

*From Social Gaming to Internet Gambling:
Identifying the Connection, Addressing the Issues and
Establishing Meaningful Recovery Principles.*

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The Marshmallow Test

- The 'Ultimate Test' in Delayed vs. Instant Gratification for a child!!



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ

Q: WHAT CAN EARLY EXPOSURE TO GAMING OR GAMBLING DO TO A CHILD?

A: THINK OF WHAT IS BEING LEARNED:

- Immediate gratification
- Inability to develop patience or control
- Early exposure or a Big Win can be a predictor in future problems for gambling
- For gaming, speed and action dominate the brain (Overdrive)
- If coupled with unresolved trauma in childhood, can lead to multiple issues in the future



Landscape

- ◆ eSports is gaining in popularity
- ◆ Skill-based gambling is a thing
- ◆ Internet gambling is growing
- ◆ DFS is not legally considered gambling across the country but it centers on wagering on player performance and is popular
- ◆ Sports Gambling SCOTUS in May, 2018....



What are eSports???

- ◆ A global industry!
- ◆ Audience of 225 million people
- ◆ Revenue of nearly \$325 million in 2015
- ◆ Competitive gaming in real time
- ◆ 93 million Americans play video games
- ◆ Twitch streams tournaments live and 9.7 million people watch daily...now owned by Amazon who bought it for \$1 Billion in 2014





What is a Loot Box???

- 1) A consumable virtual item in a [video game](#) which can be redeemed to receive a random selection of further virtual items.
- 2) A loot box is typically a form of [monetization](#), with players either buying boxes directly or receiving the boxes during play and later buying "keys" with which to redeem them.
- 3) Regulated under [gambling law](#) in some Asian countries.
- 4) Criticized for being a form of unregulated gambling, for creating situations in games that make people "pay-to-win."



Overwatch®: Loot Boxes

OVERWATCH IN-GAME CONTENT

- 2 Loot Boxes - USD 1.99
- 5 Loot Boxes - USD 4.99
- 11 Loot Boxes - USD 9.99
- 24 Loot Boxes - USD 19.99
- 50 Loot Boxes - USD 39.99

Buy for PC



The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes

- ◆ Gambling is a 'Variable Ratio' Payout – You have to keep playing in order to win but you never know when you will win.
- ◆ Surprise element of when you will win is the addictive quality
- ◆ You also do not know how often or when it will occur but it is that uncertainty that is the hook.

The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes

- ◆ What causes people to act against what they normally otherwise would not do? Scarcity principle, fear of missing out since it will not be available later on.
- ◆ Some think Loot boxes resemble more like toy boxes or baseball card packs; that said, baseball card dealers don't use 'pay to win' persuasion to buy more packs.
- ◆ In this vein, loot boxes should be viewed with caution and done responsibly due to ethics and predatory behaviors.

The Psychology of Gambling and Loot Boxes

- ◆ ‘Social Proof’ – HSN shows proof that item is being purchased and is desirable to consumers.
- ◆ Activision had a 2015 game (with Patent) with a matchmaking system that allows for players who purchase a particular weapon to be placed in a gameplay session where the weapon is highly effective thereby potentially encouraging the player to see the ‘proof’ that his microtransaction was working and encourage future purchases to achieve similar results.

Emerging Trend #2

- ◆ Daily Fantasy Sports where only one player is selected instead of an entire team.
- ◆ Have to go 3 for 3 at a minimum to win at 5 to 1 odds.
- ◆ Fastpick.com in NJ offers already.
- ◆ Run through Resorts Entertainment

ALL

SEARCH



1B

C. DAVIS

TEX @ BAL 17 JUL 4:05PM

8.61
FPPG



13.91
FPPG



OF

A. JUDGE

NY Yankees @ MIN 17 JUL 5:10PM



RF

M. BETTS

TOR @ BOS 17 JUL 4:10PM

11.83
FPPG



10.94
FPPG



3B

K. BRYANT

CHC @ ATL 17 JUL 4:35PM



1B

A. RIZZO

CHC @ ATL 17 JUL 4:35PM

11.06
FPPG



12.43
FPPG



CF

C. BLACKMON

SD @ COL 17 JUL 5:40PM



3B

M. MACHADO

TEX @ BAL 17 JUL 4:05PM

9.24
FPPG



11.42
FPPG



3B

N. ARENADO

SD @ COL 17 JUL 5:40PM



C

G. SANCHEZ

NY Yankees @ MIN 17 JUL 5:10PM

10.89
FPPG



10.87
FPPG



RF

G. SPRINGER

SEA @ HOU 17 JUL 5:10PM



SS

F. GALVIS

PHI @ MIA 17 JUL 4:10PM

7.76
FPPG



6.97
FPPG



3B

D. FREESE

MIL @ PIT 17 JUL 4:05PM



2B

B. DOZIER

NY Yankees @ MIN 17 JUL 5:10PM

8.83
FPPG



8.94
FPPG



3B

J. DONALDSON

TOR @ BOS 17 JUL 4:10PM



1B

F. FREEMAN

CHC @ ATL 17 JUL 4:35PM

14.98
FPPG



9.09
FPPG



RF

J. BAUTISTA

TOR @ BOS 17 JUL 4:10PM



3B

E. LONGORIA

TB @ OAK 17 JUL 7:05PM

9.48
FPPG



10.77
FPPG



DH

C. DICKERSON

TB @ OAK 17 JUL 7:05PM



SP

M. MOORE

CLE @ SF 17 JUL 7:15PM

6.28
FPPG



11.63
FPPG



SP

J. ODORIZZI

TB @ OAK 17 JUL 7:05PM

Emerging Trend #3

- ◆ Twitch.TV
- ◆ Path and route of sports betting info and media??
- ◆ Live streaming of video games, eSports contests, music broadcasts (recent)
- ◆ Purchased by Amazon in 2014 for just under \$1 Billion
- ◆ Integrated with 'Prime' to form 'Twitch Prime'



Emerging Trend #3 continued

- ◆ 100 million visitors per month!
- ◆ Leading Live stream video service as of September 30th , 2017 in the world.
- ◆ Bigger than YouTube Gaming for the first time.

Internet Gaming Disorder

- A condition for further study in DSM-5 (APA 2013)
- Not an “official” disorder in the DSM but one in which the American Psychiatric Association wants additional research done.
- Often called ‘video game addiction’



Q: COULD IT BE A PROBLEM???

A: RECOGNIZE THE WARNING SIGNS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING:

- Neglecting family and work
- Loss of reliability
- Picking fights more often at school
- Increased levels of anxiety or depression
- Lies or evasiveness around time and money
- Secretive, controlling family finances
- Decrease in grades or interest in activities previously enjoyed

Potential Risks with Gaming

- Can lead to Problem Gambling.
- Bigger concern among the youth.
- The earlier one starts, the higher likelihood to develop a problem.
- The brain develops the “gas pedal” faster than the “braking system.”
- Inability to control impact on time or money.
- Illusions of Control
- Sense of identity and belonging.

Problematic Cognitions with Gaming

- Allows the behaviors to hang around longer
- No amount of time spent is ever enough
- Continue until a level, reward, or feature is completed
- Gaining power and status through the game
- Escaping the real world
- The computer or console is an “electronic friend.”

Motivators and Advantages around Internet Gambling

While prevalence is relatively low, participation is increasing:

- Convenience and Accessibility
- Greater value for dollar spent (i.e. payout rates and bonuses)
- Speed and Ease of Betting
- Variability and Robust Selection
- Comfort and lack of stigma

VIDEO

How Counter Strike turned a teenager into a disordered gambler



First...We have to acknowledge some of the challenges...

- Difficulty in differentiation between “Gaming” and “Gambling” activities in addiction research
- Many common features in terms of speed, aesthetics, and structure
- Both can create harm through excessive involvement
- Boundaries and lines are getting blurred (digital games with free and paid virtual currencies or items, as well as the capacity for wagering)
- Delay of gratification

Potential Pathways to Adolescent Gambling

- Social Casino Games: Easy, short duration, multiple devices, fun or competitive, isolation or social.
- Constant exposure normalizes the experiences
- Availability and Supply
- Positive experience + social interaction
- In game purchasing normalizes the habit of spending money on games....may carry to adulthood.
- Rewards (loot boxes and skins) and leveling up carries may carry over to comps in adulthood.

The 5 E's of Why People Play Games or Gamble!

- ◆ Excitement!
- ◆ Entertainment!
- ◆ Escape life's problems or pain
- ◆ Economics....It's all about the Benjamin's!
- ◆ Ego....Pride, reputation, or identity

Principles of Recovery

Attitude of Recovery

- ◆ Humility vs. Pride
- ◆ Gratitude vs Blame
- ◆ Mindfulness vs. Denial
- ◆ Determination vs. Incompetence
- ◆ Respect vs. Ignorance
- ◆ Relation vs. Isolation
- ◆ Love vs. Hate
- ◆ Attention vs. Neglect
- ◆ Being Present vs. Being Absent

Cultivate a Recovery Culture Within

- Mindfulness
- Laughter / Levity
- Identity
- Life Skills
- Multiple “Tools in the Toolbelt”
- Resiliency
- Self-Empowerment
- Respond vs. React
- H.A.L.T
- Accountability
- Emotional Awareness
- Others First
- Language
- Presence
- Balance
- “Feeling Safe”
- Care and Connection

Why Don't Problem Gamers / Gamblers Seek Treatment?

Challenge to Identity and Resistance to Change:

- Changes are related to gambler's thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.
- Intermittent rewarding outcomes are difficult to abandon.
- It is their sense of purpose and identity providing fun and excitement.
- Realization of wasted time, energy, money, and personal losses (relational, emotional)
- How does a person re-define themselves?

Importance of Language

- 1) Using the proper language can impact one's recovery
- 2) Language can be stigmatizing
- 3) Can influence how a person is viewed outside
- 4) Can influence self-identity
- 5) Labels and perception (Abuse vs Use Disorder)

Commonly Cited Barriers to Recovery

- Housing (eviction, problems, debt)
- Transportation
- Substance Use (Tobacco common)
- Risk Taking (Addiction switch)
- Offense (Police involvement, probation or parole violation)
- Lack of meaningful activities (includes employment)
- Lack of meaningful relationships

Commonly Cited Strengths for Recovery

- Recovery Group Participation (Attendance alone is not enough.)
- Social Support
- Meaningful Relationships
- Gainful and Meaningful Employment
- Commitment to Change / Transformation

Summary of Recovery Principles

- Don't think less of yourself....think of yourself less
- Rules without Relationships lead to Rebellion
- “The greatest sources of suffering are the lies we continue to tell ourselves” (Elvin Semrad, Boston U.)
- For people trapped in a mental prison, they battle between enjoying the pain of pleasure while suffering from the pleasure of the pain
- ‘The Body Keeps the Score’ by Bessel Van Der Kolk
- A ‘Dis-Ease’ of one’s inner being at varying levels

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SUPPORT. TREATMENT. HOPE.

Thank you!

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Phone: 1-800-GAMBLER

OR

Send a Text to '800GAMBLER'

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