Welcome
&
Introductions

General Rules, Expectations and Housekeeping
Welcome

Ken Litwak, BA, ICGC-1, CCTP
Who is 800-GAMBLER?

800gambler.org

Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc.
3635 Quakerbridge Rd. Suite 7
Hamilton, NJ 08619

609-588-5515 ~ 1-800-GAMBLER®

CCGNJ is neither for nor against gambling
Similarities and Differences between Substance Use Disorder and Disordered Gambling
Risking anything of value hoping to gain something of greater value
DSM-5

- Tolerance
- Withdrawal
- Unsuccessful Attempts to Stop
- Relationship and Career Problems
Shared Behaviors

- Lying
- Preoccupation
- Bailout
- Chasing losses
- Gambles when distressed
Differences

• Screening
• Hiding
• Hangover
• Early Stages
   Overlooked
• Disease Model is Hard
  to Accept
• Hope Fiend
History of Gambling

- Gambling is older than alcohol.
- Gambling has historically been the way people communicated with higher powers.
Social gamblers - 90%

- Enjoyable experience
- Entertainment
- Gamble with others
- Limit amount of money spent
- Stop after reaching limits
- Gamble for short periods of time
- No interference with other parts of life
Problem gamblers – 7-8%

- Gamble longer than planned
- Loses more than intended
- Starts to borrow money for gambling
- Prolonged losing episodes
- Starts to lie about amount gambled
- Returns to gamble to win back losses
- Relationship problems begin
Disordered gamblers – 2-3%

- Cannot pay household expenses and debts
- Marked increase in gambling episodes
- Gambling for larger amounts
- Receives bailouts for gambling debt
- Gambling alone
- Alienation from significant others in life
- Illegal acts to finance gambling
- Unsuccessful attempts to stop
- Helpless and suicidal
Recovery

Fellowships

Outpatient – Inpatient – Individual Counseling

People, Places, & Things

Underlying Cause
Gambling and substance use disorder

Share many of the same characteristics
Similarities

- Preoccupation
- Escape
- Intense cravings
- Tolerance
- Inability to stop even though things are going bad
- Withdrawal
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ADDICTIONS: SUBSTANCES vs. PROBLEM GAMBLING

Although substance addiction and gambling addiction have many things in common, there are also some distinct differences between them.

What are they.....?
SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

- Addiction to a substance that is ingested or injected into the body

GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Addiction to the activity
SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

- Drug seeking behavior

GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Chasing losses
**SUBSTANCE ADDICTION**

- Visible physical signs of addiction

**GAMBLING ADDICTION**

- No visible physical signs of addiction
SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

- Individual enabled by family (making excuses for or covering up the behavior instead of making them personally accountable for their actions).

GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Family “bails out” problem gambler (giving money to the individual to pay off debts).
SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

◗ May have some financial problems

GAMBLING ADDICTION

◗ Usually involves BIG financial problems
SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

- Drug tests and breathalyzers can confirm suspected use

GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Gambling problem can be easily hidden until money runs out

This is a Drug-Free Workplace! We Conduct Drug Testing
SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

- Death is often unintentional

GAMBLING ADDICTION

- Higher suicide ideation and attempts
**SUBSTANCE ADDICTION**

- Once in recovery, an individual may be able to avoid problem substances in everyday life to reduce temptation to return to use.

**GAMBLING ADDICTION**

- Once in recovery, an individual cannot avoid using money (the agent of gambling addiction) so temptation to return to use is often near at hand.
SERIOUS POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES COMMON TO ALL ADDICTIONS....
Mental & Emotional Problems

Permanent Changes in the Brain

Depression, Anxiety, Paranoia
School Problems

Poor Grades in School

Getting Kicked Off a Sports Team

Dropping Out of School
Problems with the Law

Truancy

Permanent Record
Employment Problems

Job Loss

Diminished Life Achievement
Problems in Daily Living

Money Problems

Homelessness
Problems with Family and Friends

- Loss or Change of Friends
- Family Problems / Dysfunction
Problems Coping

Black Outs
“Losing” Chunks of Time

Inability to Protect Oneself from Harm
Health Problems

Addiction Gets Progressively Worse Over Time

Health Problems/Other Progressive Diseases
A Hard Road Back

Recovery can be Painful, Difficult, and Costly

May Recover but Will Never be Cured of the Addiction – Relapse is Common
Some Never Make it Back

Premature Death or Suicide
The Hidden Addiction

- Extremely difficult to diagnose
- Hard to overcome because the gambler believes that they will overcome it on the next win
Trauma

Trauma many times goes unrecognized and is at the base of many disorders.