Meeting the Unique Needs of Women Problem Gamblers: Webinar and Workbook Effectiveness Studies

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Women not well represented in Ontario gambling treatment

Only 3% of Ontario gamblers have ever sought professional treatment for gambling

Number of gamblers in treatment does not mirror the number of problem gamblers in the general population

Women face a number of barrier to accessing treatment
Barriers to Treatment
(Voices Study, Boughton & Brewster, 2002)

- Time Constraints 34%
- Money Issues 33%
- Mental Health 24%
- Safety Issues
  - Recognition 17%
  - Confidentiality 29%
  - Shame 33%
  - Fear of judgment 34%
  - Fear of total abstinence 57%

In addition, 73% believe they should be able to make changes of their own.
Treatment should be tailored to Women's Needs

- **Criticism:** treatment geared to male gamblers (Crisp et al., 2000, Mark & Lesieur, 1992)

- **Gender difference in motivations** (Potenza et al. 2001)

- **Gender differences in gambling choices & patterns** (Boughton, 2003)

- **Female felt safer and felt supported in female only counseling groups** (Piquette-Tomei, Dwyer & McCaslin, 2008)
Advantages of phone & remote counselling

• Helps express views & feelings more easily
• Equalize the power relationship
• Cost effective
• High levels of client satisfaction
• Lower attrition
Contents Drawn from:

- Boughton and Brewster (2002)
- Best Practice materials: CBT, DBT, Seeking Safety, Mindfulness, Stages of Change, Stress Management
- Clinical experience
- Sundry sources on addiction, compassion, trauma, recovery.
Twelve modules:
- Women sensitive
- Trauma informed
- Compassion Based
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Module 1

- **Treatment: What's it all About?**
- **Is my Gambling Causing Problems?**
- **Identifying Goals**

- *Choice Theory* (Montagnes & Kranz, 2006)
- *CPGI* (Ferris and Wynne, 2001)
Module 1: Behaviour.

Behavior isn’t good or bad, just more or less effective. But it’s always my best Attempt at the time, given what I know, to get me what I want.

Behaviour has four interconnected components. They work together like the wheels of a car.

The two front wheels, Acting and Thinking steer the car and give it direction.

The two rear wheels, Feelings and Physiology, move it along and give it drive.

Under self control. With some effort I can control what I do and think.

Controlled indirectly. Can be changed by what I do or think.
Module VII

The Addicted Brain: Why do I keep on gambling even when I don’t want to?

The Triune Brain [McLean, 1967]

Mammalian Brain: or Limbic System: emotional and somatosensory memory, attachment

Speaks the language of emotion

Frontal Cortex: Regulatory abilities, cognitive and executive functioning

Uses verbal language and analytical reasoning

Reptilian Brain: Autonomic arousal, instinctive responses

Speaks language of sensation and impulse

Sensorimotor Psychotherapy Institute
Strategies: Dealing with Troublesome Emotions

- Tip sheets: Anger, Depression, Anxiety
- Mindfulness: Decreasing Emotional Suffering
- Tips: Thinking and Acting to Maintain Emotional Balance
- Physical Approaches
- Food and Mood
- Containment: imagery & visualization
- Grounding
- Building Positive Emotions
Mindfulness and Stress Management CD

Track 1  Awareness Breathing
Track 2  Loving Kindness & Self Compassion
Track 3  Urge Surfing
Track 4  Thought Labeling
Track 5  Thoughts are Just Thoughts
Track 6  3-Minute Breathing Space
Track 7  Progressive Muscle Relaxation
Track 8  The Role of Awareness
Track 9  Snapshot of Awareness 10-Point Scale
Track 10  5-minute Meditation
Track 11  Muscle Release skills
Track 12  Open Attention
Track 13  Relax Tongue and Jaw
Track 14  The Quieting Response
Track 15  Deep Breathing
Track 16  The Relaxation response
Qualitative Results
The Tutorial Workbook was effective in supporting the women in making changes

Webinars added an additional layer of support for participants and were highly valued

Consistent with current research findings, expanding services to Ontario women to incorporate self-help materials, phone access to treatment and group intervention via the internet has clinical utility....
Next Steps: Expanded Services

- Final revision of the Tutorial Workbook (TW)
  - Make TW available online and in hardcopy (in process through PGIO)
  - Establish webinar treatment groups for women
  - Formalize procedures for phone counselling