

Gambling Assessment Part 1

Jerry Bauerkemper, Consultant IDPH

402-699-6810

Goals for today

- Look at how to ask probing questions to begin to understand the gamblers specific issues
- Develop a list of questions and follow-up questions to help counselors understand gambling mentality entering treatment
- Provide tools to counselors for intake

Any questions from last two sessions?

- Anything that surprised you or shocked you?
- Anything you disagreed with?
- Anything that was said that made you think... I have a client that might have a gambling problem?

Gamblers focus group

- Gamblers both in treatment and after completion were invited to several focus groups.
- Over 50 gamblers attended the focus groups
- They were ask a series of questions including what was most helpful in the initial sessions

Focus Groups: Counselor Selection

Answering my initial phone call for help

Initial trust/concern coming from counselor

Confidentiality

Counselor gave me hope

Not talking down to you

Gender an issue

Leaving the initial meeting relieved

Understanding/willingness to work on debt

Counselor showed knowledge of gambling problems

Questions on the intake

- Initial data is both extremely important and not accurate at all
- Gathering data to gather data is a not a helpful purpose
- Gathering data to use to help the client and their family into recovery is imperative

Focus Groups: Skills Needed Continued:

Listening Skills

Prominent in all four groups

Listen at first session and avoid paperwork

Empathy/compassion (Family members are more likely to mention this)

Confrontational Skills

Ability to criticize in a constructive way (Peers)

“Tough,” understand lying (Peers, Masters)

Reality based (Masters Level)

Engagement skills are important

- Having client fill out the form first is counterproductive to recovery
- Meeting with the client first then having them complete the data forms is more productive for you and for the client
- Talking to the client about presenting problem is important as it gives you insight as to the level of awareness the client has about their disorder and the important items to address to engage the client

Results of gamblers focus groups on retention

Confidentiality

All groups very concerned about referrals/support group confidentiality

Gamblers/family members equally concerned about GA/Gam anon and other community referrals being non-confidential

Participants in Peer groups wanted counselors to go to GA meetings to understand referral

Focus Group: Skills Needed Continued:

Ability to ask probing questions “Emphasized by all four groups”

Clients wanted counselors to have insight into what is really going on

Knowledge other co-occurring disorders

Switching addictions (Masters Level groups)

Mental Health Issues (Masters Level groups)

Depression (Masters Level groups)

Alcoholism (Peer groups)

So lets ask probing questions!

- Questions:

- Number of persons financially dependent on you?

- Follow-up: How many to you claim on your taxes? How many on your W4 form?

- Occupation?

- Follow-up: How much free time do you have each day/week that you can/ have been gambling?
- Does anyone at work gamble with you?

Living Situation:

Follow-up: How many times have you moved in last 5 years

Follow-up: How many times have you refinanced your home in the last 5 years

Questions continued

- Education:
 - Follow-up: How did you like school?
 - Follow-up: Did you gamble at school?

Income Source:

Follow-up: How much do you make including money not telling spouse

Follow-up: What are your other sources of income?

Questions Continued

- Current debt:

- Follow-up: How much of the debt is due to gambling?
- Follow-up: How much debt do you have over all?
- Follow-up: How many credit cards do you have?
- Follow-up: How many can you still use (not maxed out)?

- Age first gambled:

- Follow-up: Who introduced you to gambling?
- Follow-up: What was your first gambling experience like?
- Follow-up: When did gambling become a problem?
- What types of gambling have you tried in the last 12 months?

Questions Continued

- Follow-up: When you gamble how much money do you take with you/ have on hand?
- Follow-up: Where do you gamble? How often do you go?
- Recommendation: Do not ask them to tell you about wins and losses at this point as it may (usually) trigger the client to gamble.
- You need to gather this *ASAP* as when gamblers realizes what they are saying many times they begin to backtrack and the need to preserve their gambling kicks in!

Questions Continued

- How did you find out about this agency
 - Follow-up: Did you call helpline?
 - Follow-up: How many times did you call prior to talking to them and taking the referral?
 - Follow-up: Where else have you gone previously for help with gambling or other problems?
 - Follow-up: How did those attempts go?

Questions Continued

- Family Gambling
 - Follow-up: Did you grow up in a house where there was gambling?
 - Follow-up: Did anyone in your family struggle with gambling problems?
 - Follow-up: Did you grow up in a house where there was smoking?
 - Follow-up: Did you grow up in a house where there was alcohol or drug use?

Questions Continued

- What is your expectation of counseling?
 - Follow-up: What have you heard about counseling?
 - Follow-up: What have you heard about this agency?
 - Follow-up: What fears about counseling do you have?
 - It is important to allay fears of counseling so client will return!

Questions for You!

Ask yourself

- What is the reason for admission?
 - Follow-up: Why does this client need counseling vs support?

What is presenting problem?

How can I help with that problem?

Primary diagnostic impression?

DSM score 0-9

Follow-up: Is client aware of the diagnostic score and its implications?

Follow-up: What is my impression of what the client needs to return to the next session?

Questions for ME?

Next session:

Gambling Assessment Part 2