

# AddictionCare 2025: Drug Addiction and Rehabilitation

Conference Proceedings

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## The Autobiographic Art Therapy Protocol (AATP) to Support Clients during Drug Detoxification

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**Context:** The AATP protocol was developed at the Methadone Clinic, in the Dept of Psychiatry of Muhimbili University, Tanzania, during the years 2019-2021. The Clinic was not residential and the risk of relapse was very high (over 50%).

**Approach:** This protocol is based on the concept of narrative therapy, using non-verbal symbolic self-expression and optional verbal sharing in the group. The aim is to strengthen the motivation of completing the detoxification process, overcoming feelings of shame and increasing personal resources.

**Intervention:** The protocol is structured with 10 theme-oriented workshops, followed by some free creative time. It moves through three phases:

- 1) the time before addiction (3 sessions);
- 2) the time during addiction (3 sessions)
- 3) the present time (3 sessions).

**Results:** The protocol was piloted with a group of 7 men clients, who all completed detoxification without relapsing. They acknowledged decrease of shame and increase of motivation. Research would be needed to prove the effectiveness of the intervention.