

## **The Anton Proksch Institute's Orpheus Programme**

The Orpheus Programme developed by the Anton Proksch Institute is an innovative concept for treating addictive disorders. It seeks to empower addicts to live their lives in a way that is so exciting, pleasurable and joyful that the addictive substance loses its overpowering appeal.

Abstinence should no longer be seen just as self-denial but first and foremost as a way of opening up an opportunity for change.

In addition to treating the addiction itself (detoxification and withdrawal treatment) as well as its physical and mental comorbidities, a broad spectrum of modules that are designed to give joy and pleasure are offered as part of a lifestyle change programme. The main aim of the treatment is to enable patients to live an autonomous and independent life that is for the most part experienced as joyful.

### **The Individual Modules:**

#### **Experiencing pleasure**

In keeping with the motto, "... addiction has no chance where life is beautiful and full of joy!" patients work in experience-oriented groups to develop their own ability to experience pleasure by strengthening what is healthy and promoting a sense of well-being. Experiencing pleasure needs an inner willingness to do so, requires time, abandonment and sensitivity of the senses.

#### **Movement**

One of the therapeutic aims is to help patients develop a positive approach to their body, its perceptual awareness and mobility. The movement module is designed to remind patients of their own resources and to restore their own potential for movement and thus for action that has been temporarily lost.

#### **Creative Workshop**

The creative workshop stimulates patients to (re)discover their hidden talents, hobbies and abilities, for example in arts and craft activities. The possibilities for realising one's own ideas are almost boundless.

#### **Art Therapy**

The art therapy module at the Anton Proksch Institute provides a link between the creative therapeutic and psychological-psychotherapeutic activities. In a first step, a variety of media such as painting, pottery, music, movement, poetry and new media are used to prompt reflection on issues that are of personal relevance and then to reveal new prospects with a view to subsequently utilising them for change.

#### **Clinical Gardening**

"Healthy growth" means more than just sowing, cultivating, growing, harvesting and enjoying the garden produce, it is also about growing and rediscovering resources in a new life unencumbered by addiction. Clinical gardening thus stimulates the processes of finding meaning, gives pleasure and

stimulates the senses. Furthermore, nature can be experienced both actively and passively as a tangible resource.

### **Leisure Group**

The leisure group provides an opportunity to utilise new media for creative ideas, to obtain information about voluntary work and associations with the aim of helping patients establish daily and weekly routines that are good for their overall personal health.

### **Music**

The music groups, a percussion group, a pop/rock group and a choir make an important contribution to introducing patients to meaningful and enjoyable activities. Participants do not need to have any previous musical knowledge.

### **Philosophy Academy - Philosophic Cinema Therapy**

Good films are like balm for the soul because every one of them has something that can provide inspiration for dealing with life's problems. Once a week the seminar rooms H1, H2 and H3 at the Anton Proksch Institute are converted into a cinema where excerpts from a profound and wholesome cinema film are shown on a large screen. The screening, which lasts approximately 30 minutes, is followed by a seminar, at which participants discuss the content of the film and its therapeutic-philosophic message.

### **Walking and Culture**

The Anton Proksch Institute's green-belt location and proximity to Vienna with all its cultural activities enable patients to (re)discover an enjoyment of nature and outdoor exercise during guided country walks. These walks also provide an opportunity to learn more about the history of the area. Excursions to museums and exhibitions offer new experiences, while cinema, cabaret and theatre provide some good entertainment. Patients receive a *Kulturpass* card that gives free admission to many cultural institutions.

### **Learning Centre**

The learning centre at the Anton Proksch Institute offers a range of free educational courses. Even while undergoing residential treatment patients can acquire valuable skills that will help them (re)enter the working world and remain in employment. Patients learn independently on a PC (Computer Based Training - Learning Software) and/or in small groups (workshops) supported by a skilled trainer.

## The Background to “Orpheus”

In ancient Greek mythology Orpheus was able to resist the temptations of the sirens by playing beautiful music on his lyre thus drowning out their destructive call. This was in contrast to Odysseus, who ordered his men to tie him to the ship’s mast and seal their ears with wax. In a similar approach, the Anton Proksch Institute is breaking new ground in the treatment of addicts by not defining abstinence as the sole goal of treatment as was the case in the past. Instead abstinence is viewed as an important sub-goal, as the basis for a change process directed at empowering the patient to again live a joyful and autonomous life. This life should be enhanced and enriched by so much beauty that the addictive substance increasingly loses its appeal.