

from the Institute of Psychology of the CUL took an active part in the Kiev conference – Prof. Oleg Gorbaniuk and Dr Joanna Chwaszcz. The Polish Mission in Kiev of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw took the Conference under its wings.

The team of co-organizers of the event was made up of: the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the Ukraine, the G. Kostiuk Institute of Psychology, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (the Institute of Family Studies and Social Work), the Association of Psychologists of the Ukraine, the Ukrainian association of psychologists of organizations and industry.

The conference was first of all a chance to exchange valuable experiences for research workers and practitioners who work in the field of psychology, and to establish international contacts that will bear fruit in the form of effective cooperation.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
„CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL SUR LES TROUBLES ADDICTIFS
FOCUS SUR LES ADDICTIONS COMPORTEMENTALES”

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The concept of the so-called behavioral addiction is ever more often used in the language of both practitioners – people whose profession is to treat dependencies – and researchers. However, it is worth noting that – as yet – a particular disease like “activity dependence” has not been distinguished. In the recent classification of mental disorders DSM-V published by the American Psychiatric Association gambling disorder was included as the only one of the so-called addictive disorders, whereas other disorders belonging to this group still have to be studied.

In the international field experts dealing with the so-called new dependences have been meeting for many years. In France the Federative Institute for Behavioral Addictions (Institut federative des addictions comportementales – IFAC) attached to the Clinic in Nantes was established; it initiates numerous actions connected with the issue. One of such actions was organizing another international congress devoted to behavioral addictions on April 16-17, 2015. The congress took place on the premises of the Faculty of Pharmacy of the Nantes University and its aim was to establish a plane for an exchange and discussion for clinicians and researchers in order to clarify the concept of behavioral addictions and to present most recent methods of therapy of new disorders.

The congress also was an occasion for a meeting of experts from Europe, Canada, the United States and Australia. Poland had her representative too – the author of the present report was a member of the Scientific Committee. Among the invited speakers there were such universally known researchers in the field of behavioral addictions as Alex Blaszczynski, Marc Potenza, Robert Ladouceur, Michel Lejoyeux, Elizabeth Papineau, Isabelle Giroux. All the plenary lectures were simultaneously translated into English and French; the thematic sessions were held in a chosen language (French or English).

During the two days of the conference participation was possible in four plenary sessions and in nineteen thematic ones; it was up to the participants to choose which one to attend. Considering the themes of particular thematic sessions and the speakers in them the choice was not at all an easy one, although some of them were especially interesting and not all the people who wanted to participate in them were able to do so because of a limited number of seats.

Day One was begun with a plenary session entitled “The Concept of Addictions Without Substances. Its Usefulness, Limitations and References to the DSM-V”. The session was moderated by Prof. Joël Billieux from the Catholic University of Louvain, and Marc Potenza and Mélina Fatseas from Bordeaux were the speakers. Dr Fatseas’s lecture devoted to the phenomenon of craving in behavioral addictions was met with an immense interest from the listeners, which is confirmed by the fact that the seats for the workshop led by Dr Fatseas in the further part quickly became scarce even before it started. The speaker referred to numerous empirical data, including ones resulting from the studies she conducted herself. She also referred to therapy, with special attention paid to the phenomenon of craving, to the methods of work that are used, and to diagnostic tools. The second plenary session was devoted to the phenomenon of addictions in the context of the “digital era”. The session was presided over by Jean-Luc Vénisse, the Director of the IFAC, whereas the speakers (Jean Michel Costes of the Observatoire des Jeux – France, Dr Boris Beaudé of the École Polytechnique Fédérale of Lausanne, Dr Susana Jimenez-Murcia of Bellvitge University Hospital-IDIBELL and CIBERobn of Barcelona) referred to on-line gambling and addictions to the so-called new technologies.

Among the nine thematic sessions held on the first day several themes can be mentioned, including “Anorexia Nervosa as a Specific Behavioral Addiction” moderated by Dr Marie Grall-Bronnec of the IFAC, “The Policy of Gambling Responsibly” moderated by Prof. Isabelle Giroux of the Université Laval of Quebec, “Can All Behaviors Become Addictions” moderated by Dr Morgane Guillou-Landreat of the IFAC, “Cyberaddiction and Video Games Addiction” moderated by Prof. Didier Acier of the Université de Nantes, “The Problem of Sects in the Context of Addictive Behaviors” moderated by Prof. Raphaëlle Miljkovitch of the Université Paris 8. The organizers of the Congress gave its participants a chance to establish contacts, exchanges and less formal debates during a Gala Dinner given at the end of the first day of the congress. It was a really exceptional chance to meet in one place so many experts from all over the world who study behavioral addictions, as well as to establish academic relations between researchers working in similar fields as far as the character of their research is concerned.

Day Two of the Congress was largely devoted to therapy of addictions and preventing them. The first plenary session entitled “Prevention and Therapy: What Are the News?” was led by Prof. Marc Potenza from the United States. One of the speakers was a recognized expert in the field of pathological gambling from Australia – Alex Blaszczynski, a co-originator of the conception of three paths of the development of pathological gambling, who presented the dominant and most recent trends in therapy of problem gambling. A very interesting lecture was also given by Prof. Isabelle Giroux from Canada, who presented an interactive simulator of the gambling situation used for work on a gambler’s cognitive restructuring. Professor Giroux also showed a film that presented the work of the simulator during a therapeutic session, which made it possible to directly learn about the most recent technologies used in therapy.

On Day Two ten thematic sessions were held, devoted to, among others, the following topics: “Habits and Neurostimulation” moderated by Prof. Shirley Fecteau from the Quebec Université Laval, “Adolescence and the Internet” moderated by Prof. Lucio Romo from the Paris-Ouest-Nanterre-La Défense Université, “Neurobiological Aspects of Pathological Gambling” moderated by Prof. Jean-Claude Dreher, “Sex Addictions” moderated by Dr Marie Grall-Bronnec from the IFAC, “In What Way Can the Pathological Gamblers’ Quality of Life Be Improved?” moderated by Dr Yasser Khazaal and “Gambling in Europe” moderated by Jean-Michel Costes from the Observatoire des Jeux – France. In the last of the above mentioned sessions the author of the present report gave a lecture presenting the current state of research into pathological gambling in Poland, the intensity of the problem, and also the actions taken to prevent it (including the realization of the project co-financed by the Fund for Solving Gambling Problems). The Congress was closed with a plenary session devoted to the issue of animal models in therapy of behavioral addictions.

Participation in the conference was an extremely valuable experience for all the clinicians and researchers because the most recent achievements and trends in the field of behavioral addictions were presented there. A great demand for this type of events may be confirmed by the fact that those who participated in the Nantes Congress also took part in the international conference devoted to pathological gambling that took place in Neuchâtel, Switzerland on January 15-17, 2014 (the author of the present report also took part in it). Hence the cyclical form of this kind of events seems to be desirable because of the great circle of their recipients who are willing to visit various countries in Europe looking for the most recent knowledge. An additional advantage, that is a possibility to establish international cooperation, was also especially valuable for the author of the report who hopes that it will bear fruit in the form of an interesting international research project.

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