

**Sophie Poirot**  
**Testimonial of 12 years spent under the control of a “therapist”  
and of winning my criminal trial**

In 1992, I became well and truly “*hooked*” by Benoît Yang-Ting (BYT), a man claiming to be a “therapist”. But my relations with BYT and his wife date back to 1987. I was 19 years’ old at the time and in an easily damaged state following the death of my mother three years previously. Moreover, my father had just married BYT’s younger sister.

Profiting from the trust linked to this family relationship, the Yang-Tings slowly brought me out of my shell.

**In a phase of seduction**, I experienced “*love bombing*” on arriving in Paris in summer 1991 (I had previously been a student in Le Havre), receiving presents (clothing, books, trinkets, etc.), invitations to restaurants, compliments. This ended up with me entering into a “derapeutic” relationship several months later (September 1992).

Indeed, before starting my university psychology course, I asked to meet BYT to help me choose my options ... (*tells about the message left on the answering machine, then the call back that same evening ...*)

BYT told me that there was a long waiting list –2 years – but that I could “*take my place*” in the “session”, provided that I showed determination and set about looking for money, and that I would get “*on the waiting list*” once I had available the minimum amount required (set at 150,000 FF (± €23,000)).

The process thus got under way, with me searching for the money, scrounging on my family, friends and relatives and even people not so close (friends of my parents, parents of my friends, etc.) – a total of at least 50 people.

Few were actually willing to lend me money, and the largest amount (60,000 FF) came from my sister-in-law, herself a longstanding patient of BYT. Other amounts, ranging from 5,000 to 10,000 FF also came from her family.

I had several face-to-face meetings with BYT, always without charge, and all with intention of getting me “*hooked*”.

I scraped together the 150,000 FF. The “session” was thus able to begin. That was in May 1993.

The first day of the “session”, at 7:30 in the morning, I found out that we were required to take part naked.

The same was required from all the other “patients”:

*“I did not expect to have to take my clothes off”;*

*“He suggested that I take my clothes off before sitting down on the couch. I was a bit afraid as I had not been expecting this.*

At the end of my first session, I thought that the “*therapy*” had finished. However, I found out that we had to continue to regularly write “*reports*” (they soon became chargeable) for BYT, i.e. *to write “about one’s life”* as often as possible (several times a week).

For me, this was the end of all private life.

And it was not just one “*session*” (although BYT had initially boasted to all future “patients” that they would only need one single “session”) that I needed, but several: **three in fact**: in 1993, 1996 and 2004.

At the same time, my circle of family and friends got smaller and smaller until none were left.

This lasted 12 years, and cost me more than €238,000.

A whole range of things were used by the Yang-Tings to keep me under their control:

- demands for near-daily reports - at a fee of €50 a page [!]- to learn everything about my most private life;
- the requirement to present once a month (by the 4th at the latest), under penalty of a fine, a financial status report detailing income and expenses of the previous month;
- the duty to be reachable by the couple at all times, with my mobile phone always switched on and with me;
- the requirement to provide, on a weekly basis, a list of what would be happening in the coming week, so that the couple knew where to reach me and thus to “*keep me on a leash*”, able to permanently check my movements;
- to break with all my family and my “*past*” friends;
- to be “*totally autarkic*: leisure activities, mass, restaurant visits, weekends, holidays, family get-togethers, etc. all was to be done jointly;
- informing on other “patients”, “*moral lessons*”, requests for forgiveness;
- mutual appreciation and encouragement to continue with the “Yang-Ting therapy”;
- financial links between all of us, with the richer financing the less well-off,
- etc.

### The “session” principle

The “therapy” invented by BYT is called a “session”, or the “quest for truth” or “humano-therapy”: a 3-week intensive “therapy” (the richer a patient is and the more dependent he is on the “therapist”, the longer sessions last – up to 37 days for me in 2004), 7 days a week, 6 - 8 hours a day (sometimes even more), mornings spent with him, afternoons spent writing a report of the morning session, a short sleep and a night ‘vigil’ spent compiling “**chains**” (a document written by the “patient” detailing in inverse chronological order the titles of “scenes” mainly from when he/she was a child and associated with a feeling of pain: hate, fear of the future, separation anxiety, fear of being judged by others, etc.).

The theory expounded by BYT: “*we need to find a person’s true self, eliminating all problems preventing such*”: “*At the end of three weeks or more, we will be able to understand, deep down, what is Truth, Life and Love*”; reliving past traumas (mainly those occurring between the age of 0 and 5/6) with a view to getting rid of the suffering deep down inside us, weeding it out so that it no longer has any grip on our present life: “*When an individual, via a long-term exercise like I went through, i.e. staggered over nearly 40 years, has succeeded in accessing certain areas that allow him to overcome and not just to prevent certain impulses, that person can enter into a living/loving relationship with another person and not have to fight against his own impulses*”.

### The tools used by BYT:

- ➔ Creating the expectation the feeling of being “exceptional”: *“On the eve of the coming millennium, my wishes take the form of a prayer that the Holy Spirit will enlighten you and give you strength, enabling you to perhaps benefit from a still possible occasion in 2001”*; *“He (Mr Yang-Ting) told me that, insofar as I did everything possible to be honest with myself and to remain true to myself, I would have nothing to fear from life: I would remain at the top of his waiting list. I therefore had to continue making progress, working on myself to prepare for the session. But I still did not know when it would be taking place”*.
- ➔ Sleep restrictions “to bring down the defences”
- ➔ Food restrictions: *“we’re searching for suffering, not pleasure”*.
- ➔ Deep breathing to hyper-oxygenate the brain with a view to *“conjuring up scenes from one’s childhood”*, sometimes with BYT putting pressure on the jaw to force people to breathe; painful: *“You need to breathe very fast. He told me that oxygenation was good for the brain: ‘good, now you’re going to take 150 breaths”*; in fact, this creates a state of inebriation which further weakens the individual.
- ➔ Nights spent working on the “chains” (see above) to relive painful episodes from the past.
- ➔ Nudity, with patients being invited, at the start of their 1<sup>st</sup> session, to take their clothes off, so as *“not to hide behind one’s clothing”*, and *“not to risk losing one’s money”*: *“We take off everything that hides”*; *“You need to be completely naked. Take off your clothes (...)”*. He was always saying: *“When you are naked, face to face with the truth, everything is within you”*.
- ➔ Compliance with a certain position: Stretched out, naked, body and palms pointing upwards, face aligned with the body, moving as little as possible. Ban on all contact with the outside world to “prevent distraction”; (apart from, where necessary, telephone calls or other forms of contact on the presence of BYT or with his authorisation and a subsequent report.

### Fees:

- ❖ 1,200 FF an hour in 1993, 1,600 FF in 1996 and €320 in 2004.

Payments were in cash, with the exception of six cheques handed over to the couple during my third “therapy session” in June/July 2004 for a total of €52,320.

The cost of the “sessions” was so high that “patients” frequently found themselves short of money to continue their “session”. In such cases, BYT suggested that they borrow money from the other members of the “small group”.

BYT justified these extravagant fees as follows:

- *“Of course, I’m expensive, no matter whether it’s an emergency or not. That’s true. But given the intensity and quality of my work, its complexity, my 24/7 availability throughout a session and the results obtained within such a short space of time! .... Believe me, the fees are by no means excessive”*;
- *“the amount spent is concentrated on three weeks, and not on a therapy lasting several years”*;
- *“my price is low compared to therapies lasting 5, 10 or 15 years”*

Apart from the sessions, money was required for many other things:

### Reports

Initially without charge, we very quickly had to start paying for these reports, the purpose of which was for patients *“to consciously be aware of the time”* spent with BYT, whereby it should be pointed out here that it was a member of the “small group” who insidiously got “patients” to pay for their

reports. As for me, it was my cousin-in-law, similarly a member, who one day said to me: “but as you know, I’m paying for my reports”. A few days later, BYT also asked me to start paying for them ....

3444 pages up to May 2005; i.e. 20-30 pages per day written by me, virtually every day ....

If I reduced the frequency of my reports, BYT reacted by getting other members of the “*small group*”, those no longer needing my services (services rendered between members of the “*small group*” were paid for) to stop speaking to me. In this case, the Yang-Tings also stopped giving me presents or inviting me out, all with a view to making me understand that trying to save money by reducing the number of reports was not the right thing to do.

When I finally stopped writing the reports, one of the members of the “*small group*” – almost certainly prompted by the Yang-Tings – invited me to start writing them again: “*don’t stop writing your reports*”; “*in my view there’s still time, and you URGENTLY need to get back onto the “school path”, the one which made you the beautiful person you were in December 04, January 05 and perhaps even into March*”.

❖ In addition to the reports, I also had to list, right down to the very last cent, my **monthly budget** (for a charge of €50) detailing all my expenses and above all any income. Late submission again led to a fine ...

### “Face to face meetings between sessions

Apart from the “*sessions*” and the “*reports*”, “*patients*” also had the opportunity to talk with BYT for several hours, as “*you don’t disturb BXT just for an hour or two*”, as otherwise “*he would have someone else come who had been waiting a long time for a long talk*”. These face-to-face meetings were “*billed*” at €320 an hour and €480 when Suzanne Yang-Ting was also present (i.e. €320 for BYT and €180 - half-price - for his wife). Sometimes the meetings were free of charge, although it was seen as a good idea to note these down in the ex-post report “*so as to be well aware that they were a present*”.

### Telephone conversations

BYT very regularly (most often daily) conversed with his “*patients*” on the phone. I was supposed to be reachable at all times. And when mobile phones hit the market, all hell broke loose.

### Joint activities and meetings

As stated by Suzanne Yang-Ting in court, “*my husband was not inconvenienced by seeing his patients in a friendly setting. In his method, there was no problem viewing his patients as friends*”; moreover, “*we would see each other once a week at mass, in a restaurant, at a concert...*”.

Such get-togethers were an integral part of the BYT “*therapy*”: “*we were a close-knit group. Everybody who met up with us and enjoyed a relationship with us remained in close touch with us*”.

In a letter sent to Yang-Ting, I wrote: “*All your moments of relaxation, all your free time is devoted to us, to the image of this past week and weekend: Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.*».

The presence of the Yang-Tings was so overwhelming that I felt lost in their absence;

– “*your absence is only acceptable, supportable, when it is just for a short time.*”

### **The role of BYT’s wife:**

As highlighted by the public prosecutor in his *appeal request*: “BYT’s wife, by training a violoncellist, very opportunely used to act as a front to gain patients’ trust, playing a key role in the Yang-Ting system, which could only function properly on account of its duality and the affective and reassuring feeling they were able to give to these often weak “patients” in search of help – help promised to them in the form of BYT therapies.”.

➤ Indeed, it was Suzanne Yang-Ting who ran the whole financial side of the business:

*“After refusing to lend my sister the money for this 1<sup>st</sup> session, I had to spent a long time on the phone justifying my refusal to Ms Suzanne YANG-TING for this ‘mistake’ (...). Indeed, it was her - not her husband - who contacted me. Despite asking to speak to her husband, I never succeeded in getting him on the phone in this matter”.*

➤ Suzanne Yang-Ting also played a crucial role in “*retaining*” “patients” (whom she called “*her little babies*”), or in giving added backing to her husband’s “therapeutic work”. She showed her appreciation of people who “*had completed the session*”;

- “*You’ve got a lot more love in your heart*”;

- “*You’ve changed, I can feel it*”;

- “*we’ve discussed this Benoît, you’re so extraordinary that Benoît can free up some time for you*”;

She was good at imposing her decisions on her husband’s “patients”: “*OK, come on the 6th and 7th in the evening, and on the 9th, 14th, 16th, 18th, 20th, 22nd and 24th in the morning*”. She would also encourage “patients” about to enter a session: “*Listen to Suzanne’s message of encouragement and prayer on 23/06 at 23:57.*”

➤ Though devoid of any psychological training, Suzanne Yang-Ting also intervened in the “therapeutic relationship”, reading our reports and even receiving letters and/or paid reports; she was sometimes present during the face-to-face meetings between her husband and a patient, charging half-rate (BYT fee: €320 an hour, Suzanne Yang-Ting’s rate: €160 an hour, for a total of €480 an hour). She insisted on being present alongside her husband at the meeting demanded by my father when I quit; she was involved in all discussions and decisions regarding the lives of the patients, a fact she acknowledged in passing:

- “*I was present at the paid face-to-face meetings, free of charge. When patients wanted to thank me, they sometimes added something to the cheque given to my husband instead of giving me a present*”.

➤ Suzanne Yang-Ting incited “patients” to take or retake a session, while at the same time doing everything to get them to pursue their “*personal development*” with her husband, tightening the latter’s control over them during the whole relationship and at the end of a session, and sometimes even diagnosing “problems” requiring a therapy with her husband:

- “*I fell for it, thanks to the discussions with B&S on the “large chunk” I needed to work on. They said I needed a first session*”:

- “*I’m sure you’ll succeed, but you’ve got to keep your eyes set on the goal: the constant development of your personality*”

- *“For Benoît, it was a truly colossal task! Nobody else would have been capable of loving you that much, remaining at your side, even in turbulent times ... But I continued to pray ... just as the suffering got into you, it could also get out of you”;*
  - Just like her husband, Suzanne Yang-Ting was adored by the “patients” – *“You are the person I love most in the world”*. The couple had full control of me.
- Suzanne Yang-Ting and her husband gave or lent us money, stood security for us, even guided our investments:
  - *“25 years’ old: end of the 1<sup>st</sup> session. I was left without a cent. I paid for my last session by cheque. S lent me 15,000 FF to repay my ‘bridging loans’”;*
  - *“My husband and I lent her ten percent of the price to help them, her and Evelyne”;*
  - *“Ms Yang-Ting once advised me to invest in property, a secure investment. She told me that Benoît owned a magnificent plot of land for sale in the Var, for two million francs”;*
  - the Yang-Tings stood security for Armelle Rémy to pay her rent.

### Creation of a state of fatigue and changes in eating habits

- a. During the “*therapy sessions*”, i.e. for a minimum of three weeks (certain sessions could last for four or even five weeks depending on how thick our wallets were), “*patients*” were only allowed four hours of sleep a night, as BYT considered that lack of sleep was a good way of bringing down the mind’s defences and facilitating the “*recollection*” of early childhood scenes which “*needed to be purged*”.
- b. In a similar manner, BYT forbade any drinking or eating during a “*session*” from midnight onwards during vigils. According to him, this stopped his “*patients*” having to go to the toilet.

Finally, any meal taken during the session – i.e. one meal a day at 18/19 o’clock – had to be frugal, “*only what the body needed, nothing more*”. Fruits full of vitamin C were forbidden as these could artificially prevent people going to sleep.

As a way of keeping watch over us, BYT told us that we had to write down the menu of each meal in the “*report*” written at night, which had to be handed over to him at the beginning of the morning session.

As an example, here is all we ate the whole of the day:

- *“16:00 1 banana; 18:00 1 apple; 19:00 100g herring filets, 150g grated carrots; 23:55 1 banana – 2 tsp. of 0% soft white cheese”;*
- c. These sleeping and eating restrictions had the desired effect on me: my health got worse, my resistance was broken and I became more vulnerable. This deterioration was noticed by my friends and relatives during our rare meetings:
    - *“we saw her during a stay on Martinique, at Christmas 1997, but it wasn’t the Sophie we used to know. We found her much thinner, with dark rings under her eyes, full of sadness rather than joie de vivre;*
    - *“her bad looks, outdated clothes, lack of contact with the family gave rise to many questions”;*

### 3. strengthening attachment to the group and urging patients to break their ties with family and friends

#### Unconditional attachment

Within the “*small group*”, “patients” had to do everything that BYT said, not because they were “dependent” – BYT banned the use of this term –, but because it was “*best for them*”.

BYT had me understand that, without this unconditional attachment, he would no longer be able to help me. And without the “*small group*”, now my “*family*”, I felt lost, without a family, abandoned, at sea, rejected.

Attempts at rebellion were pointless, for example refusing to pay for spelling mistakes. And then, what would this have left me with? Nothing, emptiness. So after a few hours, sometimes even days, of extreme solitude (the whole group was ordered not to speak with us), we gave in ...

#### Breaking with one’s family, friends, society

- a. After the first “*session*”, BYT told us not to contact our past relations for “*at least a few weeks or months, the time it takes for the cement to set*”

BYT’s theory was as follows: “*the work accomplished in a session is like building a wall; for it to become solid, we have to wait for the cement to set; if you throw water on cement that hasn’t yet set, it will never set properly*”

According to BYT,

- patients’ past relations were like water, endangering the setting of the cement;
  - friends and relatives would always want to see the “patients” as they had known them in the past. This could have the effect of putting the latter back into their previous state.
  - Friends and relatives were not disposed towards accepting that “patients” had changed, as this might raise questions concerning their own selves or cause jealousy.
- b. And this break with family and friends was easy to obtain through the use of *induced false memories*, and we all had the same memories ....
- **regarding our conception:** our fathers had their moment of pleasure without bothering about us, but we “*still chose to live*”;
  - **regarding our pre-natal life:** each of us experienced abortion attempts, mainly through knitting needles: “*it’s all these experiences (bleach, needles, etc.) in Mum’s womb that make me say she still wants to kill me once and for all*”; “*Mum wanted to kill me, she stuck a needle into her belly*”; “*no, don’t come near me, don’t touch me with your needle*”.
  - This is also to be found in BYT’s own writings: “*The patient whom I am currently treating found out that parts of his body had been torn off and thrown away. The bottom of the uterus had been lined with cotton wool to make sure that everything had been torn out; all that remained was a tiny cell, a tiny molecule. Finally, nothing was left. With this as the starting point, he has totally and fully reconstructed himself, not just once but twice. Once in the third week, once in the fifth week*” and also in items communicated on his behalf: “*THE ABORTION - I am quite calm, feel warm. Suddenly I feel pain in my arms: it’s you, my bloody mother, who’s trying to destroy me. But I’m not going to let you destroy me. I’m going to stop you. You’ve no right to destroy me. Stop hitting*

*me with this ruler (red, green and two sides yellow). (...) Eight days later (1 month and 1 week), a burning feeling: it's bleach";*

- **regarding the actual birth:** we were all “suffocated” in the uterus, abandoned by our mother and “afraid of dying”;
- **after the birth:** we all re-experienced the cutting of the umbilical cord and our mother's disinterest in us: *“I felt I was hanging in the air, my ankles held by the doctor, my head dangling down”; “you didn't do anything to help me, Mum. You don't love me”; “you're not interested in me”; “the doctor lifted me up by my feet, my head dangling down”; “I was hanging from your hands, doctor, with my head dangling down”;*
- **regarding incestuous and violent (sexual) relations:** all female members of the “*small group*” had been subjected to abuse, *inter alia* by their fathers, or sexually assaulted by their families.

**One of the members**, questioned at the Paris Criminal Court, had neither denied nor confirmed being a victim of incest, solely pointing out to the dumbfounded prosecutor and judges that what she had written down in her reports was a feeling and that it didn't matter much to her whether it was true or false”.

- **no love shown by parents:** no member of the “*small group*” had been loved by his/her parents;

The hypothesis of an abusive parent was one of BYT's main ideas: *“The trauma resulting from a lie, for example when a child's father enters the kitchen and finds that the jar of jam has been eaten. The child can't say that it was him, because it wasn't. The child is thrashed until he says it was him. But that's a lie”.*

### [Proselytising](#)

Like all other “patients”, I was *proselytised by the Yang-Ying therapy*; *“Benoît is the person who saved my life. Without him, I would have died of an overdose, jumped under a train or done something else (...). I wanted to tell you that right away because it's a shame you don't want to meet Benoît, just this one time; especially because Benoît has this feeling that you are also a person in search of something and holds you in high esteem. (...) But it's up to you to take the first step ... I pray that you take the right step ... everything has a price (I am speaking of Life)”.*

### [4. Making it impossible to turn back](#)

When I deviated from the “*right track*”, i.e. when I did not hand in enough reports or when I put a bit of distance between us, BYT would say in a severe and strict tone:

- *“There's the door, you're free to go”;*
- *“you'll only have your eyes to cry with”;*
- *“they'll write the following epitaph on your headstone: “what a waste”;*

The Ying-Tangs required me to *“make a list of everything I had gained thanks to my personal development” ...*



They did everything to make sure that we took up new intensive therapy sessions, in addition to the near-daily reports, the face-to-face meetings, etc.

*“They rang me up again and again for two years until I **finally gave in**. BYT had succeeded in **convincing me** that “I would never become free if I always avoided the problem” and that we needed to ‘get to the root of the problem in a session’”.*

*“At the end of this meeting, BYT suggested that I write a written report and **mull over the possibility of doing a session**”;*

*“**he said that it would be stupid for me not to do a session**. He also said that I should do a session to feel better afterwards”*

Thanks to these reports, each group member was able to check on the other members and vice-versa. Everything was reported to the Yang-Tings, whose repressive power was feared

On managing to quit, one was faced, apart from the moral distress, with financial ruin: due to the loans taken out for my 3<sup>rd</sup> session (400,000 FF, i.e. €60,000), I was faced with bank repayments of more than €800 a month! How can you survive when the whole system collapses? How can you ever envisage a trial?

### Financial control over members

#### ❖ Regarding spelling mistakes and pagination errors

There were fines for spelling mistakes in the reports: initially 50 FF for each mistake; then the cost of the mistake was made to match the page number of the report.

Pagination errors were also punished at the rate of €50 per error:

*“3009 and 3010 (instead of 3007 and 3008 paginated twice) = €100*

#### ❖ “Related experiences”

These refer to fines justified by BYT in the following manner: *“In life, everything has to be paid for, sooner or later, especially errors, untruths, a lack of generosity, etc.; the later you pay, the more expensive it gets; i.e. if it is life that makes you pay, it can be serious, irremediable: a serious accident or illness, the loss of something or someone dear to you, etc.; it’s **therefore better and less expensive to pay straight away** (in cash handed over to BYT), than to wait for life to make you pay later and much more expensively; this can also serve as a lesson for not having tried to start again”.*

A wide range of examples ... I was fined 8,000 FF for a “related experience”, i.e. for having opened my mail during a session.

Such fines were frequent.

#### ❖ Payments made between members of the “small group” on the orders of the Yang-Tings

The Ying-Tangs ordered their “patients” to stand in financially for other members of the “*small group*”. For example, I was ordered to pay more than €12,000 to Armelle Remy and more than €14.000 to Véronique Dagan.

This interfering between members of the “*small group*” also allowed the Ying-Yangs to gain a bit more control over members’ lives.

Informing on other members was a constant feature of the “*small group*”.

Through imposed interventions, each member of the group checked up on the others and vice-versa.

- “800 FF for your 2 symbolic hours”;
- “a 1.5-hour fee at the group rate, i.e. 600 FF”;
- “I would like to thank you for your generous investment in me through a symbolic hour”

### Control over members’ behaviour

BYT did what he wanted with members of his “*small group*”.

He got them to eat less, sleep less, break with their families and friends, to endure certain painful situations, for instance when he got them to breathe in a special way by putting pressure on the jaw. BYT did with me whatever he thought good, but always in the guise of his “therapy”.

I spent twelve years under the sexual hold of BYT. I was not allowed to have any normal loving relationship, especially because BYT had persuaded me that I was not at a level of love high enough to live with a partner and have children.

It was thus not until 2006, after managing to free myself from the control of the Yang-Tings, that I tried everything to have a child, alas unsuccessfully.

The trial:

January 2005: I meet my future husband

May 2005: my first “No”: “I’m going to stop submitting my reports”

July 2005: final break with the couple

Gendarmerie

Report written during the summer

Autumn 2005: meeting with Jean-Pierre JOUGLA from ADFI, general information for my lawyer, the AFSI.

June 2007: the lawsuit is filed

June 2008: Benoît Yang Ting taken into custody

August 2010: submission of the public prosecutor

February 2011: referral to the criminal court

April 2012: first hearing

12 June 2012: judgment:

in first instance, the court pronounced BYT guilty of abusing my weakness.

The court sentenced him to one year in prison on the basis of Article 223-15-2 of the Criminal Code, for wrongdoings committed between 1994 and 2004.

The court also condemned him to a €50,000 fine and €100,000 damages and compensation + court fees.

His wife was pronounced not guilty.

They appealed against the verdict, as did the prosecutor and us.

It took nearly three years for the appeal to take place, following several procedural problems, constitutional issues, requests for referral *sine die*, etc.

The appeal court handed down its ruling in February 2015: With regard to my person, BYT was pronounced guilty for wrongdoings committed between 2001 and 2004, and this time his wife was also convicted! BYT was sentenced to a fine of €50,000, his wife to €25,000. €80,000 in damages and compensation for me + €15,000 fees

They again filed an appeal, but this was ultimately withdrawn!

Justice has been done and we have won!