

DRUG ADDICTION AS A DISORDER OF THE “ANTIDRIVE” MECHANISM ?

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ABSTRACT

Substance dependence is a complex disorder of the central nervous system, characterized by the loss of behavioral control, and by the possibility of relapse, even after a prolonged period of abstinence. This disorder may have its source in a disturbed balance of drive related behaviors, which control appetitive behaviors, aimed at seeking contact with a reward (addictive substance). The act of consumption becomes more and more attractive, and the behavior takes on more and more compulsive character. Achievement of a drive goal brings about the state of fulfillment, which may be a result of a so-called “antidrive”. Contrary to the mobilization and activation of the organism, which are caused by a drive, a “antidrive” causes demobilization and tranquility. According to our hypothesis, dependence is linked to a dysfunction of the state of a drive fulfillment, i.e. malfunction of a “antidrive”. This leads to the sustainment of activation related to the current drive, which blocks other drives. In effect, uncontrolled compulsive behaviors are released. The reasons for a “antidrive” malfunction may be related to adaptive changes, reflecting a prolonged contact with an addictive substance.

Key words: drug addiction, drives, “antidrive”.