



Pärnu Haigla



Kodanikuühiskonna
Sihtkapital



Change of perspective:

Alcoholism as a Spiritual Crisis

QUALITY OF LIFE OF MEN WITH ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE SYNDROME

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Background:

Estonian population: 1,3 mil

Official language: Estonian

Capital: Tallinn

Research:

Related to my Master's thesis
at the University of Tartu
(*Public health*) (2011)
Supervisor K. Lang PhD



Alcohol dependence is comprehensive disease that in addition to health problems, involves economic and social difficulties.

- Men's health indicators, mortality, and health awareness are much lower comparing to women.
- Alcohol dependence is in society stigmatized phenomenon that is often considered as velleity, not disease. This attitude inhibits prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and development of support systems.

Some alcohol consumption: levels and pattern in Estonia (WHO)

Prevalence of alcohol use disorders and alcohol dependence (%), 2010*

	Alcohol use disorders**	Alcohol dependence
Males	18.6	9.9
Females	3.2	1.7
Both sexes	10.2	5.4
WHO European Region	7.5	4.0

*12-month prevalence estimates (15+).

**Including alcohol dependence and harmful use of alcohol.

World Health Organization 2014

http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/global_alcohol_report/profiles/est.pdf

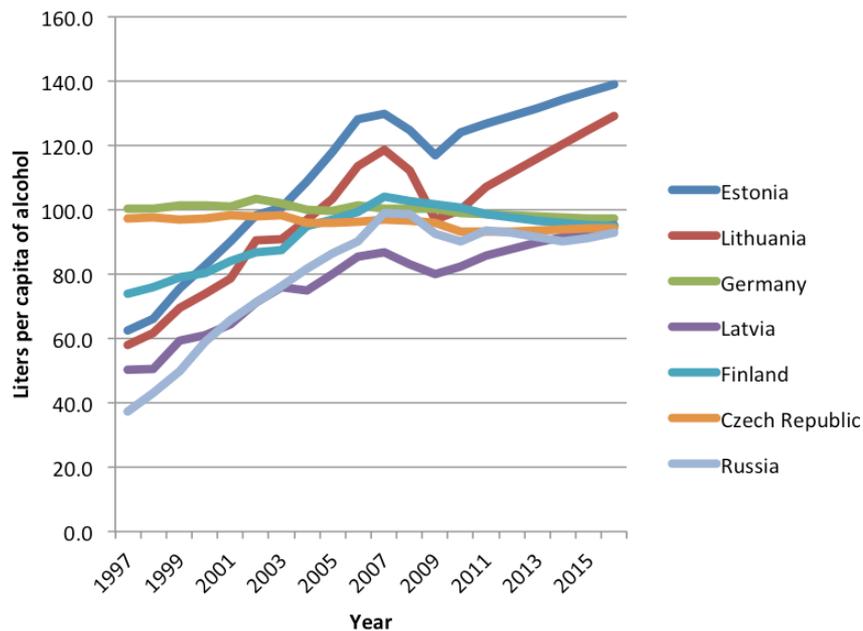
Consumption: 2007: **12,6**; 2008: **12,1** ; 2009: **10,2** litres of pure alcohol per person

- People affected with alcohol dependence

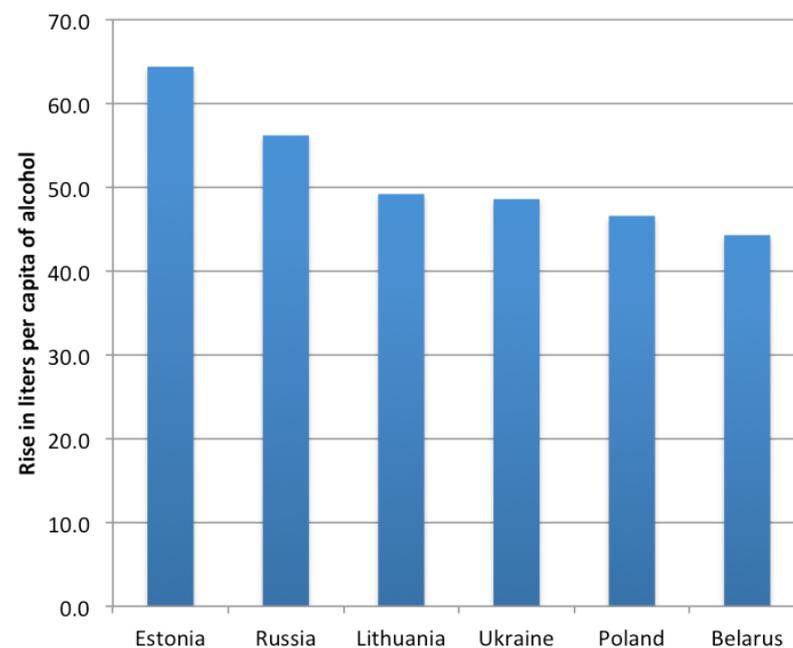
9,500 females and **45,400 males** (2004)

http://amphoraproject.net/w2box/data/AMPHORA%20Reports/CAMH_Alcohol_Report_Europe_2012.pdf

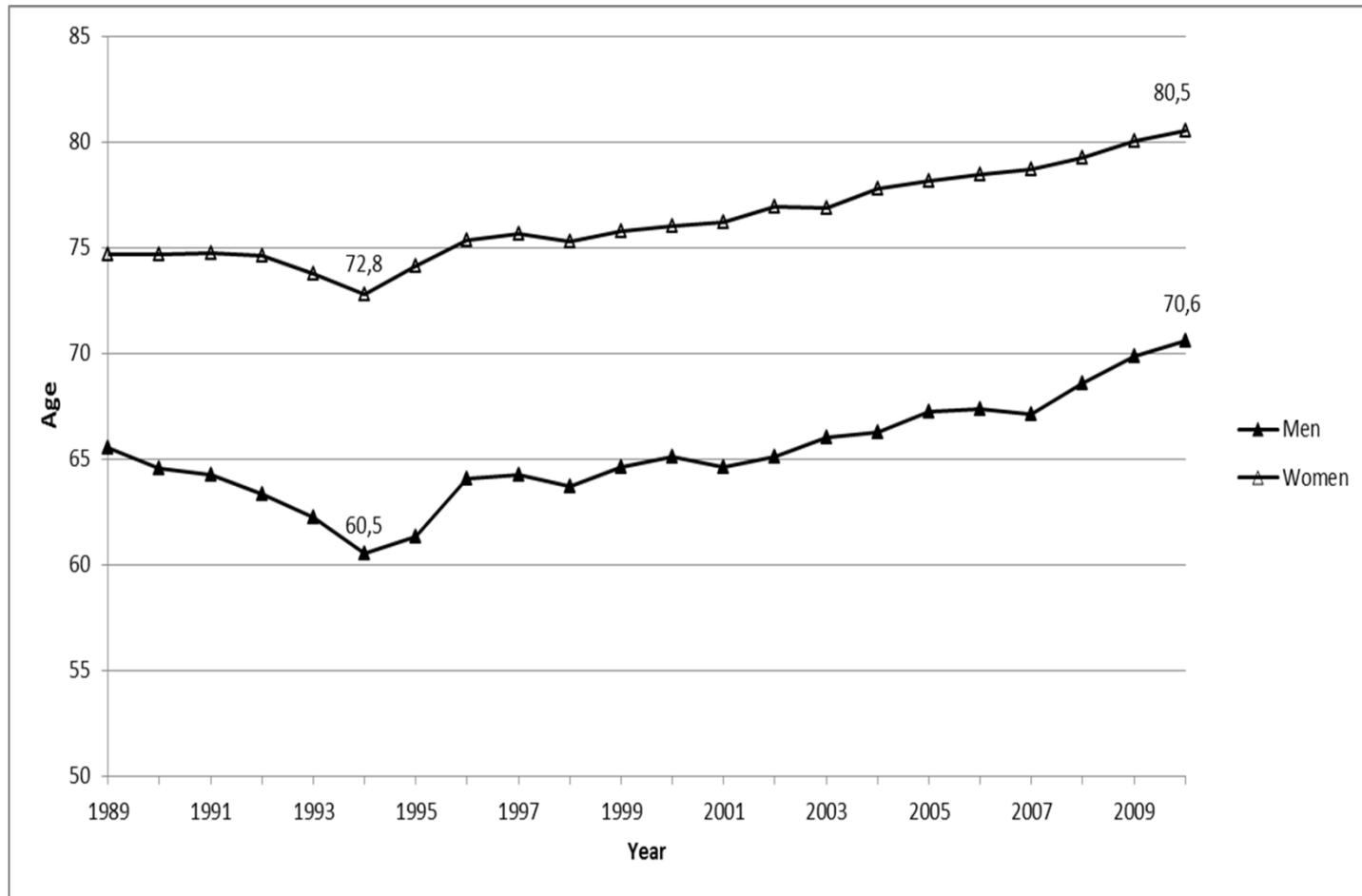
The world's top drinkers



Biggest rise in drinking, 1997 to 2011

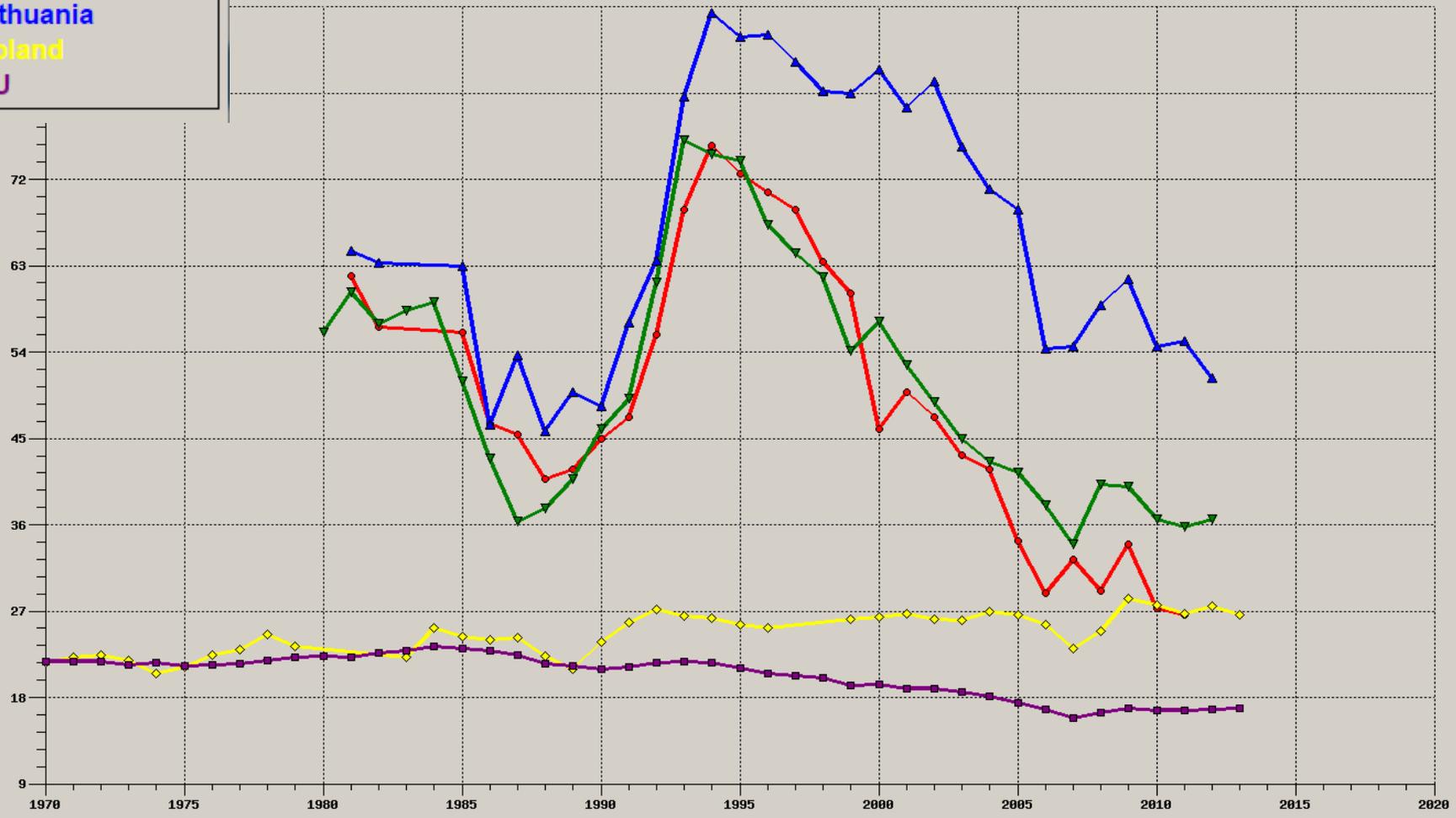


Life expectancy at birth (Estonia)



SDR, suicide and self-inflicted injury, all ages, per 100 000, males

- Estonia
- ▼ Latvia
- ▲ Lithuania
- ◇ Poland
- EU



Source: WHO/Europe, European HFA Database, December 2015

Focus on medical treatment and aftermath/results,
but we forget:

Why people drink alcohol ?

Why people want to change consciousness ?



- **Purpose:** The study aims to describe and analyse **quality of life of alcohol dependent men** in Estonia
- **Methods:** Consecutive sample of men who participated in the study had been diagnosed with alcohol dependence and been on treatment in Pärnu Hospital, Estonia. The social-demographic indicators and exposure to alcohol were assessed using a questionnaire. General index of quality of life and six broader domains (physical health, psychological, level of independence, social relationships, environment, **spirituality/religion, personal beliefs**) of quality of life were investigated using WHOQOL-100.
- **Time:** The survey was carried out 2010-2011.
- **Data:** analysis statistical program STATA and Mann-Whitney test was used.

Definitions

- **Dependence syndrome** F10.2 (ICD-10/V). A cluster of behavioural, cognitive, and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated substance use and that typically include a strong desire to take the drug, difficulties in controlling its use, persisting in its use despite harmful consequences, a higher priority given to drug use than to other activities and obligations, increased tolerance, and sometimes a physical withdrawal state.

ICD-10/V <http://apps.who.int/classifications/icd10/browse/2015/en#/F10-F19>

- WHO has defined **quality of life** as individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns.
- Division of Mental Health and Prevention of Substance Abuse, WHO, 1997)

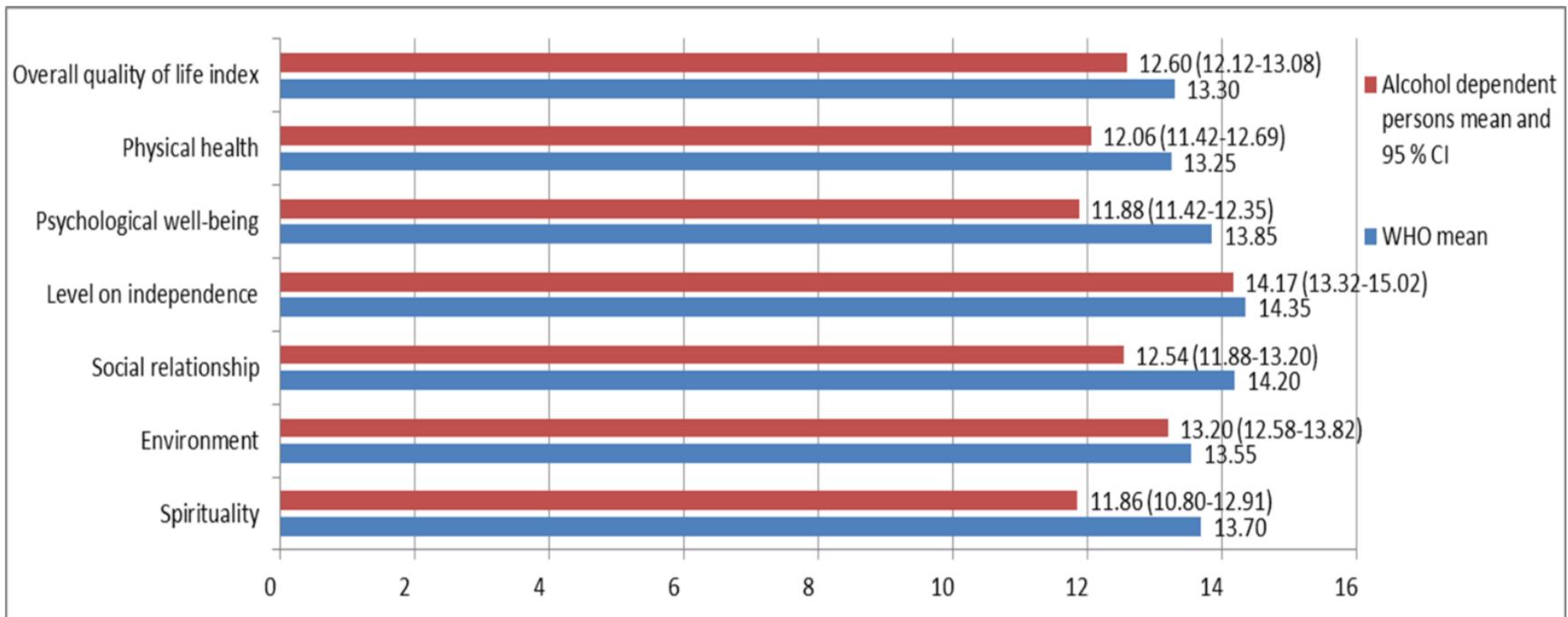
Results:

In the final analysis answers of 57 men were used. The lowest average index of quality of life was for physical health (12.06), **psychological wellbeing** (11.88) and **spirituality** (11.86). Compared to European average, all domains for the study group had lower values.

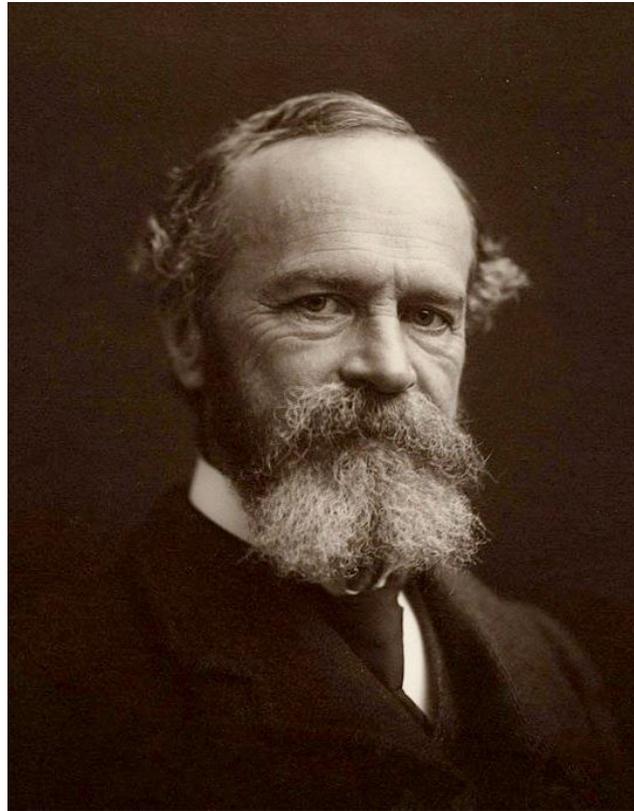
Men who were participating in self-help groups and/or were believers of some religion had higher estimation of their spirituality.

Those men, who had had their longest period of non-drinking more than six and/or were in relationship, had higher estimations of social relationships.

WHO mean and alcohol dependent persons mean quality of life indexes:

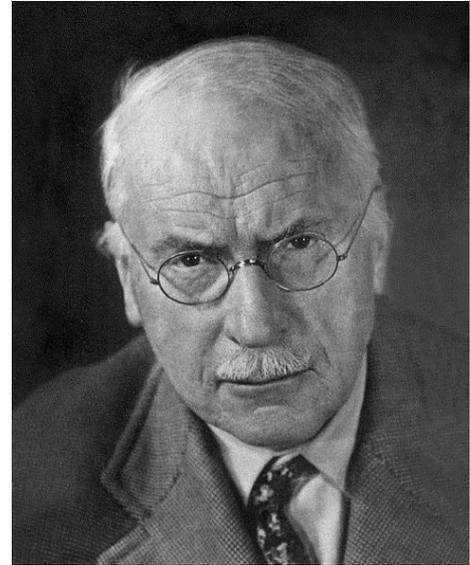


Quality of life domains (WHOQOL-100)



“The only radical remedy I know for dipsomania is religiomania.”

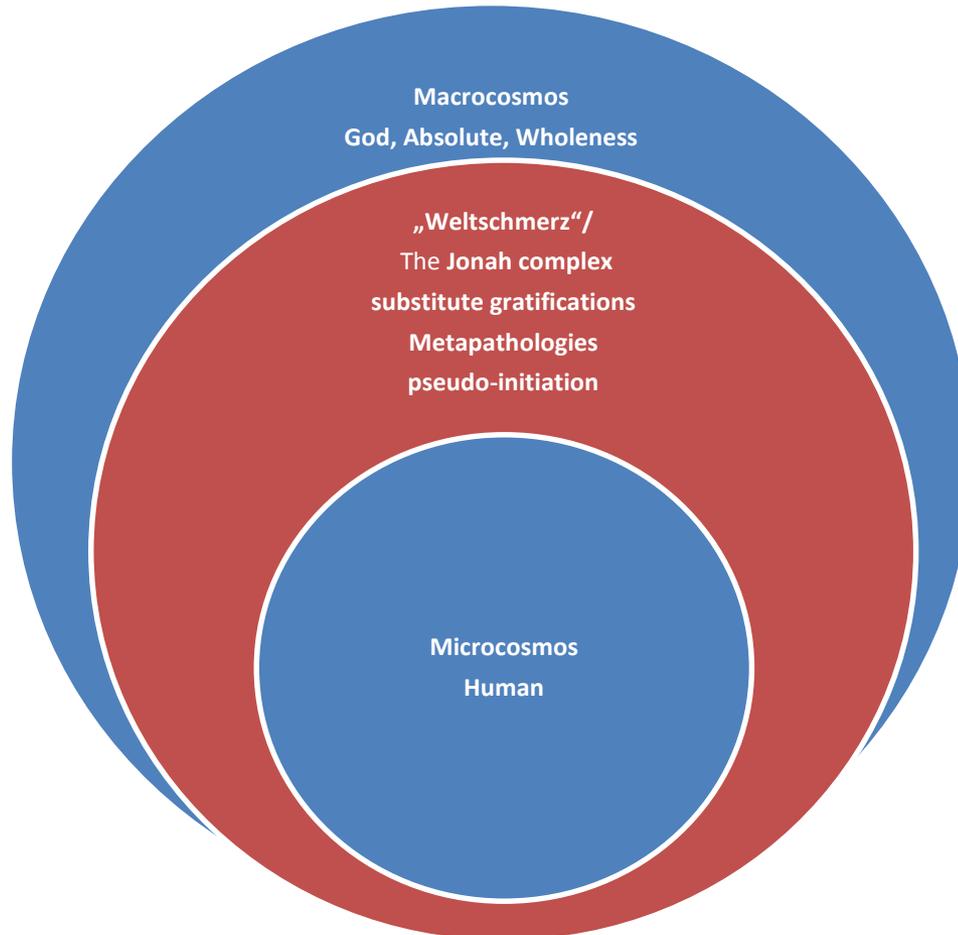
Why people want to change consciousness ?



Carl Gustav Jung viewed addiction as a spiritual malady and addicts as frustrated spiritual seekers. He believed the craving for altered states of consciousness reflected a spiritual thirst for wholeness, and that only those who have a spiritual awakening could successfully overcome addiction.

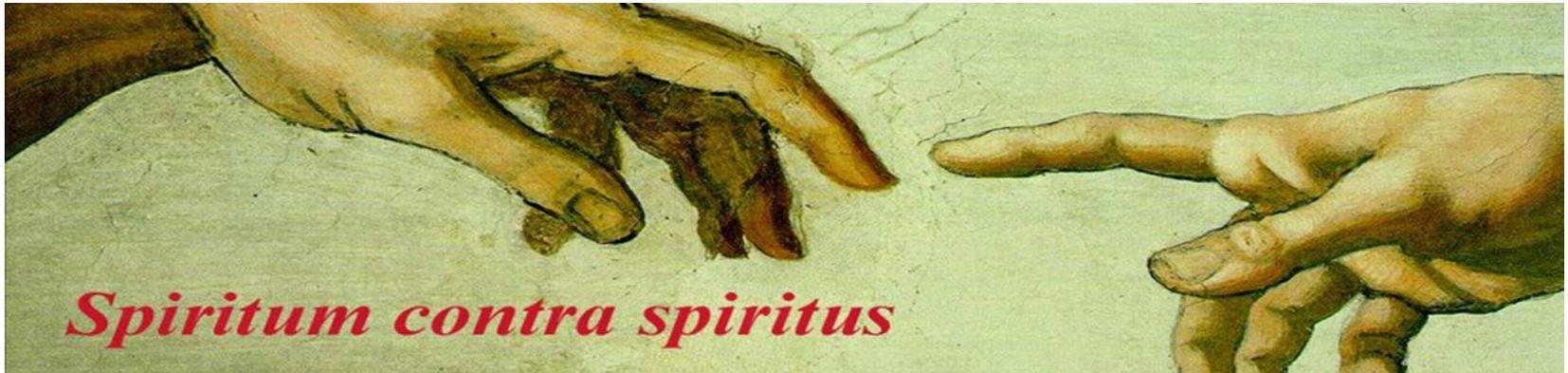
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/some-assembly-required/201404/what-constitutes-spiritual-awakening> (Dan Mager)

The Thirst for Wholeness (Jung)



The **Jonah complex** is the fear of success which prevents self-actualization. It is the fear of one's own greatness, the evasion of one's destiny, or the avoidance of exercising one's talents (Maslow).

The Creation of Adam Michelangelo

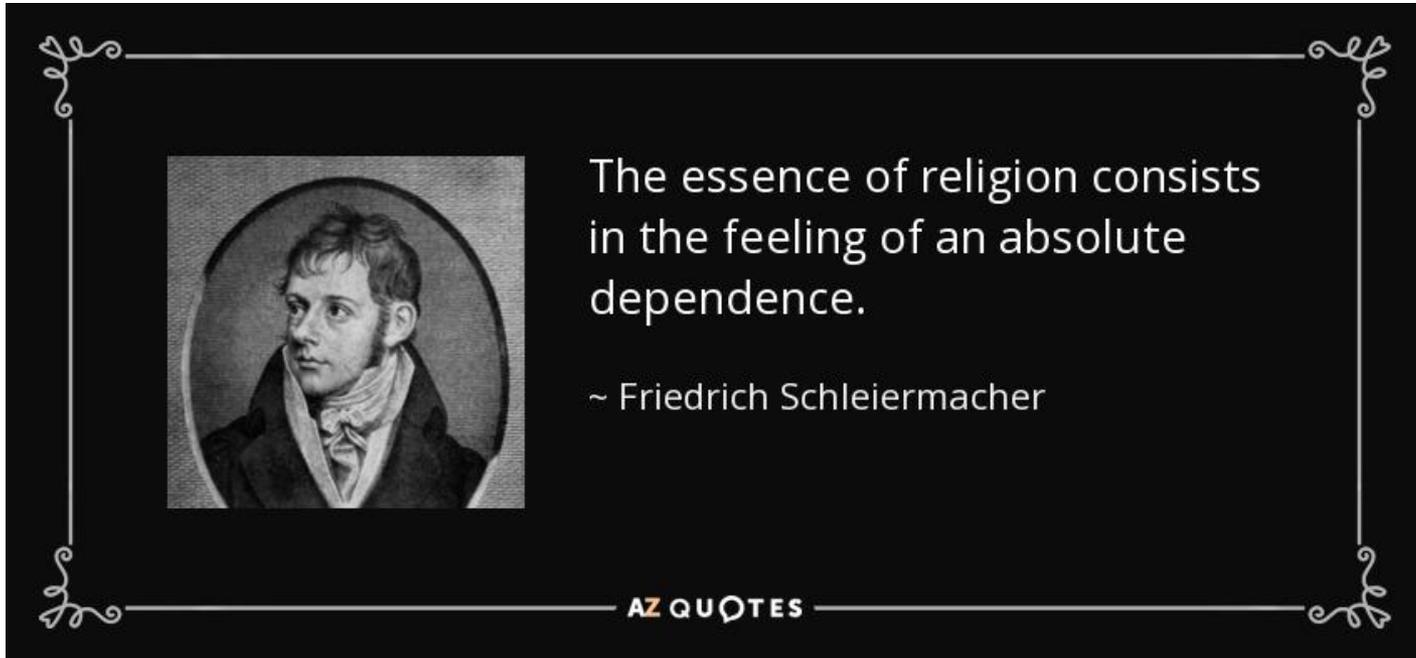


We are seeking for Spirit in ways that prevent its realization (paradox), and force us to settle for substitute gratifications, which propel us through, and lock us into, the wretched world of time and terror, space and death, sin and separation, loneliness and consolation (K. Wilber Atman Project)



Hypothetical challenge:

Somehow we are always addicted, the question is how we can change our addiction line to circle, to transforming it for higher level.



Addiction /dependence (pathology)_____ Freedom /God (salutology)

Conclusions:

- In broader context, deeper cooperation of medical, scientific, political and non-governmental sphere is needed to gain success in the struggle against alcohol dependence.
- The practical work should start from better sharing of information about alcohol and **co-morbid** problems, more strict official alcohol policy, restructuring of treatment process to integrate medical and psychological methods and also integrating spirituality issues into health care and rehabilitation system.

*Alcohol gave us wings,
and then slowly took away our sky.....*

Addiction as idolatry



*„We have two lives, and the second begins when we realize we only have **one**.”* Confucius

Thank You!

Cooperation, experiences and contacts are welcome:

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