several ways to cross the river. One bridge might hide another one...





For further information, you can contact me or have a look at the website

Thank you for listening

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Yveline REY,
Marie-Thérèse COLPIN
***Le jeu de l'oie dans
tous ses états ,***
**Une méthode d'entretien
systémique originale :
individu, couple, famille,
école, institution**
Editeur: Fabert (2014)

25€



ADDICTIONS COLLOQUE 3
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PERSPECTIVES
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Addiction & Systemic approach:

« *CROISEMENT DE
PERSPECTIVES -
DÉCLOISONNEMENT DE
PRATIQUES* »

Aix-en-Provence

3 & 4 November 2016

The full conference is on
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