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

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Need for Treatment Innovations

- 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.
Tutorial Workbook (TW)

Twelves modules:
- Women sensitive
- Trauma informed
- Compassion Based
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module I</td>
<td>Treatment: What's it all about? Is my Gambling Causing Me Problems?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module II</td>
<td>Stages of Change. Increasing Our Motivation to Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module III</td>
<td>Lining up our Ducks to Support Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module IV</td>
<td>Gambling Hooks and Traps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module V</td>
<td>Avoiding Relapses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module VI</td>
<td>Relationships and Gambling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module VII  The Addicted Brain
Module VIII  Thoughts and Well-being
Module IX    Mindfulness
Module X     Our Emotions
Module XI    The Stress connection
Module XII   Review and Next Steps: Soaring with the Eagles
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*
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track 1</th>
<th>Awareness Breathing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Track 2</td>
<td>Loving Kindness &amp; Self Compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 3</td>
<td>Urge Surfing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 4</td>
<td>Thought Labeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 5</td>
<td>Thoughts are Just Thoughts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 6</td>
<td>3-Minute Breathing Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 7</td>
<td>Progressive Muscle Relaxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 8</td>
<td>The Role of Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 9</td>
<td>Snapshot of Awareness 10-Point Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 10</td>
<td>5-minute Meditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 11</td>
<td>Muscle Release skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 12</td>
<td>Open Attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 13</td>
<td>Relax Tongue and Jaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 14</td>
<td>The Quieting Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 15</td>
<td>Deep Breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track 16</td>
<td>The Relaxation response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantitative Results
Conclusions

- 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