

“A Stress Management/Mindfulness Approach to Working with the Problem Gambler”

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Problem Gambling

Learning Objectives

Attendees will be able to:

- Increase their understanding of stress and the impact that it has on our lives and our clients
- Participants will learn about the relationship between stress and gambling problems.
- Help clients develop effective strategies to cope with stress and enhance their potential for success in recovery
- Develop an effective self-care plan that is right for you.

**BREATHE
DEEPLY AND SLOWLY**

CALM

Question

What do we seek for our clients and ourselves?

AWARNESS – Which provides opportunities for personal growth and change

STRESS

- How are our jobs and lives stressful and challenging?
- How about for your Clients? Who are the first ones that come to mind?
- What are the causes of stress as they relate to COVID-19?
- What are some of the effects of this stress on our daily lives? What are the risks?

What is Stress?

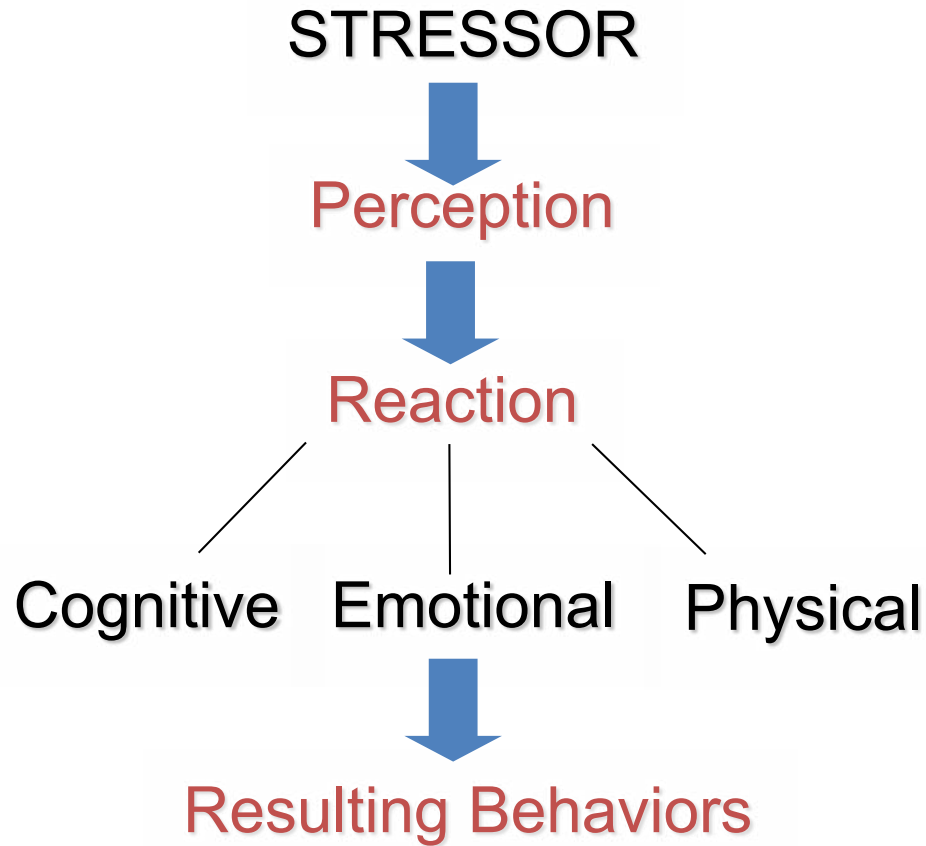
- **STRESS**

How would you define it?

What are the specific stressors that our clients are coping with?...What are we dealing with?

Stress Defined

–A physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral response to **a REAL or PERCIEVED** challenge, demand, change or threat.



Addiction

- **What does it mean to be addicted?**

What are the ways that it is manifested in everyday behavior?

How does it affect a person's thinking?

What impact does it have on emotions?



Addictive Behavior

Substance Abuse/Behavioral addictions generally involve pathological use of substances or activities resulting in:

- Potentially hazardous behavior
- Continued use and activity despite persistent social, psychological, occupational, or health problem
- Physiological need for increasing amounts of a substance

Addictions: Gambling, Alcohol/Drugs, Gaming, Cyber

- **What is it?**

- There is a genetic component that can predispose someone to problems. **STRESS** >>> negatively impacted life issues/environmental issues >Expression
- Develops over time – progression >>> **CHRONIC**
- It has biological, psychological, social/environmental, behavioral, and emotional causes.
- Leads an individual to develop obsessive (thoughts) and compulsive (behaviors) tendencies toward something.
- All these issues combined lead to the >>>>

“PERFECT STORM” of
ADDICTION!!!



How as our world changed in the last 5-6 weeks?

Stress

Perceived Threat

Learned Response>>>>> >>>>>>>

Cause & Effect

Biological Effect/Sympathetic Dominance

*Cognitive Effect / Thoughts-Beliefs-World
View*

Emotional Effect / Fear-Anxiety-Helplessness

Stress Lesson

- Control....

What is it? Why do we need it? What happens when we perceive the LOSS OF CONTROL?

Highly Stressful

What can we do in the face of this?

2 Lists – What can we Control?

What are we not able to Control?

ACCEPTANCE - Focus on what we can control?

Exercise: Mindful Meditation – Find Our Strengths

THE STRESS RESPONSE

Normal Pattern

- Vital for Physical/Mental fitness
- Source of Motivation
- Focuses Energy
- Usually Short Term

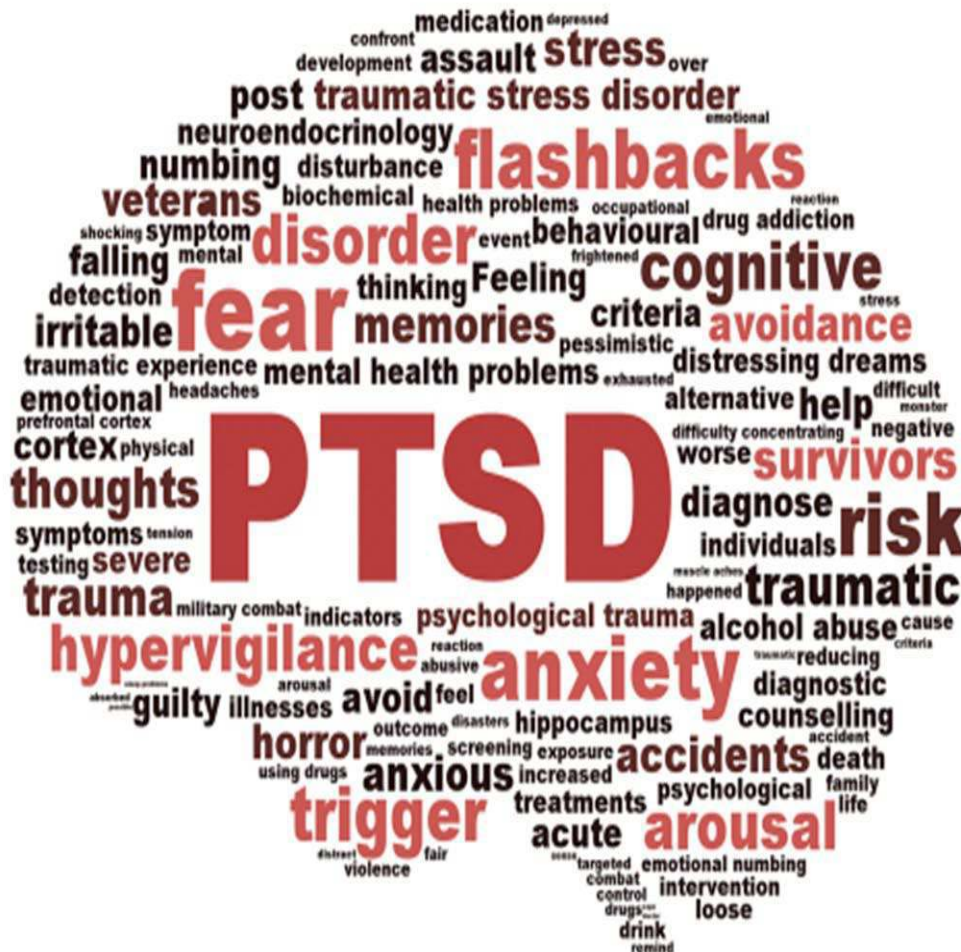
Maladaptive Pattern

- Leads to Health/Emotional Problems
- Reactions Pile Up
- No Rest/Rebound
- Usually Long Term

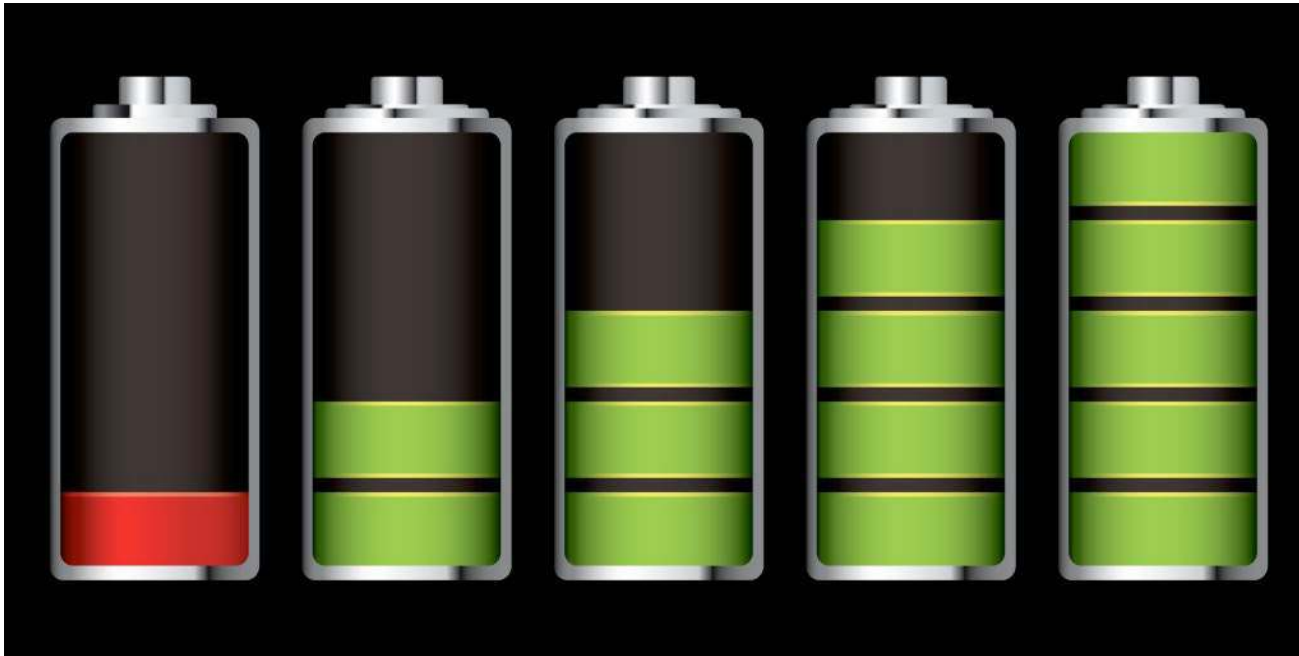


Emotional Phases of Disaster

HOW TRAUMA CHANGES EVERYTHING

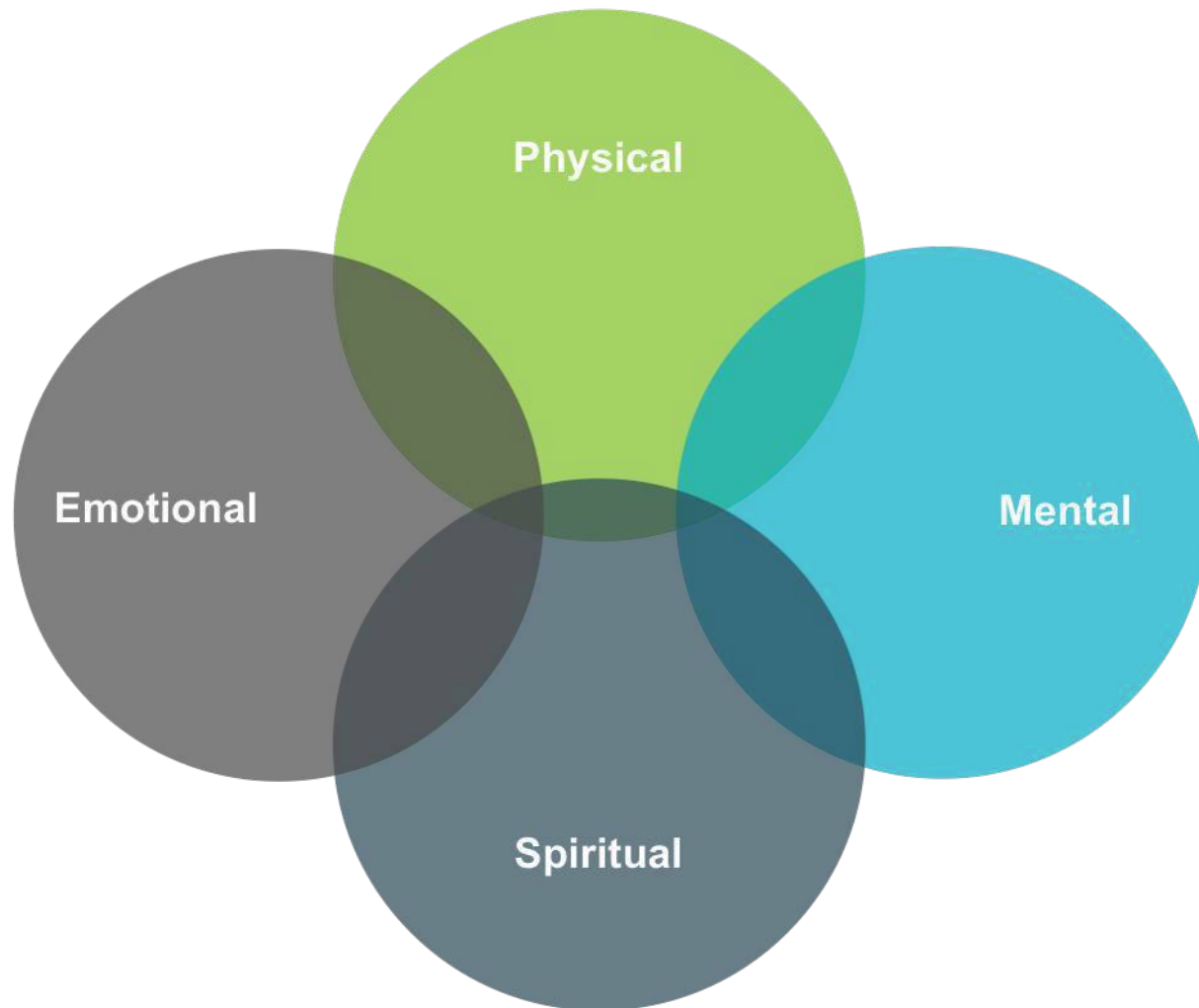


Retreat = Renew = Re-energize



For optimal performance,
we must learn how to re-energize

Four Sources of Energy



Manage How You Think

- Reframe your thoughts
- Focus on what is within your control
- Cultivate positive self-talk
- Use affirmations
- Put things in perspective
- Adjust your expectations
- Give yourself time to disconnect
- Reflect on the learning opportunity

Stress Management Exercise –
STOP – BREATHE - REFLECT - CHOOSE

(psychcentral.com)



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Stress Management



What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness - is awareness of present experience with acceptance - A non-judgmental approach to your experience.

It is deceptively simple way of relating the contents of our minds that has been successfully practiced to alleviate psychological suffering and enhance emotional well-being for over 2,500 years.

Practicing mindfulness exercises can have many possible benefits, including:

- Reduced stress, anxiety and depression
- Less negative thinking and distraction
 - Improved mood
 - Improved Relationships
 - Less reactive

How to Become More Mindful

- *Mindfulness Practice*

Develop a different relationship with our thoughts

Observe our thoughts coming and going

Don't believe in them – Practice a non-judgmental approach to them.

Becoming Conscious of Mind-Body Awareness

Focused Attention

Open Monitoring

Loving-Kindness

Mindfulness

- **Mindfulness** is simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way



Self-Compassion

- *Self-compassion entails being warm and understanding toward ourselves when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate, rather than ignoring our pain or flagellating ourselves with self-criticism.*
- *Self-compassionate people recognize that being imperfect, failing, and experiencing life difficulties is inevitable, so they tend to be gentle with themselves when confronted with painful experiences rather than getting angry when life falls short of set ideals.*

Self-Compassion

- Exercise/Meditation



Self Care/Self Compassion

- Create Balance by Engaging in a Variety of Professional Activities
- Take Time for Yourself/Slow Down

Recharge and Self-Regulate Throughout the Day

- Use Professional/Social Supports
- Promote Activities for Life Balance
- Live in the Moment
- Be Positive/Optimistic
- Seek Growth Experiences
- Grow Your Gratitude Practice

Building Mental Energy: Resiliency

The Art Of Bouncing Back

Resiliency is the ability to modify behaviors, thoughts and actions to handle a situation or challenge.

Characteristics of a resilient person:

- Optimistic
- Resourceful
- *Curious*
- **Flexible**
- **Empathic**

Resilience

Personal Resilience

- Wellness Body/Mind
- Perspective-taking
- Micro-breaks
- Mindfulness
- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Rest
- Optimism
- Gratitude
- Informal Interpersonal Support

Organizational

Resilient Leadership
Peer Support, CISM

Stress Management-Resiliency

Develop a self-care resiliency plan?

What are your take aways?

How can they be applied?

...for you and your clients.

Developing your mindfulness practice...

Living in the Present

- “There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow, so today is the right day to love, believe, do and mostly live.” Dalai Lama





*Look for ways to find and create
moments of...*

PEACE

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