

Assessment of Problem Gambling

**Loreen Rugle, Ph.D., NCGC II/BACC
Director, Maryland Center of Excellence
on Problem Gambling**

Lrugle@psych.umaryland.edu

www.mdproblemgambling.com

Agenda

- Goals of Assessment
- Brief review of problem gambling screening
- Key elements of assessment of gambling disorder
- Moving from assessment to recovery planning

Assessment Tasks and Goals

- **Engage and Motivate**
- **Convey Understanding of Gambling Problems**
- **Crisis Intervention**
- **Make Diagnoses**
- **Assess Severity and Strengths**
- **Provide Hope and Preliminary Plan**

Screening for gambling problems



PG Screening

➤ Good News

- Lie/Bet
- NODS-CLiP
- NODS-PERC
- Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (BBGS)
- **NORC DSMIV Screen**
- **DSM IV Screen**
- **South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)**
- SOGS-R A- Adolescent Screen
- Mass. Adolescent Gambling Screen



Concerned Others Gambling Screen (COGS)

1. Do you think you have been affected by someone else's gambling?
 - a. No, never
 - b. Don't know for sure if their gambling affected me
 - c. Yes, in the past
 - d. Yes, that's happening to me now

2. How would you describe the effect of that person's gambling on you now?
 - a. I worry about it sometimes
 - b. It is affecting my health
 - c. It is hard to talk with anyone about it
 - d. I am concerned about my, or my family's, safety
 - e. I'm still paying for it financially
 - f. It doesn't affect me any more

3. What would you like to happen?
 - a. I would like some information
 - b. I would like to talk about it in confidence with someone
 - c. I would like some support or help
 - d. Nothing at this stage

PG Screening



➤ Bad News

- Screens don't work well in clinical practice
- Give illusion of addressing issue

Possible Strategy

Adapted by Illinois SBIRT from DSM5, BBGS, and Elizabeth Hartney, PhD

For the purpose of the next questions, “gambling” means buying lottery tickets, gambling at a casino, playing cards or dice for money, betting on sports games, playing slot machines, video poker or other video gambling, gambling on the internet, betting on horses or dogs, playing bingo or keno.

During the past 12 months have you gambled 5 or more times? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes continue to next 3 questions ---

Screening Strategy

DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS:

1. Have you tried to hide how much you have gambled from your family or friends?	Yes	No	
2. Have you had to ask other people for money to help deal with financial problems that had been caused by gambling?	Yes	No	
3. Have you ever felt restless, on edge or irritable when trying to stop or cut down on gambling?	Yes	No	

If yes to any of the above proceed to next 6 questions

Funded by DHMH/BHA

DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS:

4. Have you tried to cut down or stop your gambling?	Yes	No
5. Have you increased your bet or how much you would spend, in order to feel the same kind of excitement as before?	Yes	No
6. Did you think about gambling even when you were not doing it? (Remembering past gambling experiences, or planning future gambling?)	Yes	No
7. Did you go to gamble when you were feeling down, stressed, angry or bored?	Yes	No
8. Did you ever try to win back the money that you had recently lost?	Yes	No
9. Has your gambling caused problems in your relationships or with work?	Yes	No
Total "Yes" Responses		

Integrated Assessment

- Incorporating into existing assessments
- How might you ask questions related to gambling in each of these sections of your intake or assessment?
 - Medical
 - Financial
 - Family History
 - Substance Use
 - Psychiatric
 - Recreation

Family and Cultural Traditions

- First gambling experience
- Family and gambling
 - Attitudes toward gambling
 - Role in family activities and traditions
- Cultural
 - Forms of gambling
 - Role in cultural traditions
 - Cultural attitudes towards gambling
 - Cultural views toward help and help-seeking

Assessment Outline: Gambling History

Benefits of Gambling

- What do you (did you) get out of gambling?
- What part has gambling played in your life?
- When do you gamble?
- How do you feel while gambling? Before?
After?
- Extent of involvement in fantasy/dream world

Affirm

- Gambling was done to meet needs
- Served an important function
- The best alternative at the time

Strengths

- What strengths/skills have you used to cope with gambling problems?
- Which have worked best?
- What strengths/skills have you used in other areas or times in your life?

Assessment Outline: Gambling History

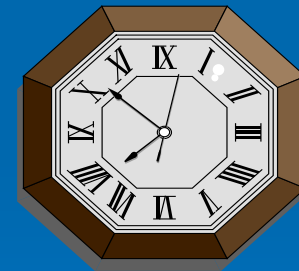
Costs of Gambling

- **Financial**
- **Legal**
- **Material**
- **Family/Relationship**
- **Employment**
- **Physical/Medical**
- **Mental/Cognitive**
- **Emotional**
- **Shame and guilt issues**

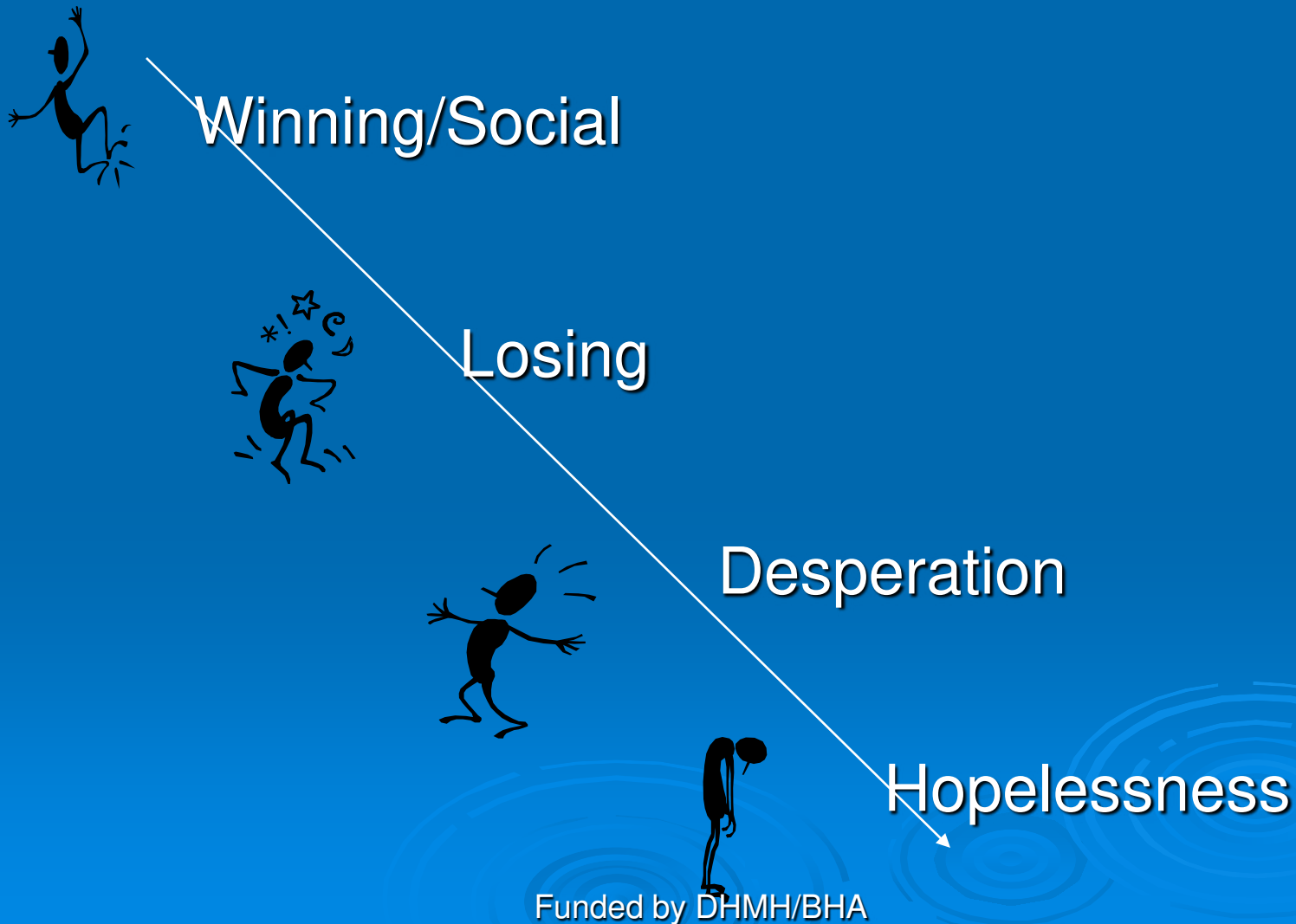
Assessment Outline: Gambling History

Severity

- SOGS Score
- # positive - DSM-5
- GSI
- G-SAS
- Time and/or Money spent
- Time line follow-back
- Money lost or owed/income
- Life disruption/damage



Assessment: Progression of Problem Gambling



Assessment Outline: Gambling History

Progression

- **Gradual or hooked with first bet**
- **Continual or Interrupted**
- **Factors hastening progression**
 - **Intrinsic**
 - **Extrinsic**

Factors Effecting Progression

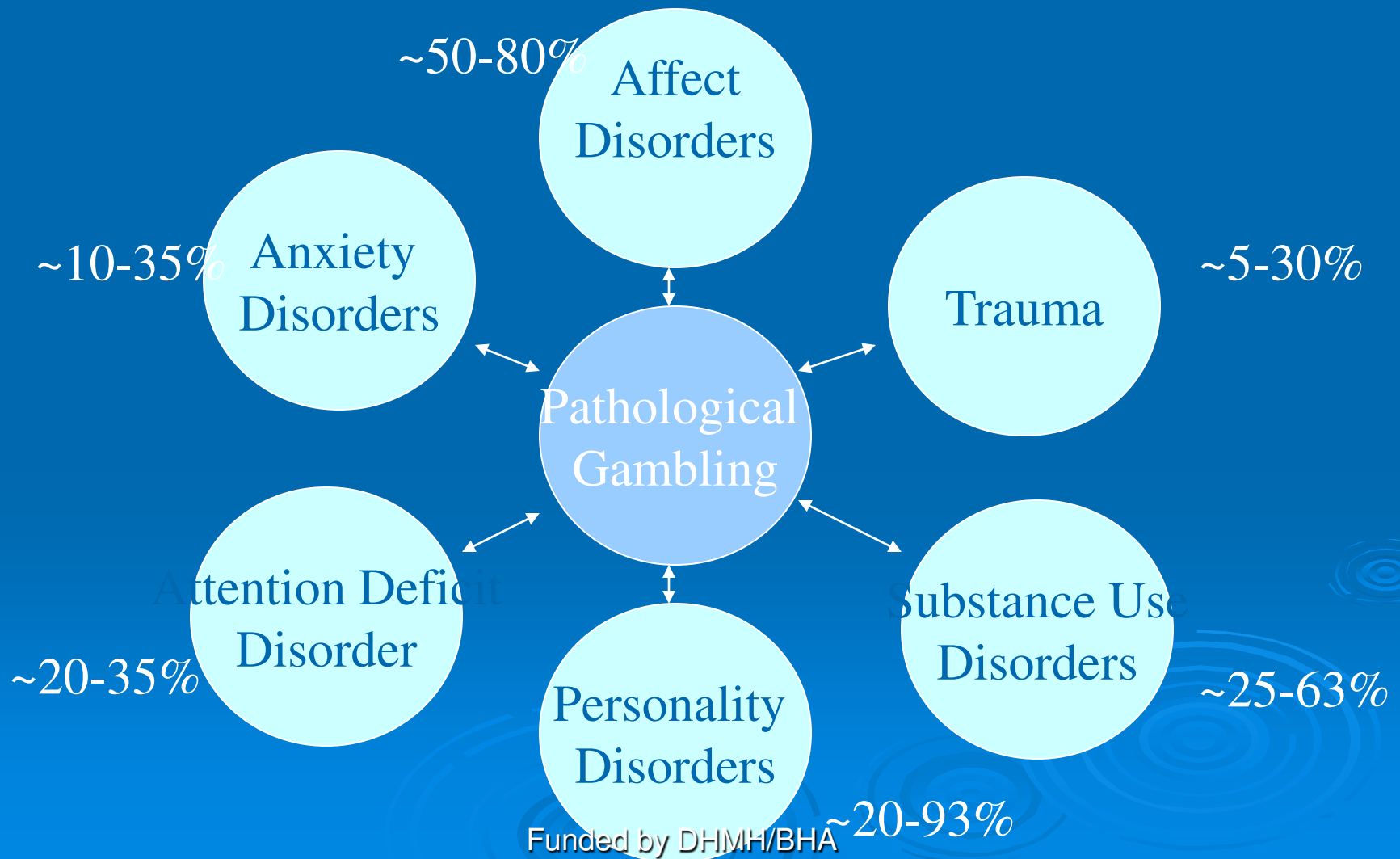
- Type of Game
- Access to Money
- Understanding of Risks
- Big Win
- Bail Outs



Assessment Outline

- **Medical Evaluation**
 - **History & Physical**

Assessment Issues: Psychiatric Comorbidity in Pathological Gamblers in Treatment



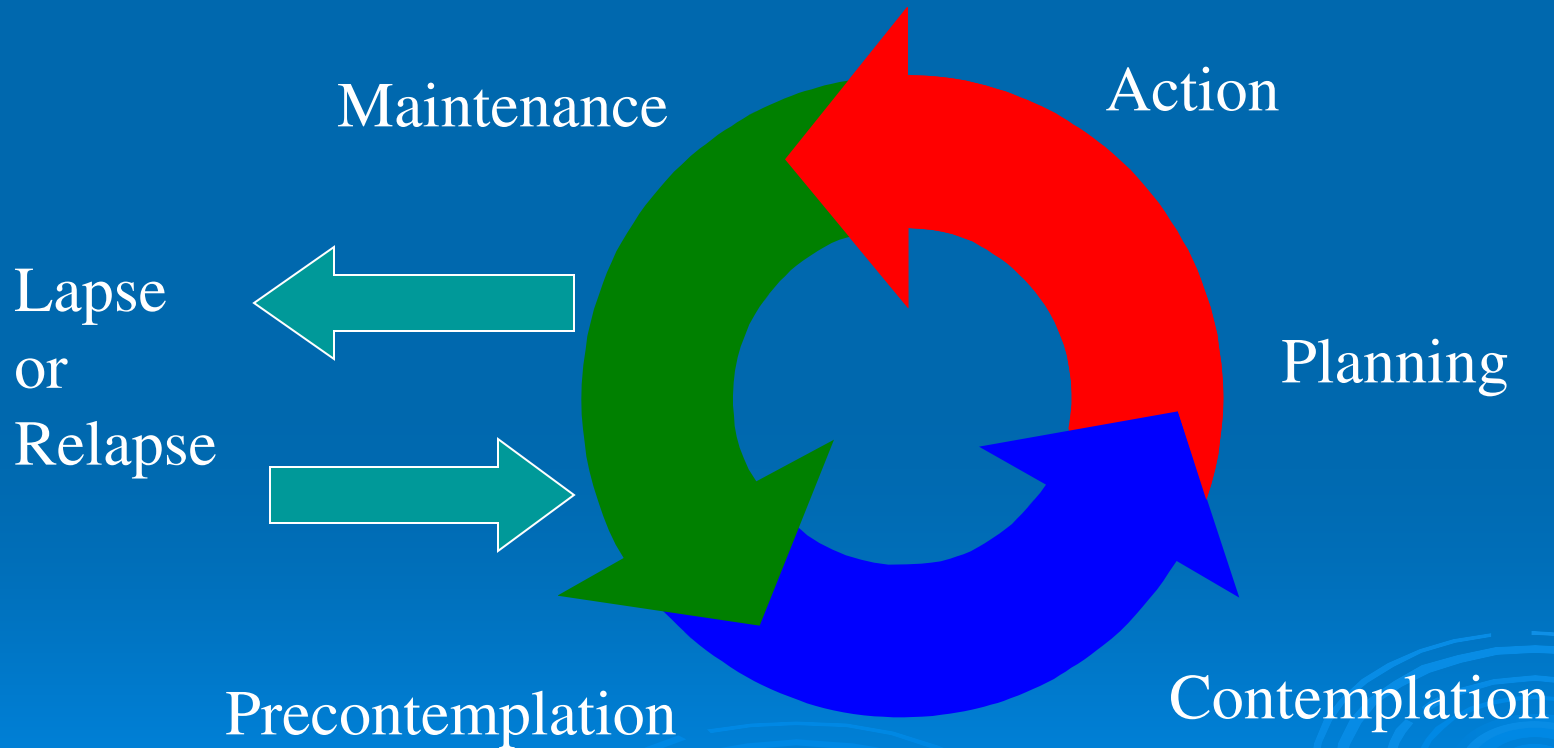
Assessment Outline

Spiritual History

- Involvement with formal religious groups/practices/beliefs
- Relationship with higher power or philosophy
- Value System
- Meaning in Life
- Feelings of Connection



Motivational Cycle



Rulers

➤ How important is it to you to change this?

• 0...1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10

• Not at all Extremely

➤ How confident are you that you can change

• 0...1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10

• Not at all Extremely

Change Planning

- What, specifically, would you like to be different
- What, specifically, could you do to get started?
- If the first step is successful, then what?
- Who else could you ask for support, assistance, if anyone? What could you ask for?
- What would be signs that things are going well?
- How would you know if you were off-track?
- What would you do if you got off-track?

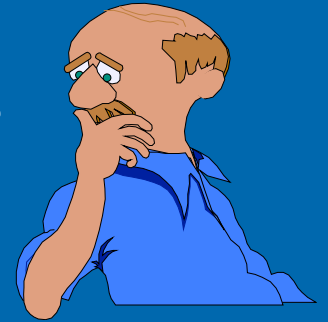
Menu of Options

- Gambler's Anonymous or GamAnon
- Problem Gambling Specific Treatment
- Brief Interventions
- Limited Gambling/Harm Reduction
- Abstinence

Family Assessment

➤ Issues

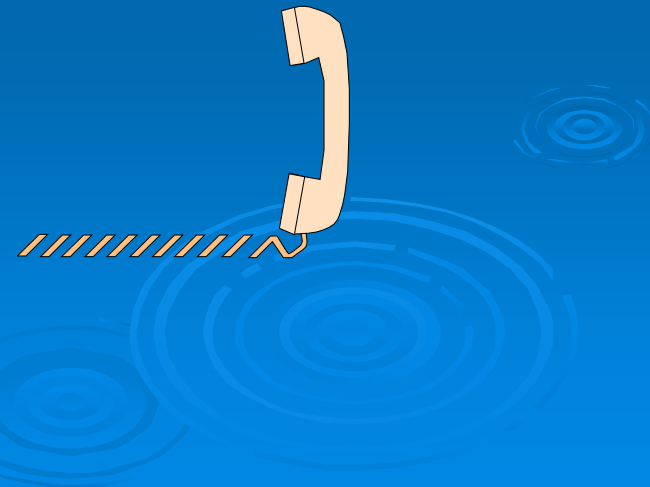
- Permission to talk to family members



- With or without gambler present?



Coercion
Threats/Fears
Protectiveness
Denial



Thank You



Anyone can slay a dragon, he told me, but
try waking up every morning and
loving the world all over again.

That's what takes a real hero.

Funded by DHMH/BHA