

# **AN EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF ADDICTION**

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**THANKS**



# ADDICT OR ADDICTED?





# DIAGNOSIS

## DSM-V — Substance-related disorders

Encompass 10 separate classes of drugs: alcohol, caffeine, cannabis, hallucinogens, inhalants, opioids, sedatives, hypnotics, anxiolytics, stimulants, cocaine, tobacco, and other substances.



# DIAGNOSIS

## Interpreting addiction:

Mental disorder

Social response

Moral flaw

Disease

Lack of human connection

Volitional / non-volitional

Disordered desire






# DIAGNOSIS

- Brain disease model
- Learned salient habit



## CAROLINE KNAPP, *DRINKING: A LOVE STORY*

Alcoholism...is a progressive illness; it sneaks up on you so subtly, so insidiously, that you honestly don't know you are falling into its grip until long after the fact...[In the beginning] the drinking felt more like an experiment, an act based on some hypothetical remedy I'd begun to form about the connection between liquor and anxiety, liquor and sadness, how one corrected the other. 'Drink as a remedy'...Over time, the lesson folded into the soul: liquor eases (1996: 18, 32, 63).





# METHOD

Phenomenology —

The 'sciences des naïvetés'; the work of reflection that is brought to bear on unreflective, everyday life...reminders of what we already know but continually pass over' (2002: 7).



# LIVING ADDICTION

Kierkegaard and Lévinas

- Addressing the subjective implications of subjectivity as 'addict' versus having an addiction
- Relational self – How do we define ourselves?





# SØREN KIERKEGAARD

Kierkegaard 'urges us to love the person we see' (Lippitt 2013:86), rather than 'the self-generated image of the other person' (Ferreira 2001, in *ibid*).







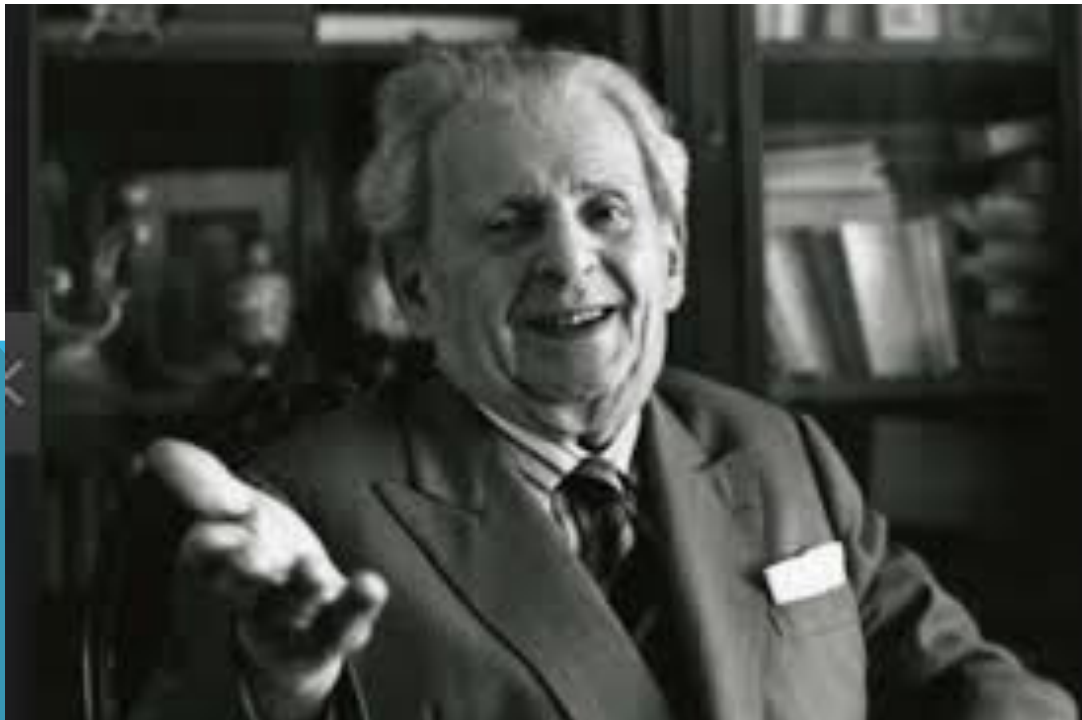




# EMMANUEL LÉVINAS

The other is not something that I can '[take] hold of (*prend*) and comprehend (*comprend*)' (2002: 16).

'Desire – far from carrying in [it] only the hollowness of need [is]... bursting of the 'more' in the 'less' (GCM 50).



# CONCLUSION

Though addiction presents particular challenges to subjectivity, Lévinas and Kierkegaard's existential phenomenology is unconditional.

A self is becoming herself in relation to the infinite other, rather than in relation to the finite object.

Addiction and problem of need.



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