

Working with Gamblers: Clinical and Cultural Considerations

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Scope of Treatment Issues

- Is Treatment Effective for Gamblers?
- How Effective is the Treatment?
- Which Treatment is more Effective than the other?

• **What We Know...**

(Blaszczynski, 2005, Ledgerwood & Petry, 2005; Toneatto & Ladouceur, 2003)

- Gamblers Respond Well to Treatment).
- Best Empirical Support for Cognitive and Behavioral Therapies
- Motivational Interviewing is a Strong Alternative Approach
- Encourage “Cocktail Approach” (Schaff 2006)
- High Attrition Rate
- Few empirically validated treatments (EVTs);
- None done in Asian Community

Asian Gambling Treatment Project

- **1999 Received about 4 months Intensive Training on Gambling Issues**
- **2000 Established Helpline and Treatment Services in Collaborative with Community Service Agencies (e.g., NICOS, Cameron House, St. Mary Tea House)**
- **Serves Gamblers and Their Family Members/Significant Others**
- **Provides Individual, Group, Family Therapy, Phone Consultation, Case Management, Medication, and Referral Services**

Initial Contact Phase— Pre-and Contemplation Stages

Transtheoretical Stages of Changes

(Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982)

- **Pre-contemplation: Absence of Awareness of Gambling Problems and No Motivation for Change.**
- **Contemplation: Increased Awareness of Gambling Problem and Benefit for Changes, but Ambivalent.**
- **Preparation/Determination**
- **Action**
- **Maintenance**

Initial Contact Phase— Between Pre-and Contemplation

Therapeutic Strategies

- **Phone Engagement Techniques**
- **Establish Therapeutic Alliance**
- **Educational Materials and Assessment**
- **Motivational Interviewing**
- **Involvement of Family Members**
- **Assess Stigma and Shame Issues**

Motivational Interviewing

Basic Techniques (Miller & Rollnick, 2002)

- **Ask Open Questions**
- **Listen Reflectively**
- **Affirm-Compliments or Statements of Appreciation**
- **Summarization**
- **Eliciting Self-Motivating Statements**
 - **Recognizing disadvantages of the status quo**
 - **Recognizing advantages of change**
 - **Expressing optimism about change**
 - **Expressing intention to change**

Working Phase— Preparation & Action Stages

- **Preparation: Appears Ready to Make Changes and Committed to Action.**
- **Action: Engages in Modifying the Target Behaviors**

Working Phase— Preparation & Action Stages

Therapeutic Strategies:

➤ Managing Symptoms

-- e.g., Stimulus Control, Relaxation & Desensitization, Cognitive Restructuring, Role Play, Medication, Self-Help Workbook, etc

➤ Address Underlying Issues

--Family Therapy, Psychodynamic Therapy, etc

Maintenance Phase

**Maintenance: Maintain New Behaviors,
and Prevention of Relapse**

Therapeutic Strategies

- **Enhance Social and Problem Skills**
- **Continue Therapy**
- **Self-Help Group**
- **Medication**

Thank You

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