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Problem Gambling Counseling and Treatment Approaches, by Jason Landon, Simone Rodda, and Masood Zangeneh, Canada, CDS Press, 2023, 500 Pages, eBook, 978-1-7778018-2-3

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Abstract: Chapter One: Brief Interventions for Gambling Disorder: A Short Overview and Case Study in New Zealand/ Chapter Two: Internet Gaming Disorder: Screening and Treatment Options for Gambling and Addiction Services/ Chapter Three: From Engagement to Treatment, Recovery, and Beyond For People Seeking Help For Their Gambling-Related Problems/ Chapter Four: mHealth Interventions For Gambling Problems/ Chapter Five: Blended In-Person and e-Mental Health For The Treatment Of Gambling Disorder: A Method To Improve Engagement and Retention/ Chapter Six: Residential Treatment for Harmful Gambling/ Chapter Seven: Mindfulness and Problem Gambling/ Chapter Eight: From Twelve Steps to First Steps: An Integrative Approach to Care Pathways for Gambling Disorder/ Chapter Nine: The Place of Mutual Help Groups in Supporting Recovery from Gambling-Related Harm/ Chapter Ten: Counselling Approaches for Gambling Disorder: Gambling Interventions for Indigenous Peoples/ Chapter Eleven: Mana Enhancing Service: A Fresh Approach to Clinical Practice/ Chapter Twelve: Counselling Interventions for Youth Problem Gambling/ Chapter Thirteen: Gambling-Related Harms In Females: A Resource For Practitioners and People Working In the Field/ Chapter Fourteen: Practical Considerations For Screening and Responding to Gambling-Related Harm Experienced by Affected Others/ Chapter Fifteen: Gambling and Gambling Treatment in Prisons.

Keywords: Problem Gambling, Counseling, Treatment, Approaches.

Introduction

Counseling and treatment approaches to gambling problems usually involve a combination of therapeutic techniques and interventions aimed at helping individuals with gambling addiction regain control over their behavior and make positive changes in their lives (Snippe et al., 2019; Wynn et al., 2014).

Innovative steps used in the counseling and treatment approach to gambling problems: 1) incorporating cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which has been proven to be effective in changing thought patterns and behavior related to gambling. Strengthening personal responsibility and internal control can help individuals make gains in controlling addiction. 2) Gradually approach treatment with motivational interviewing and transition to CBT or other interventions if necessary, providing flexibility in adapting the approach to the client's needs. Using technology, such as mobile applications, can also increase the effectiveness of interventions. 3) using Bayesian principles in cognitive therapy can help overcome false beliefs that drive individuals to return to gambling. A focus on positive psychology and increased self-awareness can improve long-term recovery prospects. 4) specialized counseling services for adolescents that take into account the developmental needs, culture, and individual context of adolescents experiencing gambling problems can help facilitate their recovery. Involving the family and integrating personal responsibility in treatment is also essential. 5) using the principles of Gamblers Anonymous (GA) and promoting the availability of peer support can be a valuable adjunct in the treatment of pathological gambling, especially when specific treatment options are limited.

This book offers a comprehensive approach to the counseling and treatment of gambling problems, covering a wide range of topics from brief intervention and internet gaming disorder to engagement, assessment, and effective treatment of gambling-related problems. Moreover, the book also covers mHealth interventions and a mix of face-to-face and electronic health care, providing a detailed exploration of their theoretical foundations, core techniques, and application in the context of problem gambling. The novelty of this book lies in its focus on culturally safe gambling interventions, the integration of indigenous knowledge, and targeted interventions for youth, demonstrating a holistic and inclusive approach to addressing problem gambling in diverse populations.

This book is organized into 14 chapters, each containing material and chronology related to counseling and treatment of gambling problems from a cross-cultural perspective to balance the subject matter and length of the book. The discussion of each chapter is clear, concise, and accompanied by examples of case studies or research results that strengthen ideas or perspectives. This book emphasizes the importance of understanding the diverse needs of individuals impacted by problem gambling, including indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities, women, youth, and people in prison settings. It advocates the integration of multiple treatment modalities, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, mindfulness, and technology-assisted interventions, to provide comprehensive support. Additionally, it highlights the importance of involving others affected and considering the broader impact of gambling-related harm. Underscores the need for ongoing research,

culturally appropriate interventions, and adaptation of services to meet the evolving gambling landscape and related challenges.

The book's implications are significant for stakeholders involved in counseling and treating gambling problems. For mental health professionals, counselors, therapists, and addiction specialists, this book serves as a practical, evidence-based resource to improve understanding and treatment approaches for individuals facing problem gambling. This emphasizes the importance of engaging clients effectively to ensure their participation in treatment and ongoing harm reduction to themselves, others, and society. For those working with others affected, such as family members and friends of individuals with gambling problems, this book provides practical tips and strategies, recognizing the wide range of harm they experience and the need for tailored treatment and self-help approaches. This highlights the need for a comprehensive treatment model that not only addresses gambling behavior but also a broader spectrum of related problems, including mental health challenges, financial difficulties, and interpersonal distress. The book also recognizes the complexity of gambling problems. It advocates a biopsychosocial plus (BPS+) approach that considers the interaction of neurobiology, physical well-being, mental health, social factors, cultural context, and spirituality in recovery. This integrative framework requires multiple treatment pathways to support change and recovery in individuals impacted by problem gambling. Additionally, this book addresses the specific needs of problem gambling youth, emphasizing the importance of a developmentally sensitive approach that considers the unique risks and protective factors in this population. The report also discusses the importance of interventions for Indigenous Peoples, highlighting the need for culturally sensitive approaches that respect their traditions, values, and healing practices.

The strength of this book lies in providing a comprehensive analysis of counseling and treatment approaches to problem gambling, equipping professionals with the knowledge and tools necessary to address the unique challenges this problem poses in various populations and settings. The target audience for this book is mental health professionals, including counselors, therapists, psychologists, and addiction specialists, who are looking for practical, evidence-based resources to support individuals impacted by problem gambling. This book aims to equip these professionals with the knowledge and tools necessary to address the diverse needs of those struggling with gambling addiction, including culturally sensitive approaches for Indigenous communities, strategies for supporting others affected, gender-sensitive approaches for women, and counseling in various fields—prison-like setting.

Statement of Competing Interests

The author does not declare any interest.

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