

# *“A Stress Management: Approach to Working with the Problem Gambler”*

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# 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, teach them resiliency skills and enhance their potential for success in recovery

Utilize mindfulness and self care regimen to manage stressors

Develop an effective self-care plan that is right for the client.

**BREATHE  
DEEPLY AND SLOWLY**

***CALM***

# Question

What do we seek for our clients and ourselves?

**AWARNESS** – Which provides opportunities for personal growth and change

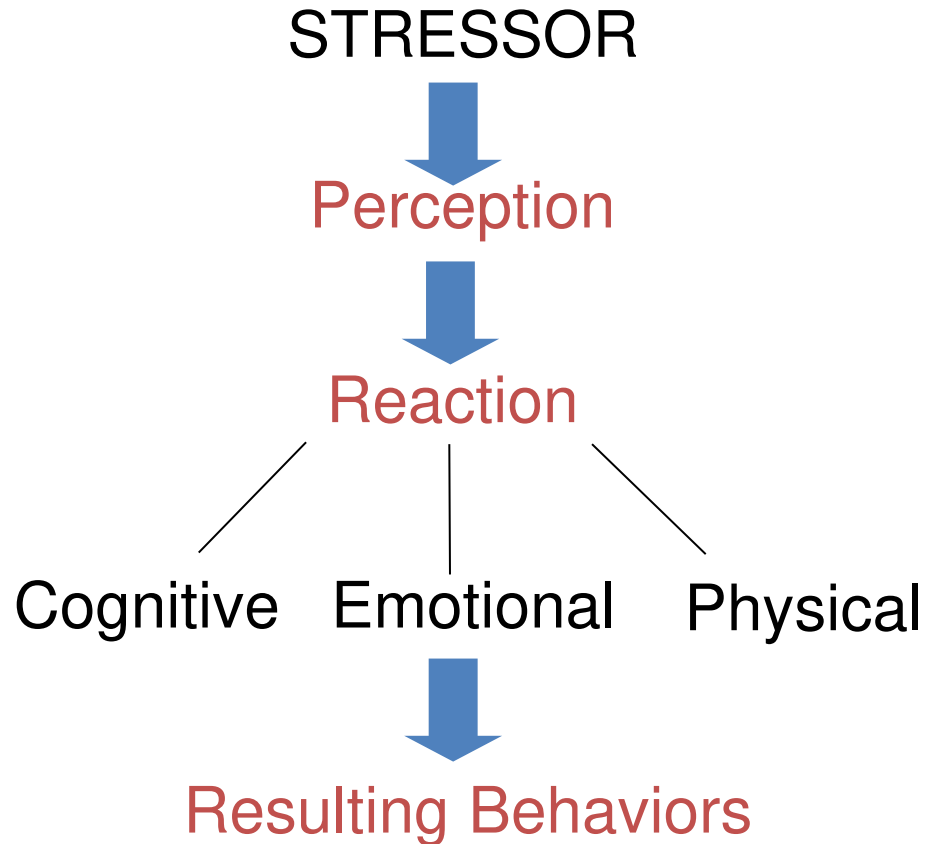
# STRESS

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

# Stress Defined

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

# Stress Continuum



# Gambling Addiction

- **What does it mean to have a gambling addiction?**

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

How does it effect a persons thinking?

What impact does it have on ones emotions?







# Addictive Behavior

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

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

# 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 has our world changed in the last 6 months?**

**How has our world changed in the last 3 years?**

# 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....

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

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

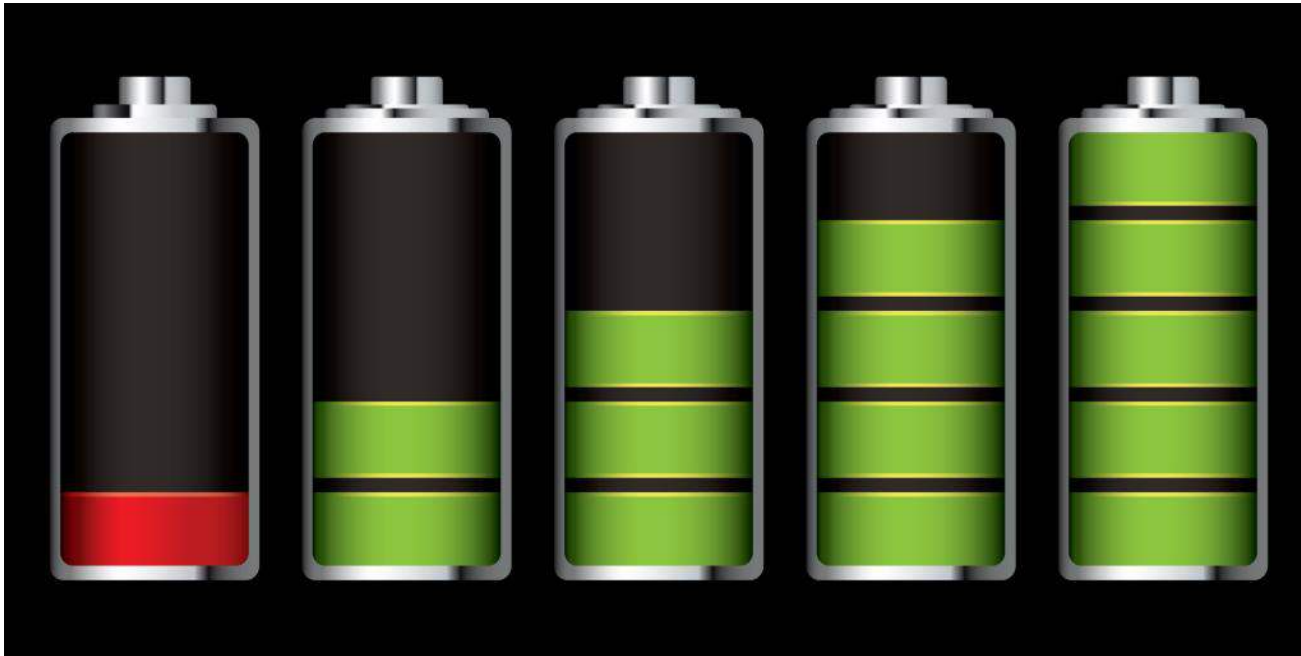
## Maladaptive Pattern

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





# Retreat = Renew = Re-energize



For optimal performance,

we must learn how to re-energize

# De-Stress: Manage How You Think

- Reframe your thoughts
- Focus on what is within your control
- Cultivate positive self-talk
- Use affirmations
- Journaling can help
- 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 to relating the contents of our minds that has been successfully practiced for over 2,500 years to alleviate psychological suffering and enhance emotional well-being.

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
- Lead to self preservation
- 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



# Resources

Maryland Center for Excellence on Problem Gambling

MdproblemGambling.com      667-214-2120

Gambler Anonymous (GA) [gambleranonymous.org](http://gambleranonymous.org)

Gam-Anon    [www.gam-anon.org](http://www.gam-anon.org)

National Counsel on Problem Gambling      [ncpgambling.org](http://ncpgambling.org)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMSHA)

[Samsha.gov](http://Samsha.gov)      1-877-samsha



**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

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

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