Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

Joanna Franklin MS NCGC II
Trimeridian, Inc.

ncpgambling@aol.com

Special thanks to Lori Rugle PhD and the patients and staff of the Custer Center and Las Vegas GTP
# Defining Spirituality and it’s Relationship to Problem Gambling and Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spirituality</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Philosophy</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trimeridian, Inc.
## Defining Spirituality and it’s Relationship to Problem Gambling and Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual</th>
<th>Not Spiritual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Themes of Spirituality

- Sense of Direction
- Meaning
- Purpose in Life
- Feelings of connectedness with oneself, others, HP, or greater reality
- Clarifying what is trivial, what is truly vital in life
- Reducing self-critical and hostile cognitions
- Fostering love, compassion and forgiveness
Dimensions of Spirituality

- **Beliefs**
  - About Transcendence (soul, afterlife)
  - About Deity
  - About reality of a dimension beyond sensory, intellectual based knowledge
  - About meaning and purpose
  - About connection or interconnection
  - Personal morality and values
    - Highest goals and aspirations
    - Highest human potential
Dimensions of Spirituality

- Practices
  - Prayer
  - Meditation
  - Contemplation
  - Fasting
  - Charitable Acts
  - Participation in Religious Activities
Dimensions of Spirituality

- Experiential
  - Everyday, routine encounters with the transcendent or sacred
  - Exceptional encounters with spiritual or mystical
Spirituality and Maintaining the Change

- Spiritual practices, beliefs, values as important aspects of life style change
- Spiritual perspective as means to enhancing fun, play, joy, meaning and purpose in life
- As source of support, strength and comfort
- Continuing spiritual development
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

GAMBLING

EGO

- SOURCE OF BELIEF THAT SELF INTEREST IS THE BASIS FOR ALL BEHAVIOR

SPIRITUALITY

SPIRIT

- SOURCE OF BELIEF IN A POWER OR PRINCIPLES GREATER THAN ONESELF; IN A UNIVERSAL ORDER OR FORCE
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

GAMBLING

SHAMEFUL
SECRET
HIDDEN

SPIRITUALITY

WORTHY
HONEST
OPEN
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GAMBLING</th>
<th>SPIRITUALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FANTASY/ ILLUSION</td>
<td>REALITY/TRUTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMPTINESS</td>
<td>FULFILLMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSATIABILITY</td>
<td>SATISFACTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

GAMBLING

SEPARATION

DISCONNECTION

DISSOCIATION

SPIRITUALITY

BELONGING

CONNECTION

WHOLENESS
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

GAMBLING
ARROGANCE
GRANDIOSITY
OBLIVION

SPIRITUALITY
HUMILITY
GRANDEUR
BLISS
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

GAMBLING

SCARCITY

ATTACK/DEFEND

FEAR

SPIRITUALITY

ABUNDANCE

FORGIVE/HEAL

LOVE
Pathological Gambling and Spirituality

**GAMBLING**
- Luck
- Magic

**SPIRITUALITY**
- Faith
- Miracles
SPIRITUAL FACTORS:
TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

- Spiritual Coping Styles
  - Deferring
    - Passive, God will handle it
  - Pleading
    - Pleading, bargaining
  - Self-directing
    - Active, handle without God
  - Collaborative
    - Active partner with God
  - Spiritual Surrender
    - Did best and let go
    - Serenity Prayer
SPIRITUAL FACTORS:
TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

 Lessons from 12 Steps:

- Begin with surrender
SPIRITUAL FACTORS: TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

- **Spiritual Surrender**
  - More than a coping skill
  - Higher value or greater good in a seemingly negative situation
    - Self-transcendence
    - Self in relation to higher purpose rather than center of the world
    - Connection with transcendent reality
    - Stop “playing God” and start “seeking God”
    - Transformation of Significance
SPIRITUAL FACTORS:
TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

- **Spiritual Surrender**
  - **Spiritual Awakening**
    - More than a cognitive shift
    - **Experiential Shift**
      - Changes motivation
      - Emotion
      - Values
      - Perception
      - Thoughts
      - Behavior
SPIRITUAL FACTORS:
TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

- Spiritual Surrender
  - Spiritual Awakening
    - Followed by an enhanced state of being
    - Acceptance
      - Completeness
      - Peace
      - Gratitude
      - Compassion
SPIRITUAL FACTORS: TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

- **Spiritual Surrender**
  - Understand client’s orientation
  - Can’t surrender to gain control
  - Surrender not learned helplessness
  - Differentiate controllable from uncontrollable
SPIRITUAL FACTORS: TREATMENT IMPLICATIONS

- **Spiritual Surrender**
  - **Circles of Control**
    - Two circles: What do you have control over, What don’t you have control over
    - What did you believe you could control when gambling?
    - Challenge errors
      - Aborting control when possible
      - Attempting to control what is out of one’s control
Step One: We admitted we were powerless over gambling – that our lives had become unmanageable

1. What personal choices would a person need to make in order to take this step?

2. How can this step apply to someone who is not yet ready to abstain from gambling?

3. How can this step apply to someone who is in precontemplation or contemplation?
Choices in the Steps

- Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to a normal way of thinking and living
  - 1. What personal choices would a person need to make in order to take this step?
  - 2. How does this apply to someone who feels they already have a normal way of thinking and living?
Choices in the Steps

- Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of this Power of our own understanding.
  - 1. What personal choices would a person need to make in order to take this step?
  - 2. What obstacles (mental & emotional) would someone who has a history of physical or sexual abuse need to overcome in working this step?
Choices in the Steps

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves

1. What personal choices would a person need to make in order to take this step?
2. What spiritual issues does a person need to face to complete this step?
3. What spiritual benefits derive from working this step?