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***“THE HOLISTIC APPROACH AND MULTIPROFESSIONAL
COLLABORATION IN PRODUCTIVE LEARNING.
Has prevention from addictive substances and behaviors
a supportive role to it?”***

KEY SPEECH

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THE HOLISTIC APPROACH AND MULTIPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION IN PREVENTION OF ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES WITH PRODUCTIVE LEARNING.

Dear friends, dear partners in prevention and productive learning projects,

I welcome all of you in Patras, in the 23rd congress of INEPS. As the English language is not the mother language for the most of us, I'll try to share my thoughts and my experience in PROTASI with you in simple English, so to understand each other as far away as we can.

We are here today, participating in this congress, because we care for young people, who have difficulties to be incorporated in social life.

The last decades the adolescents confront enough problems, which increase year after year. At the same time they don't have the skills to overcome the difficulties. So a significant percentage of them try to survive to the margin of the real life.

In reality the social life turned them down, as the official educational and social services don't care about them.

So many adolescents are drug addicted, they abandon the school or the school rejects them, they are involved in violence situations, they consume large quantities of alcohol etc.

It is obvious that our pedagogic system failed with those youngsters.

Generally the society didn't cover their needs in one or more stages during the development of their personality, so they don't believe that they may have dreams which is possible to be fulfilled. They are pessimist about their future. They don't entrust the society.

1) WHICH ARE THE NEEDS OF ADOLESCENTS

The adolescence is a significant phase of one's life. It is the waiting room before the adult age.

It is the last period in adolescent's preparation to get on the stage of the real life and to make their decisions about their future by themselves.

This is possible to happen, if children have formulated a strong personality through their first period of life. If they have developed skills and abilities to know who they are, where they want to go and why.

The characteristics of a mature personality are:

Self-awareness, self esteem, respect for themselves and the other people, communication and expression skills. An adolescent has to be able to cooperate, to accept the diversity, to create, to plan and to realize his goals. Most of all he must feel strong and independent to follow the lifestyle he likes.

2) WHERE AND HOW ADOLESCENTS FORMULATE THEIR PERSONALITY

Children have the opportunity to obtain skills and positive habits from their early life in small and large subsystems, between the wider system of the society - in physical and technical groups as family, school, in the places where they meet peers etc.

So children are strongly influenced by family and by school but as they grow up they accept influence from other youngsters in athletic teams, in entertainment places, from Mass Media especially TV and Internet and generally from the way of life in the society.

This way of life is formulated from the way that all the subsystems function. As we see there is a holistic influence on children from many different subsystems. This influence may be positive or negative. It is dependent from the purpose and the goals of the contemporary social model of life.

3) DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

If we study the results of many researches and compare them with our experience, we will find out that the contemporary model of life functions as a super consumerism model, which needs passive consumers in every field, in order to gain more and more money. This model follows a holistic approach to persuade people that they will find out happiness in consumerism.

HOMO SAPIENS changed in HOMO CONSUMER with a holistic approach.

The majority of the people have been persuaded that if they consume more products, they will become happier. So they try in every way to get more and more money. They do it in any way. They ignore the other people; they work in an antagonistic way, without values and principles. Instead of love, time and support in families, they supply their children with useless products. They hope that their children will be happy but the result is the opposite. The process is followed in the same way by all the subsystems as school and so on.

The modern way of life doesn't encourage young people to be independent personalities but it pushes them to be passive and consumerism addicted. So they don't equip them with everything that is necessary in real life. This is the cause that different personalities are rejected and only youngsters who incorporate themselves in the system have a career.

This is the cause that more and more adolescents are disappointed and abandon school or are involved in drug abuse or are addicted in other dangerous behaviors.

4) WHAT PROTASI IS AND HOW WE WORK IN PROTASI AND THE DRUG S PREVENTION CENTRE

The philosophy of PROTASI is that we are all responsible for this way of life. Even if we are pushed to follow this way, the final choice belongs to every body of us.

So we have decided that we reject consumerism as a way of our life and our purpose is to change this model in our personal life and to propose the same to other people who are ready to do it. The whole title of our agency is PROTASI (proposal), movement for another lifestyle.

The prevention projects in PROTASI and in the DRUG S PREVENTION CENTRE function in two directions

a) The members of PROTASI are trained in changing their own personal way of life, as they are influenced from super consumerism as the whole society. If they succeed it in some way and they are satisfied from the results, then they try to train everyone in the local community who desires to do the same.

The volunteers of PROTASI work always in groups.

The group is the basic tool, which facilitates the individuals to go on with changes. Every group is coordinated by two facilitators and formulates a functioning contract, in which everybody feels that he has got his place.

If the group functions in a good way, it is possible to develop a dynamic that will help volunteers to go on with changes.

At the same time, as the group will live the experiences of these changes, they will find out the way to plan and implement a prevention project to another group in local community.

The work in groups, on one hand is more effective than individual work, but on the other hand it is a practical response to the antagonistic, individual way of life which is promoted from super consumerism. The collective way of life facilitates people to find out their abilities, to choose the way of their life, to help each other and to resist to a super consumerism model of life.

These projects are implemented in PROTASI.

As our members are coming from the whole society, there is a multiprofessional collaboration in the planning, the implementation and the evaluation of every project. Teachers, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, medical doctors etc, every body has a clear role, as it happens in real life. The volunteers work together with the professional staff, which is also coming from the volunteers' tank in the field of prevention.

So the work in groups and the multiprofessional approach are two basic requirements in our work.

b) The goal of prevention projects that are implemented in the local community is to empower and to train young people from the early life of infancy to adolescence, to build a mature personality and to be responsible to choose their way of life. To find out the meaning of their life.

The primary addiction is the addiction from a meaningless life, all the others are addictions (drugs, alcohol etc) are secondary importance, taught us a great Greek psychotherapist Mr. Vasiliou.

As we mentioned above the children are influenced in building their personality from many other subsystems of the local community.

So our methodological approach has to be holistic, so as the projects can be effective.

The prevention policy of PROTASI and the Drugs Prevention Center as well, is orientated to parents, teachers and to every subsystem which is available to be motivated in prevention

The holistic approach improves significantly the positive results of our work in two ways. As long as every subsystem improves its function, it influences positively the children from infancy till their adult age, but at the same time the way of life of the local community is changing gradually to a positive direction.

So the holistic approach multiplies the results of our work.

c) At this point I would like to mention that the way we are trying to communicate with the individuals, is to be aware of their environment. If the environment of the subsystem where he lives is positive then it will be supportive to children or it can treat them. If it is negative the children will grow up having problems in building their personalities.

So the systemic outlook helps to the effectiveness of our projects, as our positive intervention to the environment of the subsystem is helpful not only for the young people, but also for all the members of the subsystem

5) SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF PREVENTION AND P.L

If we have to compare prevention projects and productive learning projects, we would find out similarities as well as differences.

The two projects have the same goal.

To empower young people with skills and abilities, in order to live the life they want, as unique personalities with rights and obligations.

They are implemented in the same and in different target groups.

Prevention projects are implemented to all children without obvious problem and the aim we are trying to succeed is that children will be able to overcome positively life difficulties. Sometimes in the groups of adolescents are youngsters who are involved in drug abuse. We try to motivate them and their parents to participate a therapeutic community.

We are mainly working in the field of primary prevention and sometimes in secondary prevention too.

Productive learning projects are mainly secondary prevention projects.

In the target group participate youngsters who abandon or they are pretending to abandon the ordinary school and have difficulties to incorporate in the social life.

However as a methodology approach is useful for children who don't like the traditional school. So it can be implemented as a project of primary prevention too.

The P.L assesses directly the effectiveness of the projects while the results of prevention projects are assessed indirectly and after a short period of life.

I mention some common points in the methodology of the two projects

1) I think that it is necessary in both projects to exist a pedagogical group with teachers or workers in prevention, inspired from the same philosophy with the same system of values about life. If this group function well, if they are inspired from their work, it will be possible to inspire the youngsters and motivate them to change their way of life.

I believe that the formulation of a clear contract in the group, which will be acceptable from all the members of the group, is necessary and will be helpful for them to achieve project goals.

The personal and group development depends on the good function of the group and the good use of the contract.

2) The participation of different professionals to the implementation of a project will help the group to have a broad perception of the reality and to increase the effectiveness of the projects. Teachers, social workers, psychologists etc, as well parents, members of the municipalities are necessary to cooperate in the implementation of a project.

3) Concerning the youngsters I think that it is necessary they are trained in groups, where they will formulate their own contract. They have to be educated to use it, in a useful way in the group. Sometimes the facilitators of the group must have personal meetings with the students when it is necessary.

4) Holistic approach is useful in both projects. It is necessary for the pedagogic group to communicate with the parents. They have to try to influence positively and to educate family s environment, as well as every environment that influences young people.

In conclusion, I think that Prevention and Productive Learning are orientated to the same purpose.

A different pedagogic system, an other social model, another way of life. The focal point of this model would be the PERSON, as a whole personality, with his needs, his interests, his unique dreams for his life and not super consumerism, a situation that is responsible for human misfortune and misery. A model that pushes the Humanity to catastrophe.

The two projects have common goals. To empower young people, to equip them with skills and abilities and to encourage them to live their live, like active citizens, concerning about theirselves, the others and their environment.

The methodology of both projects is similar.

Multiprofessional collaboration, holistic approach, systemic outlook and group working.

The real life shows us the path, as this is the way that human beings survived, developed and despite to all the difficulties, live till nowadays.