

INNOVATIVE TREATMENT STRATEGIES FOR GAMBLING AND OTHER ADDICTIONS

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OBJECTIVES

- Broaden understanding of gambling disorder and the likely effects of the Supreme Court ruling on expansion of sports betting and other gambling on individuals and families; learn about special considerations in gambling treatment
- Gain knowledge on the developmental nature of addiction and the role of helplessness in driving the addiction and potential for relapse. Learn strategies to help individuals understand and manage this helplessness
- Understand what makes effective residential treatment and what steps are needed to step down to outpatient treatment
- Learn about cutting edge approaches available at Williamsville Wellness to treat addiction such as online video content, live interactive sessions and case management, and an integrated platform to monitor progress and goals

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IMPLICATIONS FOR GAMBLING DISORDER GIVEN RECENT TRENDS

- Gambling activity generates over \$115 billion in overall revenue to local, state and federal government, but also results in \$6.5 billion in associated costs, including criminal justice and healthcare costs.*
- Approximately 2% of adults experience gambling problems, or approximately 5 million people.*
- Video on Sports Betting: <https://youtu.be/eYYOdr06v3g>

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* Source NCPG May 2018

GAMBLING DISORDER

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Increased risk of gambling indicated when family history is positive for gambling; exposure to sports betting / gambling / stock market at young age with large windfall; unresolved issues with family, grief, trauma, depression, anxiety also implicated.
- Often family and others see the person's gambling behavior as a choice rather than an addiction; person with the addiction often feels alone and highly shameful because they rarely understand the factors that drive the addiction
- Unlike many other addictions, there is often magical thinking involved in gambling disorder that contributes to the person's belief that the addictive behavior can actually solve problems

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GAMBLING DISORDER

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS - CONTINUED

- Action Gambling – highly stimulating and involves more skills, study, strategy, and improved odds
- Escape Gambling – moderately stimulating and more often involves chance, uncertainty, and results in numbing, trance-like states, and/or avoidance of emotions
- Dopamine receptors are usually activated in all types of gambling for individuals with gambling disorder

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GAMBLING DISORDER

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS - CONTINUED

- Treatment approaches usually involve a gathering a complete history of the gambling behavior and impulses, an accounting of the losses, and identification of the triggers and warning signs for relapse
- Family sessions are of utmost importance as family and supports are often historically misled, financially impacted and/or pressured for bail outs
- Interventions usually involve developing a financial plan to pay off debts over time and to limit access to cash or funds in the short and/or long-term to minimize additional losses

APPROACHES TO ADDICTION TREATMENT

- Focus on core issues of helplessness, guilt, and shame that drive the initial development of the gambling, alcohol, and/or substance use disorder
- Explore schemas, family dynamics, stressors, losses, and pressures that fueled increased helplessness over time and exacerbation of the addictive behavior
- Consider how isolation and loss of connections contributed to the person's increased mood issues and symptom severity
- Focus on balance/wellness, distress tolerance, strengths, healthy empowerment, graduated trust, and identification of goals and (new) direction in life
- Develop a clear recovery management plan that includes identification of triggers, warning signs, and healthy positive responses to negative impulse

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LEVELS OF CARE

- Residential treatment is needed when the gambling, alcohol or substance use disorder is severe in nature and the person is experiencing significant problems with mood, functioning, health, relationships, and/or life obligations. This is a full day of treatment with overnight stay, typically lasting 3-4 weeks. Optimal residential treatment is individualized and the person should receive several individual sessions per week. Treatment approaches should be holistic and offer group and family sessions.
- Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) is needed when the person has moderate to severe problems indicated above, but there is no need for 24 hour nursing and monitoring. Usually PHP is five or more hours per day and the person may be commuting from home or sober living, or staying at the facility and paying a boarding fee. This is usually 5-7 days per week and 2-4 weeks in length.
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) is usually three hours per session and several days per week. Most IOPs run 24 sessions to complete the program. Mostly groups, but they should offer one individual session per week.

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SMART IOP/ON-LINE PLATFORMS

- smartIOP is a flexible intensive outpatient program that is facilitated online.
- It is comprised of 62 video learning sessions with knowledge checks and 11 telehealth individual therapy sessions that span over the course of 6-12 weeks
- The curriculum is stacked in an educational continuum that builds on an understanding of addiction and mental health. Additionally, it provides the client with coping skills, interventions, communication and life skills, and steps to connect with healthy supports
- smartIOP requires a Smart Sponsor. The identified sponsor is vetted and is tasked with providing a supportive and accountable role with the client.
- smartIOP uses a dashboard to monitor client's progress in the program. Screening results, symptom updates, cognitive measures, and meeting attendance

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VIDEO SAMPLES

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6abYw-qm9M>
- <https://vimeo.com/325693330>



QUESTIONS?

- Thank you for your time! Please see our website for more information on our programs:
- <https://williamsvillewellness.com>
- <https://smartiop.com>
- 804-559-9959