

Don't Forget About the Power of the Unconscious: A Psychodynamic Approach to Working with Problem Gamblers

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Learning Objectives

- Develop a greater understanding of various psychodynamic theories and how they explain the development of gambling disorder.
- Learn to apply the concepts of defense mechanisms, fantasy life and transference as they apply to problem gambling.
- Develop a deeper understanding of how to apply the principals of psychodynamic psychology to the treatment of gambling disorder.



BREATHE

RELAX

Early Recollections



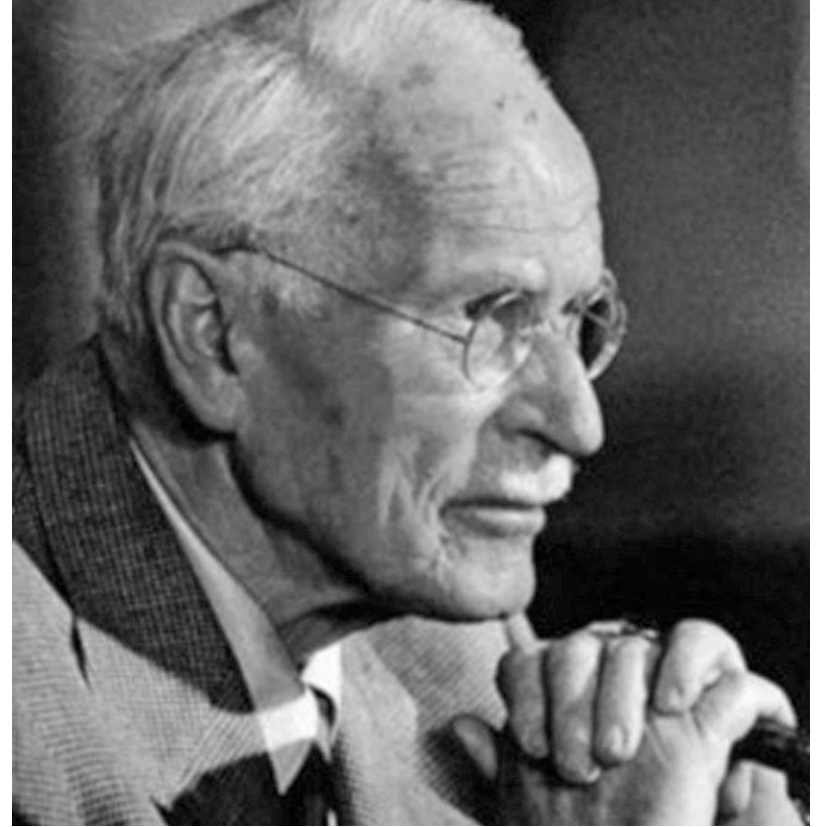
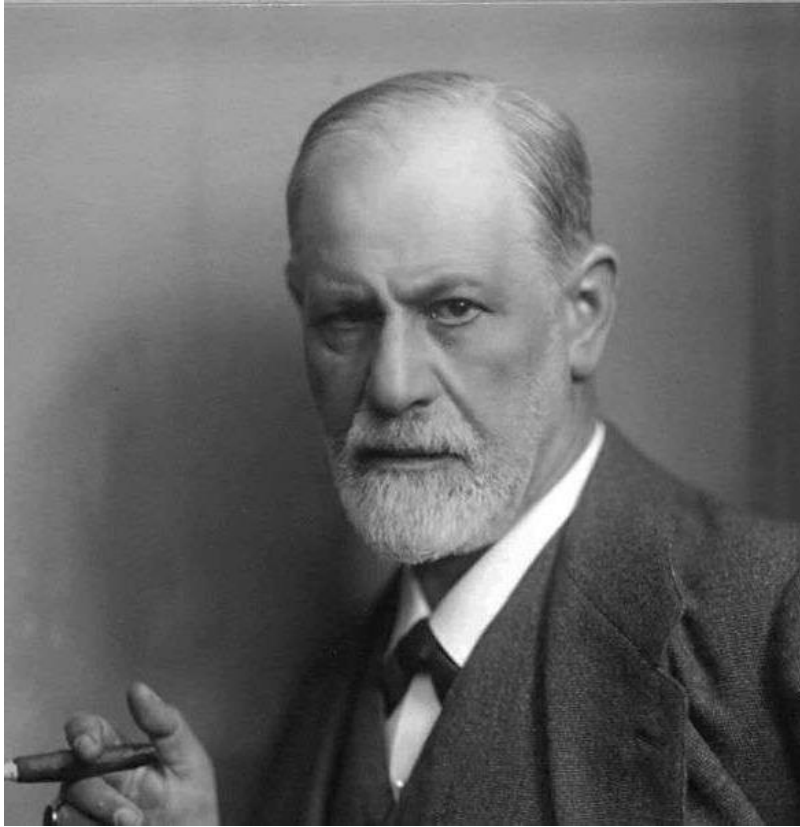
Reflection

- What was the memory that came to mind?
 - Who else was involved with this memory?
 - What were the thoughts that came to mind?
 - The emotions? How did you experience the memory in your body?
 - What are the themes, issues and symbolism as you brought up this memory?
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- Does the recollection connect to any themes or issues in your life?
- Presently or as you have developed over the years?

The Foundations of Psychology

Unconscious Determinates of Human Behavior

- Levels of Awareness
 - Conscious
 - Sub-conscious
 - Unconscious
- Defenses Mechanisms – Fantasy/Dream Life
- Transference Reactions
- Insight/Awareness/Catharsis/Change



The Giants

The Psychology of Human Nature

- **Freud**
Pleasure Seekers – Avoid Pain
Sexual Experiences
- **Jung**
Archetypes
Pathogenic Secrets
- **Adler**
Feelings of Inferiority
Compensation
- Psychological Needs – Safety and Security

Anxiety is Basic
The Talking Cure

Case of John

John is a 47 yo divorced Caucasian male, who is the father of 2 adult daughters.

Hx of gambling and S UD. Bipolar disorder. Alcohol inpatient 1 year ago and has been sober since attending a 28-day rehabilitation center. Gambling activity increased after alcohol abstinence.

Recently hospitalized for suicidality - Psychosis

Gambling led to suicide plan. Used money from social club fund, retirement and daughters wedding fund.

Family Hx of Alcoholism – Gambling Disorder - Mental Illness – Domestic Violence – Trauma

Worked hard to keep family dysfunction a secret – HS friend Died by Suicide

Childhood history of gambling – Family gambling – Veteran –

Unable to control the impulse to gamble daily – lotto – EGD – Casino – 2+ years of daily gambling

Gambling Debt and threat of criminal charges -

The Unconscious Mind of the Gambler

What are the
themes, issues and
experiences of the
gambler?

How do defenses
serve the
gambler?

Fantasy Life

Hero archetype –
Anxieties –

Behavior Patterns

Transference

Psychodynamic Applications

Psychodynamic Therapy is most suitable for...

Those who have coexisting psychopathology with their SUD or GD

Those whose recovery is stable

Those who do not have Organic Brain Disorder or other limitations due to their mental capacity

The Usefulness of Psychodynamic Concepts:

The Therapeutic Alliance

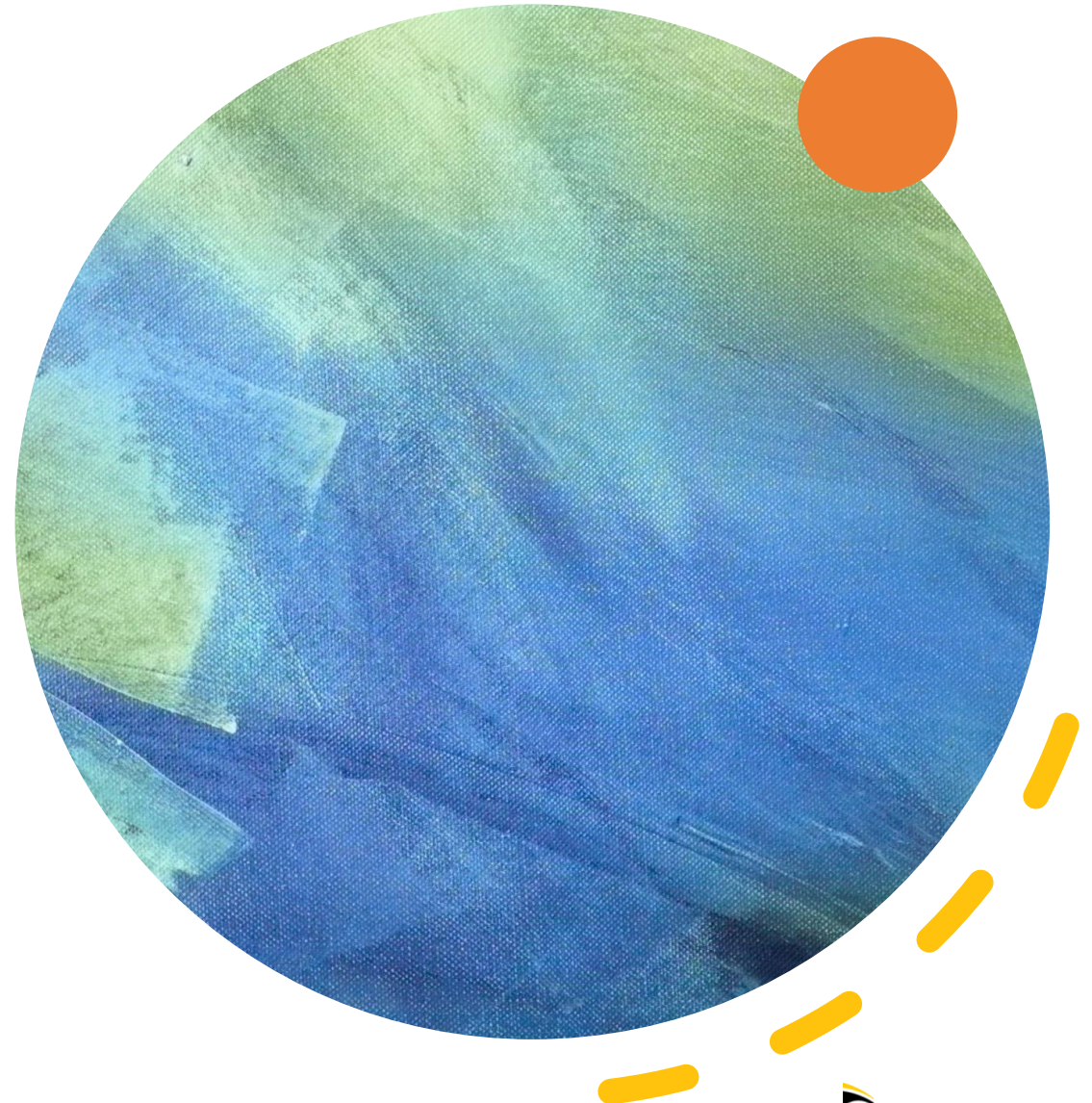
Insight

Defenses and Resistance

Transference/Countertransference

Defense Mechanisms

Denial	Rationalization	Repression
Projection	Displacement	Minimization
Safeguarding tendencies –	Excuses - Aggression – Withdrawal	<i>Protect the Self – AT ALL COSTS</i>



Unconscious Processes to Explore

Triggers

Displacement

Projections

Feelings of Insecurity

Safety and Satisfaction of Needs

Connections of past to present

Awareness and Catharsis

The Case of Ron

Ron is a 53 yo single Caucasian male. High level of stress and anxiety. Family history of Gambling Disorder. Dad in treatment and GA for many years. History of alcohol and drug use. Never received treatment outside of family therapy when he was 15 yo. Used work to address debt and credit problems. Borrowed from a friend to cover the loss.

Dad passed away 25 years ago.

Family History of Addictions and Mental Illness –

Family moved 9x in 12 years – Dad covering up or hiding from collectors – Impersonating to secure student loan -

Serious car accident – Disabling Leg Injury

Lost Job – unemployed

Primary Gambling Activity – Slots

Repression – Displacement – Loss – Unresolved Grief

Self soothing activities – Internal Conflicts

Psychodynamic Therapy

Psychotherapy – Carl Jung (Four Stages)

- Confession of a pathogenic secret
- Interpretation, explanation, and elucidation
- Education as social beings
- Transformation

Individual Therapy – Adler

- Engagement
- Assessment
- Insight
- Reorientation

Brief Psychodynamic Therapies


Dynamic Supportive Psychotherapy (Pinsker, Rosenthal, and McCullough) Up to 40 sessions
Increase self-esteem, adaptive skills, and ego functions.

- Self-esteem boosters: reassurance, praise, encouragement
- Reduction of anxiety
- Respect adaptive defenses, challenge maladaptive ones
- Clarifications, reflections, interpretations
- Rationalizations, reframing, advice
- Modeling, anticipation, and rehearsal

Brief Psychodynamic Therapies

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (Klerman) Time limited; for addictive disorders, Eliminating or reducing the primary symptom; improvement in handling current interpersonal problem areas, particularly those associated with addictive disorders.

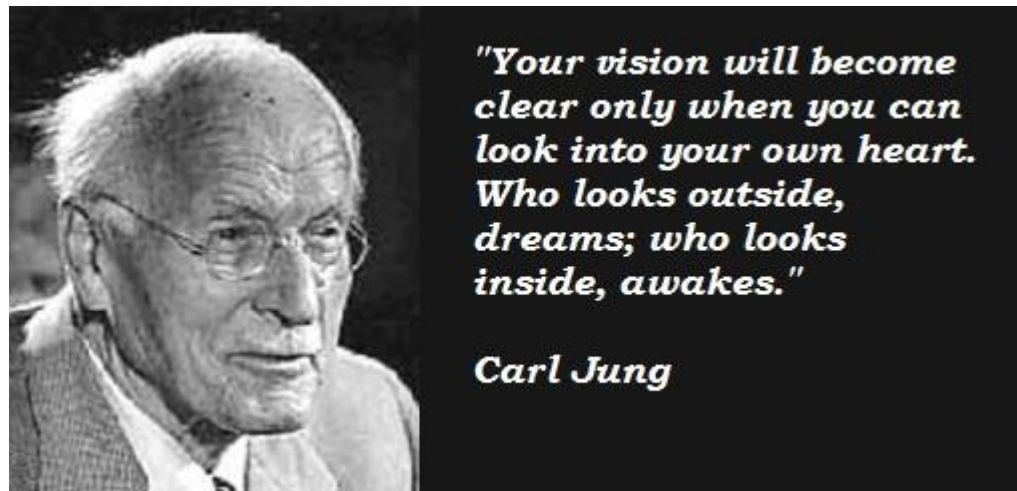
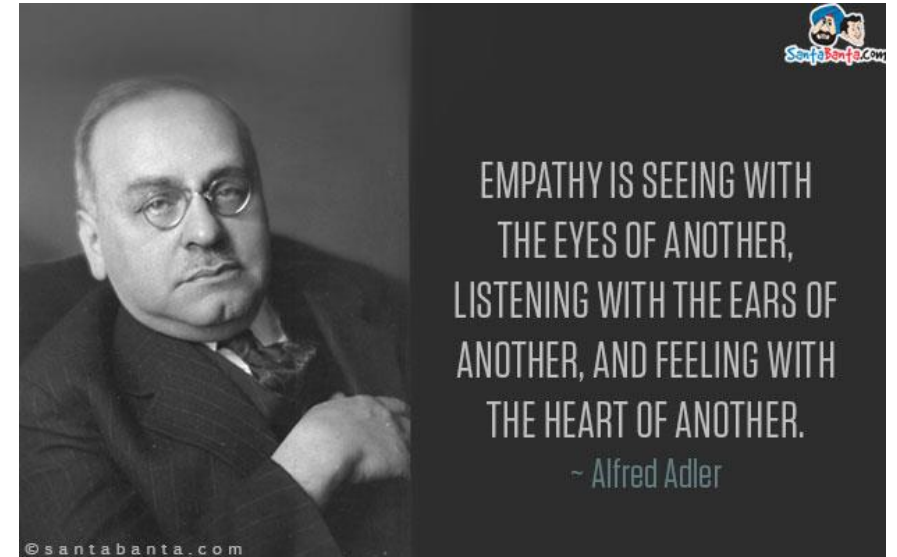
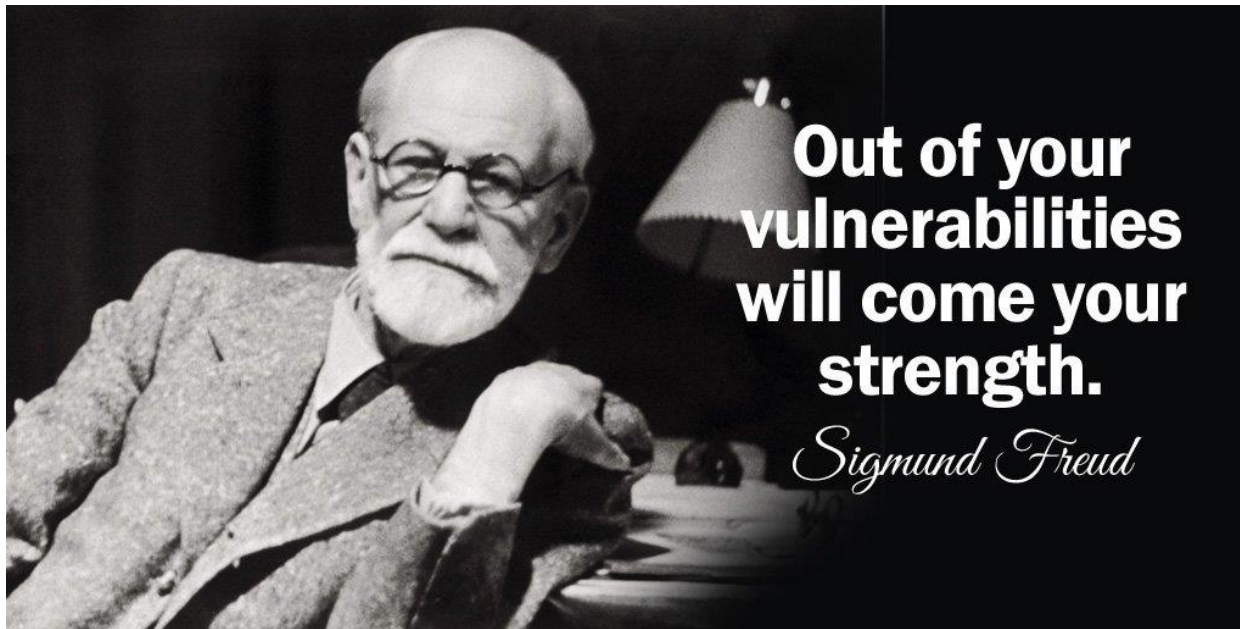
- Exploration, clarification, encouragement of affect, analysis of communication, use of the therapeutic relationship and behavior-change techniques.



Brief Psychodynamic Therapies

Time-Limited Psychotherapy (Mann) 12 sessions. Central issue related to conflict about loss (lifelong source of pain, attempts to master it, and conclusions drawn from it regarding the client's self-image)

- Formulation, presentation, and interpretations of the central issue
- Interpretation around earlier losses
- Termination





Thank You

PEACE

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