

Raising the Bar on Engagement and Favorable Outcomes for African American Problem Gamblers

Debra Neal LCPC, NCGC II, BACC

Case 1

Cultural Consideration:

AA female, married, dual family income, 40's, urban community, non-religious or spiritual practice, mother was listed as emergency contact

Presenting Problem: Client spent \$2000 on slot machines in the past weeks; gambling losses' has increased during for the past year despite a decision to quit gambling a few years ago; Admits \$13,000 in losses in 2013, \$25,000 plus excess gambling debt, \$10,000 withdrawal from retirement account, and payday loans ;denies impact on work, finances, family, or health.

Goal

"I want not to gamble today, tomorrow and so on. Until eventually the urge is controlled. I want gambling to be just a thought, not an action, and I want to have support in place on the days when just writing is not enough"

Culturally Infused Aspects of Care

- Assigned research on GA as a viable resource
- Oriented to GA culture, meeting locations and demographic differences
- Remained respectful and prudent regarding invitation for spouse/family participation
- Used culturally-lined questions:
 - “What song, anthem, poem stirs spiritual or cultural pride/hope?”
(The tradition or faith rooted)
- “What, if anything, would you like me to know about working with you as an African American and compulsive gambler?”
(cross-cultural counseling)
- Practiced Motivational Interviewing as organic approach to culturally proficient care
 - 1) Confidence building (prison life)
 - 2) Discrepancy building
 - 3) Decision matrix assignments
 - 4) Autonomy promoting
 - 5) Education with permission

Case 2

Cultural Consideration:

AA female, divorce single family income, 30's, urban central community, religious, intermittently connected and attends church, occupational hazard, cultural shame around parenting and struggle with maintaining housing; cultural trigger of daughter and sexual orientation.

Presenting Problem: Three year history of problem gambling with moderate to severe family, emotional, fiscal, housing, and relationship consequences. "My gambling is seriously out of control....this is getting out of hand" Slots as game of choice, \$500-1000 2x weekly, \$4000 total debt, past history of two evictions; 8 of 9 on the DSM 5, earning several hundred dollars in cash daily

Goal

Stop gambling/self esteem stable/housing, relationship with kids.

Culturally Infused Aspects of Care

- Cultural Adaptability
- Focusing on relationship building
- Slowed the pace of assessment and screening process,
- Attended to verbal, vocal, and visual cues
- Ex. Appearance dramatically changed from makeup, lashes, hair; energy level, mood
- Changing direction of session-
- Talking about gambling makes me want to gamble
- Cultural Pain around parenting and motherhood, eviction history, adult daughter issues
- Asking culturally distinct questions
- "What do I need to know about working with you as an African American women?"
- "How important is it for you to work with an AA clinician?"
- Motivation Building
- Gambling or No Gambling, why?
- Promoting Autonomy -" You have the final decision, decision is yours time make..I am here to support, guide, create hope"