


Blurred Lines:
The Convergence of Gaming and Gambling with a look at the impact of screen time among today's youth.



Agenda for the Day

- Open / Welcome
- Why does screen time matter?
- Convergence of Gaming and Gambling
- The "Dis" Ease within and connection
- Responsible ways to enjoy
- Summary

Stigma of Addiction

"Just because I am/was an addict, doesn't make me a bad person. Deep down inside we are wonderful, loving people."

"It's not a matter of willpower or a lack of a moral compass."

"Addiction is not the entirety of me. I am me; I am not just my addiction. There is a lot of other stuff to love."

"I wish people saw the time that addicts spent alone. Thinking about everything they've done every time they've lied and stole."

Source: Drug Abuse.com/Stigma Library Page v2

Limiting Screen Time

April 2019, World Health Organization releases findings

- Limit Screen Time for children under age 5
 - Infants under 1 – No Electronic Screen Time
 - Age 2 to 4 – Less than 1 Hour per day



Should couple with increase in exercise and movement

Also increase amount of sleep

Goal to fend off obesity and disease in adolescent and early adulthood

Limiting Screen Time

Early childhood period of rapid development

Lifestyle patterns in family matter and can be quickly adopted

Screen time includes TV's, Tablets, Computers, Smartphones, and Video Games

Problem is limited data on short and long term results

Dr David Hill, "no known health benefits for infants and children under 18 months."

Why Does Screen Time Matter



National Institute of Health began a \$300 million dollar study to examine effects of screen time on developing brains



Used MRI's to track



Preliminary results show those who use more than 7 hours screen time per day show physical changes to brain (premature thinning of cortex)



Will take decades to fully understand implications

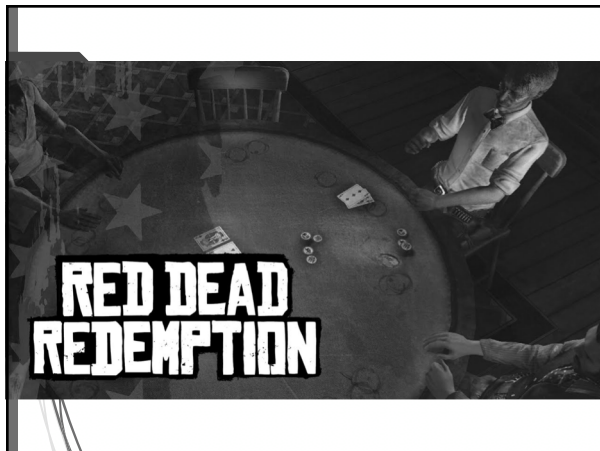
Why
Does
Screen
Time
Matter

2018 survey from Pew Research Center

54% of US teens say they spend too much time on their phones

60% consider it a "major problem."


Lower levels of drinking, sex, and drugs yet higher levels of depression and loneliness





Fortnite addict headbutts mom after she tries confiscating console (9/3/18)


13-year-old boy used his parents' credit card to fund his video game addiction




Q: WHAT CAN EARLY EXPOSURE TO GAMING OR GAMBLING DO TO A CHILD?

A: THINK OF WHAT IS BEING LEARNED:


- Immediate gratification
- Inability to develop patience or control
- Early exposure or a Big Win can be a predictor in future problems for gambling
- For gaming, speed and action dominate the brain (Overdrive)
- If coupled with unresolved trauma in childhood, can lead to multiple issues in the future




Essential Facts About Computer and Video Game Industry (2017)




Data from the Entertainment Software Assoc.



67% of U.S. Households own a device used to play video games.



65% of U.S. Households have at least one person who plays 3+ hours per week.



Average gamer is 35 years old.

Essential Facts About Computer and Video Game Industry (2017)

- 54% cite social connection as most frequent reason to play games with friends. (Feeling of connection)
- 67% cite 'quality of graphics' as the number one reason influencing a decision to purchase a video game. (Realism / Escape)
- Most widely played multi-player genre is Shooter at 29%. (Action / Fast Pace)

What are eSports?!

A global industry!

eSports as an Olympic sport!

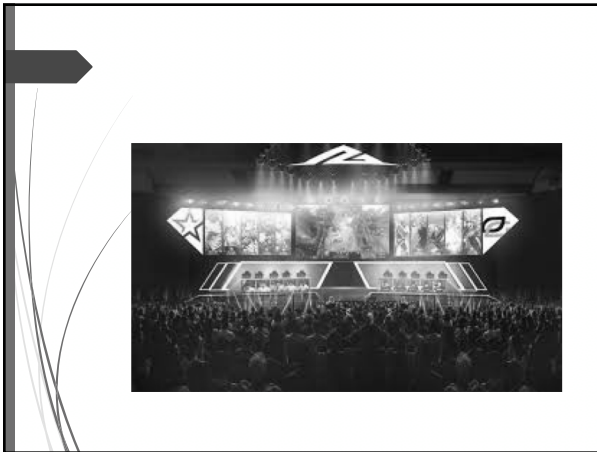
Audience 225 million 2015 // 380 million 2018

Revenue \$325 million 2015 // \$906 million 2018

Competitive gaming in real time

You Tube and Twitch streams tournaments live...Twitch now owned by Amazon who bought it for \$1 Billion in 2014





What is a Loot Box?!


- 1) A consumable virtual item in a video game which can be redeemed to receive a random selection of further virtual items.
- 2) A loot box is typically a form of monetization, with players either buying boxes directly or receiving the boxes during play and later buying "keys" with which to redeem them.
- 3) Regulated under gambling law in some Asian countries.
- 4) Criticized for being a form of unregulated gambling, for creating situations in games that make people "pay-to-win."

Loot Boxes Defined Another Way


- ◆ Random Reward Mechanism that requires 3 components:
 - ◆ Eligibility: Requirement to trigger the random event of a loot box (i.e. accomplishment, paying \$, spending time). The triggering event is done actively which perpetuates that "illusion of control."
 - ◆ Random Procedure: The randomness is the process and is what makes it feel like gambling.....the HOOK!!
 - ◆ Reward: Skins, VC, Weapon, item of value, advancement

The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes


- ◆ Gambling is a 'Variable Ratio' Payout – You have to keep playing in order to win but you never know when you will win....so are loot boxes
- ◆ Surprise element of when you will win is the addictive quality...same in loot boxes
- ◆ You also do not know how often or when it will occur but it is that uncertainty that is the hook.....see above!




The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes




What causes people to act against what they normally otherwise would not do?



'Scarcity principle' - fear of missing out since it will not be available later on.




'Social Proof' – HSN shows proof that item is being purchased and is desirable to consumers.



In this vein, loot boxes should be viewed with caution and done responsibly due to ethics and predatory behaviors.

The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes

- ◆ Activision continues to explore a matchmaking patent that encourages players to buy microtransactions.
- ◆ Filed in 2015 and granted in 2017.
- ◆ 2 Examples...



The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes

Example #1

- ◆ Outlines a process in which computer algorithms can match players together in order to increase the likelihood of microtransaction purchases.
- ◆ "For example, if the player purchased a particular weapon, the microtransaction engine may match the player in a gameplay session in which the particular weapon is highly effective," the text of the patent reads. "This may encourage the player to make future purchases to achieve similar gameplay results."

The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes

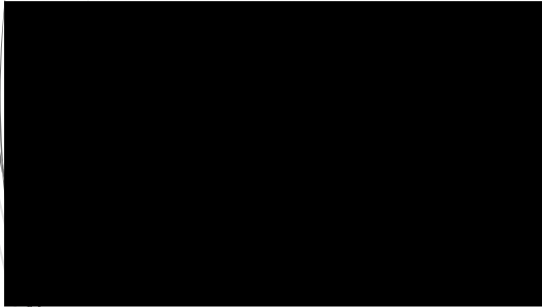
Example #2

- ◆ Dynamic Pricing (Charging players more or less for the same content) of Loot Boxes within a game based on player participation, level of skill, and time.
- ◆ Example – 2 players within a game both wish to purchase an item. Player 1, who is an experienced player, pays \$10. Player 2, who is new to the game, pays \$20.
- ◆ No clear disclosure
- ◆ Are their supply restrictions on virtual items that should warrant this?

Why is Gaming so Popular?

- 🎮 Free to play and Freemium
- 🔑 Temporary Escape
- 👥 Social Connection
- 📈 Measurable Growth
- 💡 Purpose and Meaning
- 🧠 Dopamine Overload
- 🧑 Behavioral Psychology keeps you in
- 🎯 Safe place to play, experiment, fail

Gaming Rehab Facility Video



Internet Gaming Disorder

- A condition for further study in DSM-5 (APA 2013)
- Not an "official" disorder in the DSM but one in which the American Psychiatric Association wants additional research done.
- W.H.O classifies as addiction in 2018!



Potential Risks with Gaming

Can lead to Problem Gambling.

Bigger concern among the youth.

The earlier one starts, the higher likelihood to develop a problem.

The brain develops the "gas pedal" faster than the "braking system."

Inability to control impact on time or money.

Illusions of Control

Sense of identity and belonging.


Problematic Cognitions with Gaming

- Allows the behaviors to hang around longer
- No amount of time spent is ever enough
- Continue until a level, reward, or feature is completed
- Gaining power and status through the game
- Escaping the real world
- The computer or console is an "electronic friend."

Motivators and Advantages Around Internet Gambling

While prevalence is relatively low, participation is increasing:

- Convenience and Accessibility
- Greater value for dollar spent (*i.e.* payout rates and bonuses)
- Speed and Ease of Betting
- Variability and Robust Selection
- Comfort and lack of stigma



Challenges to Prevention

- Difficulty in differentiation between "Gaming" and "Gambling" activities in addiction research
- Many common features in terms of speed, aesthetics, and structure
- Both can create harm through excessive involvement
- Boundaries and lines are getting blurred (digital games with free and paid virtual currencies or items, as well as the capacity for wagering)
- Delay of gratification

Potential Pathways to Adolescent Gambling

- Social Casino Games: Easy, short duration, multiple devices, fun or competitive, isolation or social.
- Constant exposure normalizes the experiences
- Availability and Supply
- Positive experience + social interaction
- In game purchasing normalizes the habit of spending money on games....may carry to adulthood.
- Rewards (loot boxes and skins) and leveling up carries may carry over to comps in adulthood.

Gainsbury, Sally. "Gambling and Gaming are Converging" Editorial. The Basis. Feb. 2017

The 5 E's of Why People Play Games or Gamble!

Excitement!

Entertainment!

Escape life's problems or pain

Economics....It's all about the Benjamin's!

Ego....Pride, reputation, or identity

Summarizing the 'Blurred Lines' between gaming and gambling:



Illusion of Control – skill vs. luck



Intermittent Reinforcement – every so often win



Social Proofing – others are doing it



Scarcity Principle – act now; act Fast!



"Near Miss" is a Hook – Sooooo close, do it again!

Opening Question:

What do we use to cover the pain in our life?

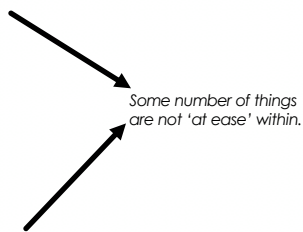


Thoughts / Observations

- 1) "If I can keep going fast enough, I can, for a little while at least, outrun the fear and the anxiety of the pain."
 - 2) Silence is the enemy.
 - 3) I can fill with endless activity.
 - 4) We all have our armor....some are chosen, some are handed down through generations.
- Shauna Niequist author of 'Bread and Wine and Savor'

What ties in with Addiction?

- Social
- Behavioral
- Emotional
- Relational
- Financial
- Spiritual
- Biological
- Psychological
- Physiological
- Mental



What is not at Ease?

- Often times, addiction is the SOLUTION, not the PROBLEM.
- A solution to a DEEPER underlying issue that is unresolved.
- Perhaps the individual does not have the tools or was never taught the right way to handle.
- Therefore, unresolved PAIN is a central area of focus

What is Pain?

It serves a purpose to tell us something is wrong.

"Pain is the Megaphone to rouse a deaf world." (C.S.Lewis)

Inner pain may lead one to seek to escape, dissociate, or isolate from others.

Addiction stems from the pain and the drug of choice becomes the SOLUTION for living in a hijacked brain...

Shapes of Pain

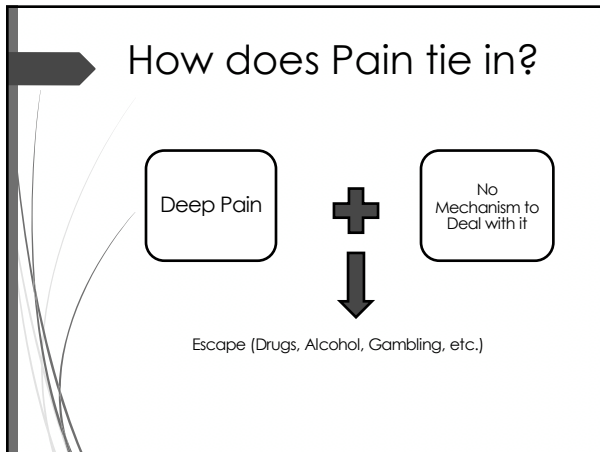
Scarcity – The concept of never having enough; always wanting more. No peace / no rest

Abuse – Nobody is safe (physical, emotional, verbal, violence, trauma.

Loss / Grief – The feeling that you have always been alone and always will be alone.

People seek to soothe and ease the pain first.

Seth Holmes, Author, Coming Clean



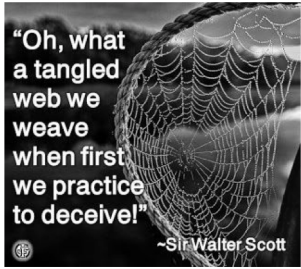
Observations

- Life will do what life does and when it does, it will HURT and bring PAIN.
- We all go through 'Pain Points'
- Don't simply ask 'why the addiction' yet also seek to understand 'why the pain?'

Observations

- We are hardwired for pleasure buzz from risky events.
- What is 'risky' to one may not be 'risky' to another.
- The uncertain nature of a 'payoff' and the 'near miss' are both hooks.

How do we begin to **Untangle** the Web of Pain?



"Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!"
~Sir Walter Scott

Pain in Today's Youth

- "I am NOT enough"
- Social Media overload
- Self-Esteem and Identity Issues
- "Who Am I?"
- Who are my "Friends?"
- The very things that keep us CONNECTED with others, is making us more DISCONNECTED from our inner self.

Pain in Today's Society



IT IS NOT EASY TO BE WHO I WANT TO BE.



DO WE HAVE AN 'INNER VOICE' THAT HOLDS US HOSTAGE TO UNWANTED THOUGHTS?



ARE MY INTERNAL ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS CONSISTENT WITH MY OUTWARD EXPRESSION IN HOW I TREAT PEOPLE OR DO I MASK?

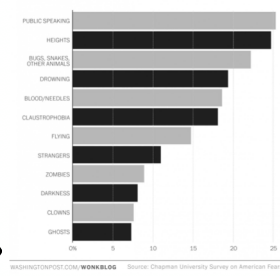


PAIN AND FEAR KEEPS US SEPARATED FROM RELATIONSHIPS AND VULNERABILITY

Fear in Today's Society

What are you so afraid of?

% of Americans who say they fear...



Anger



A Secondary Emotion



Used to protect / insulate from deeper vulnerability



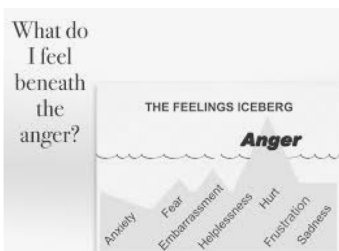
Primary emotions will underlie the anger



Need life and coping skills to deal with the anger

Anger

What do I feel beneath the anger?



Adverse Childhood Experiences:

■ Kaiser's A.C.E (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Study

- Childhood experiences, both positive and negative, have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. As such, early experiences are an important public health issue.

The Body Keeps the Score, Bessel VanDer Kolk

Adverse Childhood Experience

- ◆ Childhood trauma or adverse experiences need to be addressed!
- ◆ Important to connect A.C.E with addiction
- ◆ Safe and protective early relationships are CRITICAL to reduce / prevent children from long-term or later-term issues.

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences?

- Child abuse and neglect
- Growing up in a home with
 - domestic violence
 - parental substance abuse
 - parental mental illness
 - parental discord
 - criminal behavior

www.Michigan.gov 2014 Coordinator Meeting

What are the Questions?

Emotional Abuse

Often or very often a parent or other adult in the household swore at you, insulted you, or put you down and sometimes, often or very often acted in a way that made you think that you might be physically hurt.

Physical Abuse

Sometimes, often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at you or ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured.

Sexual Abuse

An adult or person at least 5 years older ever touched or fondled you in a sexual way, or had you touch their body in a sexual way, or attempted oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you or actually had oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you.



www.Michigan.gov 2014 Coordinator Meeting

What are the Questions?

Household Dysfunction

Mother Treated Violently

Your mother or stepmother was sometimes, often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her and/or sometimes often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard, or ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or ever threatened or hurt by a knife or gun.

Household Substance Abuse

Lived with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or lived with anyone who used street drugs.

Household Mental Illness

A household member was depressed or mentally ill or a household member attempted suicide.

www.Michigan.gov 2014 Coordinator Meeting

What are the Questions?

Parental Separation or Divorce

Parents were ever separated or divorced.

Incarcerated Household Member

A household member went to prison.

Emotional Neglect

Respondents were asked whether their family made them feel special, loved, and if their family was a source of strength, support, and protection.

Physical Neglect

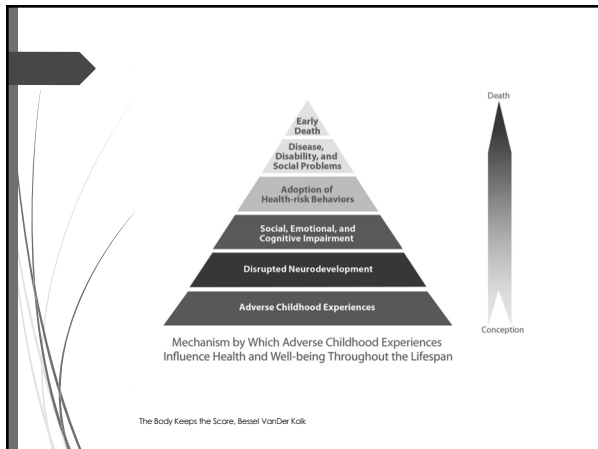
Respondents were asked whether there was enough to eat, if their parents drinking interfered with their care, if they ever wore dirty clothes, and if there was someone to take them to the doctor.

www.Michigan.gov 2014 Coordinator Meeting

Adverse Childhood Experiences Findings:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are common.
- Almost two-thirds of study participants in a study done in the late 90's reported at least one ACE.
- More than one in five reported 3+ ACEs.
- The ACE score, a total sum of the different categories of ACEs reported by participants, is used to assess cumulative childhood stress.
- Study findings repeatedly reveal a relationship between number of ACEs and negative health and well-being outcomes across the life course.




The Body Keeps the Score, Bessel VanDer Kolk



As the number of ACEs increases so does the risk for the following:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Alcohol Misuse | ■ Gambling Problems |
| ■ Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease | ■ Sexually transmitted diseases |
| ■ Depression | ■ Smoking |
| ■ Fetal death | ■ Suicide ideation |
| ■ Health-related quality of life | ■ Unintended pregnancies |
| ■ Illicit drug use | ■ Early initiation of smoking |
| ■ Ischemic heart disease | ■ Early initiation of sexual activity |
| ■ Liver disease | ■ Adolescent pregnancy |
| ■ Poor work performance | ■ Risk for sexual violence |
| ■ Financial stress | ■ Poor academic achievement |
| ■ Risk for intimate partner violence | ■ Poor Decision Making |

Recovery from Trauma: Healing the Self

-  Trauma steals the feeling from being in control of one's self
-  Goal is to re-establish ownership over self in terms of feelings and emotions without becoming overwhelmed, ashamed, or threatened
-  In order to regain control over the trauma, one needs to re-visit in a safe and therapeutic manner.

The Body Keeps the Score, Bessel VanDer Kolk

More on Trauma:

- Can lead to the concept of 'emotional numbness'
- Can change people's perceptions and imaginations
- Did not simply happen in the past rather it also leaves an imprint on the day to day mind, body, and brain.
- The individual needs to know that the danger has passed and to live in the reality of the present.

The Body Keeps the Score, Bessel VanDer Kolk

Principles of a Meaningful Recovery

Treatment and Recovery

"The end goal of treatment is working toward a sustained and meaningful long-term recovery."

Dr. Robert DuPont, founding president of Institute for Behavioral Health

GAMBLING SCREENS

- 20 Questions of Gamblers Anonymous
- Lie-Bet 2 Question Test
- Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (3 Ques. Test)
- South Oaks Gambling Screen
- DSM-V Addictive Gambling Criteria

Lie-Bet 2 Question Test

- Lie Bet Questionnaire
 - Have you ever lied to the people important to you about how much you gambled?
 - Have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money

Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen

- Brief Bio-social Gambling Screen (BBGS)
 - During the last 12 months have you become restless, irritable or anxious when trying to stop/cut down your gambling?
 - During the past 12 months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled?
 - During the past 12 months, did you have such financial troubles that you had to get help from family or friends?

South Oaks Screen

- Comprehensive
- Usually completed if one of preliminary screens yields positive result in questioning
- Based on DSM-3 Criteria
- Can be self administered or given by clinician
- Psychometric tool used internationally

DSM - 5

- The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)
- The "bible" of mental disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association
- No longer uses the word Illness or Disease
- Disorders acknowledge the correlation between social, biological, cultural, and psychological factors
- Gambling is the only Behavioral Disorder



DSM - 5

Persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as indicated by the individual exhibiting four (or more) of the following in a 12month period:

- a. Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement.
- b. Is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
- c. Has made repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling.

DSM - 5
continued

- d. Is often preoccupied with gambling (e.g., having persistent thoughts of reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble).
- e. Often gambles when feeling distressed (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
- f. After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even ("chasing" one's losses).

DSM - 5
continued

- g. Lies to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling.
- h. Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.
- i. Relies on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

DSM 5
CHANGES

New term is disordered gambling

Classified as "addiction and related disorder"

Separate category under behavioral addiction

Eliminated illegal acts as criteria

First time we have addiction without ingestion of substance - sex addiction and internet addiction in appendix

Described on severity continuum- 4-5 mild, 6-7 moderate, 8-9 severe

Treatment
and
Recovery

Negative thoughts keep us trapped

Positive intentions set us free

Awareness is NOT enough

Motivation is needed

Awareness WITHOUT equipping does NOT work

Attitude of Recovery

- ◆Humility vs. Pride
- ◆Gratitude vs Blame
- ◆Mindfulness vs. Denial
- ◆Determination vs. Incompetence
- ◆Respect vs. Ignorance
- ◆Relation vs. Isolation
- ◆Love vs. Hate
- ◆Attention vs. Neglect
- ◆Being Present vs. Being Absent

Sobriety

■ What is true sobriety / recovery?

1. Dealing with pain vs. escaping or switching.
2. Being properly 'attached.'
3. Recognizing what forces try to disrupt those attachments.

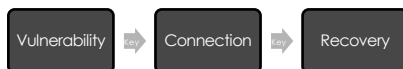
Principles of a Meaningful Recovery



SAHNGA, 2012

More on Relations and Connection...

- Rules without Relationships leads to Rebellion.



Brene Brown, The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk 2013

More on Relations and Connection...

- We are made to be connected
- Shame is the fear of disconnection
- Shame says "I am Bad"
- Guilt says "I did something Bad"
- "I am not _____ enough"
- Shame needs Secrecy, Silence, and Struggle

Brene Brown, The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk 2013

More on Relations and Connection...

- Courage to be Imperfect and own your story
- Compassion to be kind to self first and then for others
- Connection as a result of being who you are (imperfections and all), not who you want to be (constant pursuit of perfection).
- Vulnerability is at the core of all 3.
- In order for connection to happen, we need to become vulnerable so we can truly be seen.

Brene Brown, The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk 2013

More on Relations and Connection...

- Vulnerability is not WEAKNESS but the birthplace of:
 1. Innovation
 2. Creativity
 3. Change
- Vulnerability is Emotional Risk
- Do we have a Drug / Alcohol / Gambling Epidemic or is it a Deeper Shame and Fear Epidemic?.....

Brene Brown, The Power of Vulnerability TED Talk 2013

More on
Hope,
Perception,
and
Imagination....

"Imagination is absolutely critical to the quality of our lives. Our imagination enables us to leave our routine, everyday existence....it gives us the opportunity to envision new possibilities – it is an essential launch pad to make our hopes come true. It fires our creativity, relieves our boredom, alleviates our pain, enhances our pleasure, and enriches our most intimate relationships..."

The Body Keeps the Score

More on
Hope,
Perception,
and
Imagination....

...When people are compulsively and constantly pulled back into the past....they suffer from a failure of imagination, a loss of the mental flexibility. Without imagination there is no hope, no chance to envision a better future, no place to go, no goal to reach." (Bessel Van Der Kolk)

The Body Keeps the Score

Cultivate a Recovery Culture

- Mindfulness
- Laughter / Levity
- Identity
- Life Skills
- Multiple "Tools in the Toolbelt"
- Resiliency
- Self-Empowerment
- Respond vs. React
- Accountability
- Emotional Awareness
- Others First
- Language
- Presence
- Balance
- "Feeling Safe"
- Care and Connection

Barriers to Treatment

- Lack of availability
- Attitudinal – Don't see the issue
- Uncertainty – Pre-contemplation vs. Action
- Transportation
- Shame
- Embarrassment
- Stigma
- Privacy
- Denial

www.youthgambling.com

Why Don't People Seek Treatment?

Challenge to Identity and Resistance to Change:

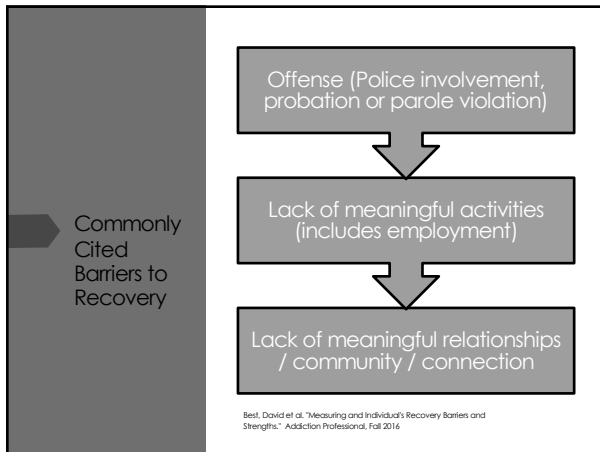
- ❑ Changes are related to gambler's thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.
- ❑ Intermittent rewarding outcomes are difficult to abandon.
- ❑ It is their sense of purpose and identity providing fun and excitement.
- ❑ Realization of wasted time, energy, money, and personal losses (relational, emotional)
- ❑ How does a person re-define themselves?

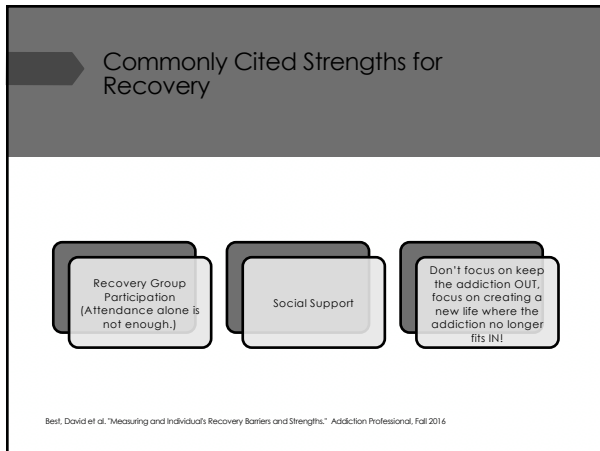
www.youthgambling.com

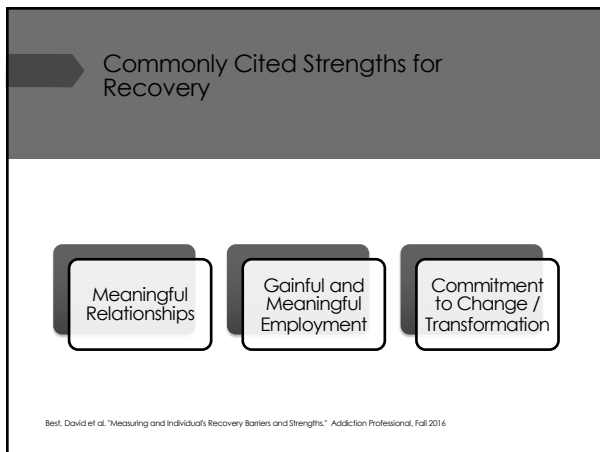
Commonly Cited Barriers to Recovery

- Housing (eviction, problems, debt)
- Transportation
- Substance Use (Tobacco common)
- Risk Taking (Addiction switch)
- Don't have the right "life tools"

Best, David et al. "Measuring and Individual's Recovery Barriers and Strengths." Addiction Professional, Fall 2016







Importance of Language

- 1) Using the proper language can impact one's recovery
- 2) Language can be stigmatizing
- 3) Can influence how a person is viewed outside
- 4) Can influence self-identity
- 5) Labels and perception (Abuse vs Use Disorder)

Summary of Recovery Principles

- Don't think less of yourself....think of yourself less
- Rules without Relationships lead to Rebellion
- "The greatest sources of suffering are the lies we continue to tell ourselves" (Elvin Semrad, Boston U.)
- For people trapped in a mental prison, they battle between enjoying the pain of pleasure while suffering from the pleasure of the pain
- Pleasure is Joy's Assassin (Seth Haines, author)

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