Mission Possible: Effective Treatment for Individuals with Disorder Gambling who Experienced Trauma

By: Naomi C. Durand-Kabasela, MA, LCPC, LPC, ICGC-I, CCTP

University of Maryland School of Medicine
The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

Mission Statement

The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling promotes **healthy and informed choices** regarding gambling and problem gambling through various key initiatives and partnerships.

The Center works closely with appropriate state stakeholders and brings together experts from a variety of disciplines including psychiatry, medicine, epidemiology, social work, and law.

Key Initiatives and Resources

- **Public Awareness:** Campaigns through social media, TV, radio, public service announcements, community outreach, public awareness materials and lending library
- **Prevention Programs:** Targeted to the full age continuum and to diverse populations and at-risk groups
- **Public Policy:** To provide information regarding strategies to address the impact of gambling on Public Health within Maryland
- **Research:** To provide evidence-based data on public health aspects of gambling disorders and evaluate and develop evidence-based strategies for prevention and intervention

Key Initiatives and Resources

- **Free Training:** On problem gambling awareness, prevention and intervention strategies with CEUs
- **Provider Referral Directory:** To provide technical assistance to the health care and behavioral health care providers in Maryland to enhance capacity to address the issue of problem gambling amongst Maryland residents at No Cost.
- **Peer Recovery Support:** To assist individuals dealing with at risk and problem gambling connect with recovery resources within Maryland and to remove any barriers to recovery
- **Helpline: Maryland Problem Gambling Helpline 1-800-GAMBLER**

Summary

Research has shown that a gambling disorder is not a pure disorder. There are comorbidities associated with this disorder. One of them is having a history of trauma or PTSD which is a risk factor for developing problems with gambling. It is imperative to assess all clients for these conditions to be able to develop an appropriate treatment plan. Clinicians not only need to be trauma informed but trauma specific when treating clients with a gambling disorder.

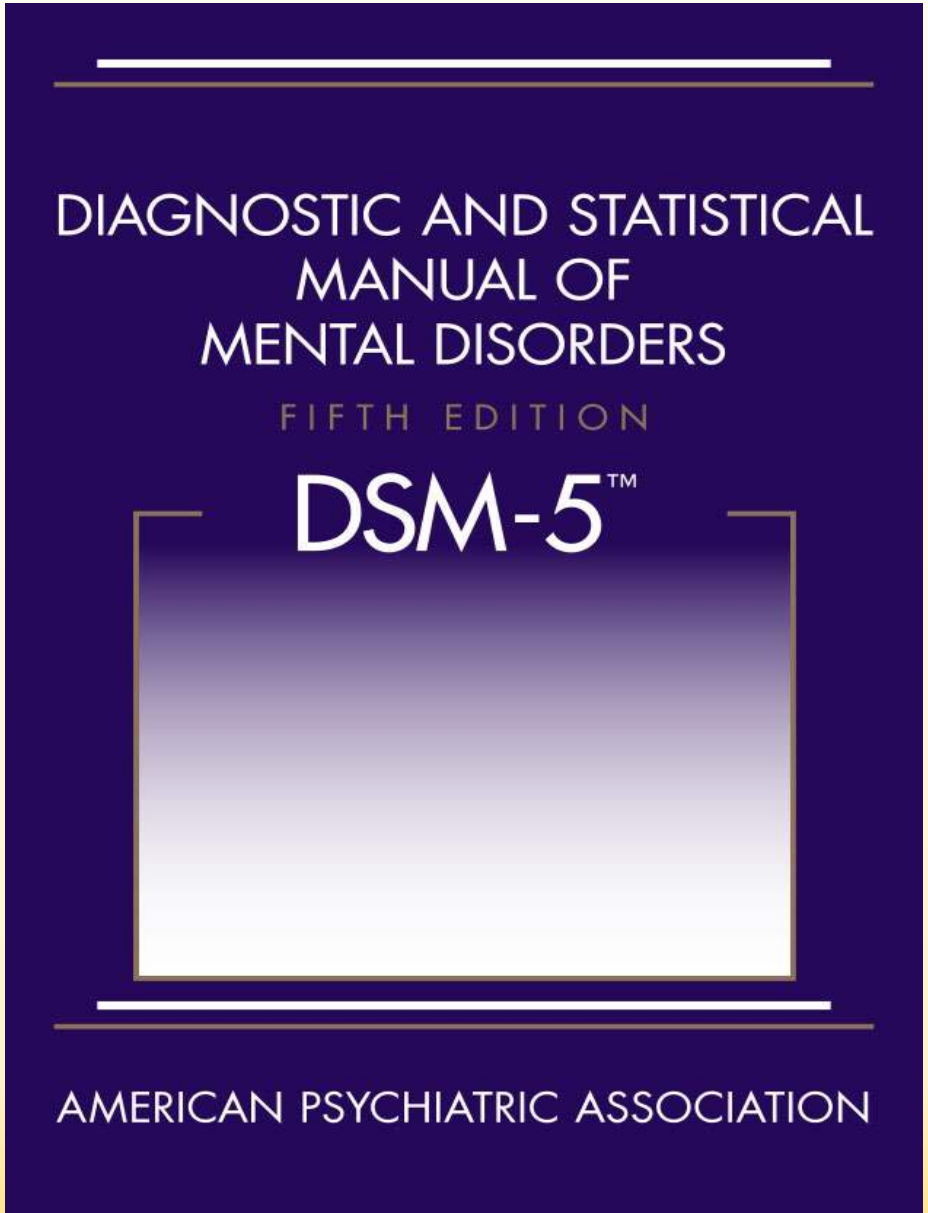
Objectives

- Provide a working definition of gambling disorder according to the DSM V and trauma.
- Establish why a history of trauma is another risk factor for developing a gambling problem.
- Various assessment tools for diagnosing trauma and gambling disorder.
- Discuss evidence based practice for treating gambling disorder amongst individuals with a history of trauma.

Gambling

The act of **risking something of value**, including money and property, on an activity that has an uncertain outcome

Gambling Disorder



Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), gambling disorder is a pattern of gambling that is persistent and recurrent, and that leads to significant distress or impairment. The disorder is characterized by four or more of the nine criteria in a 12-month period.

What is trauma?

Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence in one (or more) of the following ways: Directly experiencing the traumatic event(s). Witnessing, in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others. Learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend.



What **percentage** of individuals with disorder gambling experienced trauma in their lives?

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A) 10%

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B) 50%

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C) 34%

What **percentage** of individuals with disorder gambling experienced trauma in their lives?

A) 10%
B) 50%
C) 34%
D) 60%

According to research, a significant portion of individuals with problem gambling, particularly those who met the criteria for gambling disorder, report experiencing trauma, with studies showing that up to **34%** of people has suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); this means a substantial number of these individuals with a gambling disorder have experienced traumatic events in their lives.

What have we learned about the association between Problem Gambling & Trauma?

Some experts believe that gambling can serve as a coping mechanism for individuals with PTSD, as the excitement and thrill of gambling might temporarily alleviate symptoms related to their trauma.

“Healing from trauma isn’t an overnight process. It’s a lifelong journey that requires patience, support, and self-compassion.” – Jasmin Lee Cori

“Lifetime experiences of surviving trauma are related to increased risks of problem gambling behaviors. Problem gambling behaviors are highly comorbid with individual reports of trauma….”

According to Diane Young, Addiction and Trauma Specialist, "gambling, as with all addictions, numbs pain and discomfort. "That could be from past traumas or present-day problems and challenges," she says. "When the gambler is in "their behaviour, or their disease' they are oblivious to anything else at that moment."

Trauma Assessment Tools

BTQ: Brief Trauma Questionnaire

CES: Combat Exposure Scale

CAPS-5: The Clinician Administered PTSD Scale

GPS: The Global Psychotrauma Screen

PSEI: Potential Stressful Events Interview

PCL-5: PTSD Checklist for the DSM-5

SLESQ: Stressful Life Events Screening Questionnaire

TAA: Trauma Assessment for Adults

THQ: Trauma History Questionnaire

THS: Trauma History Screen

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SOGS-RA: South Oaks Gambling Screening. Revised for Adolescence.

Psychotherapy

This can help people who experienced trauma or PTSD learn to identify and manage triggers and symptoms. Some types of psychotherapy include:

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)

Exposure therapy (ET)

Cognitive processing therapy (CPT)

Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR)

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Prolonged exposure (PE)

Psychodynamic Therapy (PT)



Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT): Helps people change unhelpful thinking patterns to lead to healthier behaviors and improved emotion regulation.

Exposure therapy: Helps people learn to manage their fear by gradually exposing them to the trauma in a safe way.

Cognitive processing therapy (CPT): A trauma-focused psychotherapy that's considered one of the most effective treatments for PTSD.

Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR): A trauma-focused psychotherapy that can help address trauma-related distress.

Motivational Interviewing (MI): Conducting a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person's own motivation and commitment to change. It specially aims to address a person's ambivalence to change

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Psychodynamic therapy (PT) can help individuals recovering from gambling by addressing core conflicts & hidden psychological meanings of gambling.

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RESOURCES

- Maryland Centers of Excellence on Problem Gambling

  www.mdproblemgambling.com 667-214-2120

- National Council on Problem Gambling

  ncpgambling.org 202-547-9204

- Maryland Coalition of Families: A peer support system for family members of a problem gambler http://www.mdcoalition.org/blog/peer-support-now-available-to-loved-ones-of-those-with-gambling-problems

- Gambling Anonymous (GA) www.gamblersanonymous.org

  Gam-Anon (for families) www.gam-anon.org

  1-800-GAMBLER

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Naomi C. Durand-Kabasela, MA, LCPC, LPC, ICGC-I, CCTP

naomidurandkabasela@gmail.com 240-543-4773

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