Process Addiction and the Addictive Brain

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Learning Objectives

- Participants will understand the basic principles related to Behavioral Addictions, as well as the role of the addictive brain in this process.

- Participants will understand the key issues associated with individuals exhibiting Behavioral Addictions, as well as the unique characteristics of each type.

- Participants will learn the similarities and differences between Behavioral and Chemical Addictions and the implications it has upon treatment strategies.
Past views of mental health and/or addiction

- Weak
- Bad
- A failure
- Lacking in morals
- Lacking will power
- Criminal
- Hopeless
What is the personal impact that mental health and/or addiction have upon my own life?

How might this impact me as a loved one, or professional?
Hearts
Clubs
Diamonds
Spades
The Spectrum of Substance Use

- No Use
- Use But Not Problematic
- Misuse
- Abuse
- Dependence
- Addiction
What is an addiction?

Addiction is a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry.

Dysfunction in these circuits leads to characteristic biological, psychological, social and spiritual manifestations. This is reflected in an individual pathologically pursuing reward and/or relief by substance use and other behaviors.

ASAM - 2011
Addiction is defined as any related, compulsive behavior which interferes with normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends, loved ones, and one’s work environment.
Behavioral Addictions

- Sexual
- Gaming
- Gambling
- Spending
- Socializing
- Information Gathering
What is an addiction?

The Three C’s and a T

- Loss of Control
- Compulsion
- Continued use despite (-) consequences
- Thinking (obsession)
What can cause an addiction to a substance or behavior?

How is addiction related to Mental Health?
CUBIS

- Chemical Imbalance
- Unresolved Issue(s)
- Belief (which is distorted)
- Inability to Cope
- **Stimulus-Response Relationship**
Dopamine

Alcohol / Drug and/or a Behavior

MID-BRAIN

Glutamate

Hypofrontality

prefrontal cortex

nucleus accumbens

VTA

Dopamine

Alcohol / Drug and/or a Behavior

Lindner Center of HOPE | UC Health
Dopamine and/or a Behavior

Glutamate

Hypofrontality

MID-BRAIN

prefrontal cortex

nucleus accumbens

Alcohol / Drug and/or a Behavior = SURVIVAL
Olds & Milner, 1954
CUBIS TREATMENT

- Chemical Imbalance - Medication
- Unresolved Issue(s) - Psychotherapy
- Belief (which is distorted) - CBT
- Inability to Cope – New Skills
- S-R Relationship – Education
What is a behavioral addiction?

- Problem Gambling
- Sexual Addiction
- Internet Addiction
- Compulsive Buying
Problem Gambling

DSM-5 - Addiction and Related Disorders

1. Preoccupation
2. Need to increase $ to achieve effect
3. Unsuccessful efforts to control
4. Restless/irritable when attempting to cut down or stop
5. Gambles as a way to escape from problems
6. After losing money, returns to “chase” one’s losses
7. Lies or conceal involvement from family, therapist, etc.
8. GONE (illegal acts)
9. Lost significant relationships due to gambling
10. Relies on others for money to relieve financial stress
Problem Gambling

- Over 2,600 online gambling sites from traditional betting, to casino gambling, to lotteries
- Ability to gamble 24 hours a day at a casino or in your own home
- Growing problem with women, elderly, young adults
- Escape Gamblers & Risk Gamblers
- The decrease in the perception of the value of cash - i.e. players are forgetting that they are spending money.
Problem Online Gambling

- Over 2,600 online gambling sites from traditional betting, to casino gambling, to lotteries
- Ability to gamble 24 hours a day at a casino or in your own home
- College students
Risk Factors

- Early big win
- Easy access
- Cognitive irrational beliefs
- Lack of an awareness of money in & out
- Recent loss
- Issues of boredom or loneliness
- Impulsive
- Financial issues
- Few interest or hobbies
- Lack life direction or purpose
- Abuse or trauma history
- Mental health issues
- Other history of addictions
- Having a parent with a history of gambling
- Connecting myself (esteem) to gambling.
The Case of Sally

- 73 year old female
- Does not believe in the use of AOD
- Unresolved issues concerning the death of her husband (grief, abandonment, loss)
- Limited social connectedness
- Feels the need to escape from reality
The Case of Buddy

- 58 year old male
- Successful professional
- Previous history of cocaine use
- Has the belief that he is a professional gambler and can earn his living by gambling.
- Has lost over $500,000 due to gambling
I was on a high, a rush that was better than cocaine, better than sex, better than being there when my son was born. I didn’t care about whether or how much I won or lost, I just wanted to stay at the table.
Typical Client Fantasies Common in Gambling Treatment

- I can quit anytime I want.
- I’ll quit as soon as I have my next big pay off.
- I can learn to gamble safely and moderately.
- My problem is only due to temporary circumstances.
- Once my real problems are treated, my gambling problem will vanish.
- This is just a phase of my life that will pass on its own.
- Once I quit gambling, all my other problems will disappear.
Habib and Dixon, 2010

- Neurobehavioral Evidence for the “Near-Miss” Effect in Pathological Gamblers
Sexual Addiction

Is a pathological relationship with a mood altering experience.

Patrick Carnes, Ph.D.
Sexual Addiction

**Myths**

1. Sex addicts are sexual offenders
2. Few people have this problem
3. Only men struggle with sexual addiction
4. Sexual addiction is a moral weakness
5. Sex addiction is all about sex
the spice cabinet
Sexual Addiction

Behaviors consisting of...

Pornography, Masturbation, Prostitution, Cyber-Sex,

and could also involve...

Exhibitionism, Voyeurism, Bestiality, Incest, Child Molestation, Rape
What is Sexual Addiction?

- It is defined by repetitive patterns of sexual behavior utilized to self-medicate and/or stabilize emotional distress.

- Sex addiction is also not automatically diagnosed in people who have active mania (due to bipolar or some other disorder) or in people who are actively abusing drugs or alcohol, as these other emotional and addictive challenges must first be ruled out.
How does it happen?

- Addictive sexual fantasies and behaviors trigger a hormonal release resulting in feelings of pleasure, excitement, control, and distraction.

- A combination of neuro-chemicals occur.

- Individuals susceptible to underlying emotional or psychological issues can learn to abuse this neurochemical response as a means of coping and making emotional pain.

- Repeated abuse of pleasurable fantasies and behaviors in this way eventually teaches the brain that the way to feel better (or cope) is to engage in more and more of the same activity.
Sexually Addictive Behaviors

- Compulsive masturbation with or without pornography
- Ongoing abuse of soft- and hard-core porn
- Multiple affairs and brief “serial” relationships
- Attending strip clubs, adult bookstores and similar sex-focused environments
- Prostitution, or use of prostitutes and “sensual” massage
- Compulsive use of cybersex
- Ongoing anonymous sexual hookups with people met online or in person
- Repeated patterns of unsafe sex
- Seeking sexual experiences without regard to the immediate or long-term consequences
- Exhibitionism or voyeurism
The Case of Rob

- 32 year old male
- Victim of sexual abuse beginning at the age of nine
- Victimized for five years
- Excessive downloading of pornography
- Problems with intimacy
- Initial presentation - Major Depression
What is Cybersex?

- Accessing Online Pornography
- Real Time with a Real or Fantasy Partner
- Multimedia Software
Cybersex: Computer rendering
Cybersex: Computer rendering
Cybersex: Anime pornography
Internet Pornography Statistics

• Internet Pornography Statistics Pornographic websites 4.2 million (12% of total websites)

• Pornographic pages 420 million

• Daily pornographic search engine requests 68 million (25% of total search engine requests)

• Daily pornographic emails 2.5 billion (8% of total emails)

• Internet users who view porn 42.7%

• Received unwanted exposure to sexual material 34%

• Average daily pornographic emails/user 4.5 per Internet user
Real Time with a Fantasy or Live Partner
Name: Eva

Sex: Female
Race: White
Age: 23
City: London
Country: United Kingdom

Orientation:
- Hetero
- Homo
- Bisex

Character type:
- Romantic
- Talkative
- Passionate
- Sex maniac

Favourite games:
- Fuck
- Oral
- Anal
- Handjob
- BDSM
- Fetish
- Masturbation

Short description:
I hate slow drivers...

Message:
Adam: Hi Eva,
Eva: Hi Adam. How are you today?
Adam: I am bored. Would you like to talk to me?
Eva: Why not? And not only talk... I am bored too...
Adam: Fea! What about to go to a private room?
I am happy that you can feel my secret wishes :)

Message to: Adam
Internet Stimulation

Real Touch™

Manufactured by: *Interactive Life Forms* (ILF)
Media Software
Internet Addiction

• Gaming
• Virtual Worlds
• Information & Technology
Internet Gaming

- Variety of themes
  - violence, fantasy, sports
- Quests
- Domination
- Alliances
The Case of Jerry

- 15 year old male
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Social isolate
- Hx of downloading pornography
- Has played Internet games 14-16 hours non-stop
Internet Addiction

• Gaming

• Virtual Worlds

• Information & Technology
Social Networking
Compulsive Buying / Spending
The Case of Millie

• 45 year old female
• Family of origin issues
• Impulse-Control Disorder
• Patient’s father was physically & emotionally absent
• Hx of alcoholism with both parents
• In 2009, maxed-out five credit cards
• Patient’s mother had Hx of spending issues
• Dynamic regarding spouse – caretaker role
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms or Behaviors</th>
<th>AOD</th>
<th>Behavioral Addictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cravings</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of problem’s severity</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption of families</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High relapse rate</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of control</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lying to support use/activity</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preoccupation with use/activity</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive disorder</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tolerance developed</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used as a means of escaping</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal symptoms common</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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General Treatment Areas

- Diagnostic Assessment
- Individual, Couple, Family Therapy
- CBT, Cognitive distortions / impairments
- Situational, behavioral, and emotional triggers
- Relationship issues
- A lifestyle of wellness (mind, body, spirit)
- Medication
- 12 Step Support Group
- Ongoing monitoring and Relapse Prevention
The Power of the Internet

1. Accessibility
   - 24/7
   - Before the Internet, access was limited
The Power of the Internet

2. **Affordability**
   - Low cost alternative
   - Free sites, promotional materials, video clips
3. **Intensity**
   - Power of connecting with the world
   - Powerful medium + Powerful material
   - *Cybersex - the Crack Cocaine of the Sex Addict*
4. **Anonymity**

- Many are still not comfortable with sexuality
- Many still see something wrong or dirty about sex
- Enter the Internet – to provide a freedom to explore
- No one knows your name, age, gender, where you live
5. **World of Fantasy**

   - Any type of sexual behavior can be found
   - Cybersex opportunity to develop sexual fantasies w/o fear of rejection or relationship
   - The user is free to become part of the fantasy w/o responsibilities, consequences or rejection
6. **Disinhibition**
   - Willing to do things you would not do in real life.
   - People cross boundaries that they would normally not.
The Power of the Internet

7. **Isolation**
   - The most powerful component
   - Allows the user to separate yourself from others.
   - You do not have to deal with a real person (no relationship).
The Power of the Internet

8. **Pseudo-intimacy**
   - Relationship addiction
   - Chat rooms
Assessment Instruments

Sexual Addiction
- Sex Addiction Screening Test (SAST)
- Cybersex Addiction Checklist

Gambling
- South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)
- Massachusetts Gambling Screen (MAGS)

Compulsive Buying
- Compulsive Buying Scale

Internet Addiction
- Internet Addiction Test (IAT)
Reading List

**Sex**
- Out of the Shadows – Patrick Carnes; False Intimacy - Schaumburg
- Sex Addiction Workbook – Sbraga & O’Donohue; Women, Sex, and Addiction - Kasl

**Gambling**
- Hats & Eyeglasses – Frankel; Nicotine Dreams: A Story of CG - Cunningham
- The Gambling Addiction Patient Workbook - Perkinson

**Internet & Gaming**
- Internet Addiction: A handbook and guide - Young
- Caught in the Net – Young; Untangling the Web – Weiss & Schneider
- Game Addiction: The Experience and the Effects – Clark & Scott
- Unplugged: My Journey into the Dark World of Video Game Addiction – Van Cleave

**Buying**
- To Buy or Not to Buy – Benson; Spent – Palaian; Born to Spend - Arenson

Handbook of Addictive Disorders:
A practical guide to diagnosis and treatment edited by Robert Coombs
CUBIS

- Chemical Imbalance
- Unresolved Issue(s)
- Belief (which is distorted)
- Inability to Cope
- Stimulus-Response Relationship
Chemical and Behavioral Addictions

Alcohol
Drugs
Gambling
Sex
Internet
Buying
The Pathway

Trigger (cue)

Pathway / Routine / Habit

Relief (reward)

Therapy, Rx, Diet, Exercise, Spirituality, New Skills, Family/Friends Community Support

Health, Wellness, Happiness, Peace Meaning

Behaviors Situations Feelings

Alcohol, Drugs, Gambling, Sex Buying, Internet
What is a behavioral addiction?

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- Internet Addiction
- Compulsive Buying
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Alcohol / Drug and/or a Behavior

MID-BRAIN
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prefrontal cortex
nucleus accumbens
VTA

Alcohol / Drug and/or a Behavior = SURVIVAL
Meaning
Meaning
Thank You!

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