

# *Promoting Resilience in the Family: Working with Families of the Problem Gambler.*

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Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

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The Maryland Center of Excellence  
on Problem Gambling

# Learning Objectives

- To learn the definition of resilience and how to promote it.
- To develop an increased understanding of how to build resilience in the family of the problem gambler.
- To increase understanding of relevant family issues involved in the treatment of problem gamblers.
- To learn therapeutic techniques to promote the recovery of the problem gambler and their family.

*TAKE  
A  
DEEP  
BREATH*

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# The Resilient Family

- Do you consider yourself *Resilient*?
- What is Resilience?
- How can Resilience help those in recovery and their families to survive the harm of gambling disorder?
- How would you promote Resiliency to our clients and families?

Brief Resiliency Scale (BRS)

# The Resilient Family

- How Resilient Are You?
- What's your score?
- What factors are being measured?
- Who comes to mind when you think of a person who is **RESILIENT?**



# Resilience

- Definition of Resiliency.....

The acquired immunity against disabling stress. The ability to rebound from adversity. It is an inner strength that increases the likelihood of success in anything you do.

George S. Everly, Jr., PhD

*The Resilient Child*

(2009)



Impact on  
Concerned Others  
(Svenssen et al.,  
2013; Wenzel et al.,  
2009; Lorenz &  
Shuttlesworth, 1983)

- Financial Problems
- Alcohol Abuse
- Depression
- Anger
- Conflict/Abuse
- Hopelessness
- Anxiety
- Isolation (Particularly women)
- Fear of Job Loss (more so men)
- Obsessive-Compulsive Sx
- Sleep problems
- Headaches
- More sick days
- GI problems
- Breathing problems



## EFFECTS ON SPOUSE

Humiliated by debts

Helpless, depressed, fearful of future

Concerned about children 's needs

Senses all responsibility on shoulders

Fear of the Future

Loss of intimacy and special relationship



# EMOTIONAL IMPACT

- How could he/she do this to me?
- How am I going to pay bills?
- How can I ever trust gambler again?
- What do we tell the children
- How can I put my life back together?
- How could I have believed the lies?
- Who should I talk to about this?
- What do we do now?

# FAMILY AS A SYSTEM

- *Made of component parts linked together in a particular way to accomplish a common purpose*
- Family linked by rules
  - Role or function of each member
  - Relationship between the persons
  - Goals and methods to achieve goals
  - Attitudes and values
  - Who has power and how others will respond

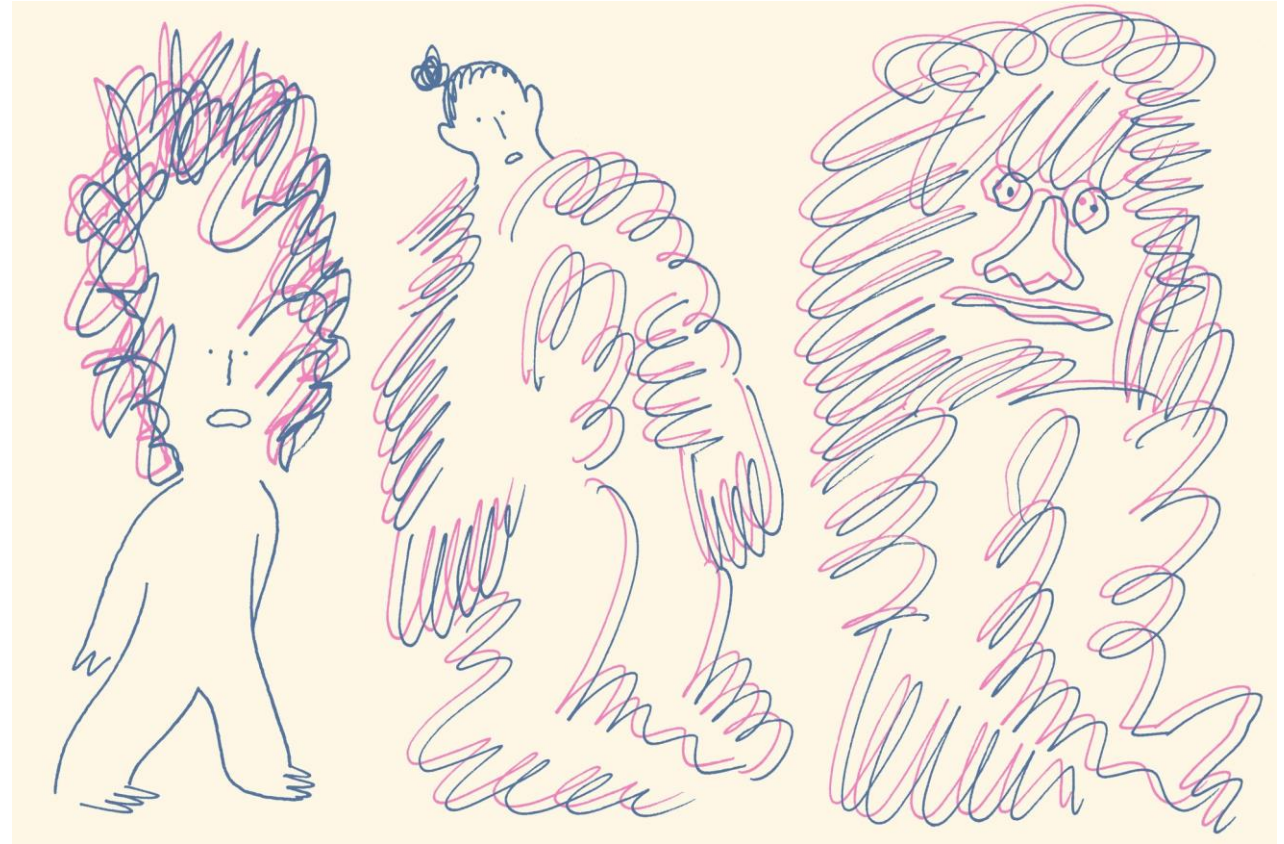


## How to deal with change

# Stress = Life

- How do we handle/cope with life and its circumstances?
- What choices do we have?
- Change?
  - \*Gambling Behavior/Harm
  - \* Financial Crisis
  - \*Family Issues

Spouse/Children/Extended Family





# Hardiness

## Psychological Hardiness

- Hardiness is the key to the resiliency for not only surviving, but also thriving, under stress. Hardiness enhances performance, reduce stress, behavior, stamina, mood and both physical and mental health.
- It involves 3 key Factors
  - Commitment
  - Control
  - Challenge Attitudes



# Resiliency Roadblocks

There are some roadblocks that can prevent us from becoming resilient, including:

Pessimism or Negative Thinking

Fears and Stress

Communication Issues

The Giving and Receiving of Support

# Resiliency Roadblocks

- Pessimism and Negative Thinking

Beliefs>>>>>>>Emotional Consequences>>>>>>>Behavior

Negative thinking >>> Emotional state, Stress, Family Relationships and Health.

“Bad things always happen to me.” This in turn creates a series of outcomes:

They are powerless to change.

Bad events are viewed as their personal inadequacies and misfortune.

They are defined by their setbacks. “Why try”

Pessimists interpret a problem as insurmountable, quickly give up trying to solve it, and then feel helpless, depressed and pessimistic—creating a vicious cycle

Reframe Exercise

# Resiliency Roadblocks



FEARS/ANXIETIES



STRESS/CHANGE



COMMUNICATION  
CHALLENGES



THE GIVING AND  
RECEIVING OF HELP

# The Resilient Family

- Resilience

*is the ability to bounce back and effectively cope after an adverse event, such as stress, a major life change, a catastrophe or troubled times.*





# Resilience

## The Resilience Builders

- Optimism
- Problem Solving
- Self-validating
- Engagement with community, spirituality and career
- Self-care



# Optimism

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## Optimism

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Reacting to setbacks from a presumption of personal power.

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Bad events are temporary setbacks , isolated to particular circumstances. Can be overcome by my effort and abilities.

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## Optimism can:

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Inoculates against depression

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Improves health

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Combines with talent and desire to enable achievement

# Optimism

Common traits of an Optimist are:

Self-regulating – Thoughts, Emotions, Behaviors

Believe they can influence outcomes

Do not believe in the permanence of negative events

Ability to interact and relate well with others

Empathy

Compassion for self and others




# The Resilient Family

## Summary

- Make connections
- Accept change/avoid seeing problems as insurmountable
- Keep things in perspective/reframe/think positively
- Take care of yourself/nurturing self and family







“Note to self...every  
time you were  
convinced that you  
could not go on,  
you did”

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-unknown



# The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

- **Maryland Helpline** 24/7 Confidential, call or text  
**1-800-GAMBLER** (1-800-426-2537)
- **Help seeker website** – **helpmygamblingproblem.org**  
Self-Assessment Test  
“Find a Counselor”
- **Main website** – **mdproblemgambling.org**  
Repository for all Center resources and information
- **Free Awareness Materials**  
Mailed to you including posters and brochures
- **Gambling Peer Support**  
Support for Individuals provide by Center Peers  
Support for families provide by Maryland Coalition of Families

**Office: 667-214-2120**



# You Are and Can Be Resilient!

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*PEACE*