

# Family Therapy and Gambling Treatment



## Goal of Treatment...

- Improve the functioning of the family system-
  - **person by person**



Identify those in the system willing to engage in a treatment process



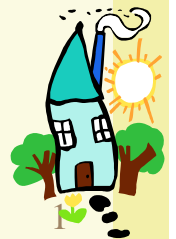
Identify: their survival strategies,

- their priorities
- their motivation



Then identify your own-

- treatment goals, priorities and strategies



Identify and Assess the power base in the family

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Ally with the power base in the family

Shift the power base in the family

Prepare concomitant approaches to care:

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| – Gambler           | Significant Others |
| – Functional issues | Functional issues  |
| – Intimate issues   | Intimate issues    |

...THAT WILL NOT WORK IN UNISON



## In Family Therapy-

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- The Relationship is the Client
- The Relationship is the Client

## Begin with Basics-

- What do they know? What do they need to know?
- Teach them what they need to know-



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 Identify key elements of your client education program

- make them understandable
- user friendly to EACH family member

 Evaluate productivity as you go

- identify what is not working and what is
- alter, adjust, edit, change program until results are produced
- in a fearless, confident manner...



Expect a high degree of enmeshment among couples

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Expect unproductive triads

- Couple and children
- Parents and adult child
- Adults and older parents

Correct movement across generational lines

Be sure appropriate support systems are in place for each family member

Evaluate the effectiveness of each intervention- change as necessary



# Family Therapy and Children of Problem Gamblers

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📄 Invite the children into treatment if:

- They ask to come
- The parents want them to come
- There are signs of serious decompensation or acting out:
  - **Fights, drop in grades, stealing, biting, kicking, bedwetting etc.**
- Get immediate help for any child setting fires or hurting animals- they have already crossed the line and are in serious need of help.



📄 Teach the parents how to listen to their children

📄 Be sure support is available for the disenfranchised...

– **which is ALL children**

📄 Examine roles of child as: Controller

– **Victim**

– **Pawn**



# The Family System

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- 📄 When presenting for care the first focus is on functional issues:
  - **Financial crisis**
  - **Housing,**
  - **Employment**
  
- 📄 Only after critical functional issues have been addressed can the family move to the intimate issues in crisis:
  - **Trust, Anger, Hurt, Communication, Forgiveness, Responsibility, Accountability, etc.**

# The Crisis Stage for Significant Others

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Begin with the most urgent concerns:



- ☞ Don't try to hurt or kill yourself.
- ☞ Remind yourself you are not going crazy.
- ☞ Find People you can talk to-get support from others.
- ☞ Allow yourself to think about this as much as you need to.
- ☞ Delegate any responsibilities that aren't essential.
- ☞ Don't use alcohol or drugs to dull the pain.

*Adapted from Beginning to Heal- Ellen Bass, Laura Davis  
(1993)*

# The Crisis Stage for Significant Others



- 📄 Get out of Dangerous or abusive situations-get help.
- 📄 Sit tight you can get through this storm.
- 📄 Develop (use) a belief in something greater than yourself.
- 📄 Talk to people further along in their recovery.
- 📄 Do some nice things for yourself –watch out for revenge spending.
- 📄 If you feel panic don't rush into action- don't drive, drink or drug, don't strike out at self or others.
- 📄 Learn how to calm yourself- breath, call friend, etc.