The Virtual World and Mental Health
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Virtual World: New Orders, New Disorders

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Virtual World & mental health

What has virtual world done for mental health?

Main topics of this conference's workshop sessions

- Promoting mental health

  - Enhancement

  - Obsolescence

- Medium for addressing specific mental health issues

- Recovery medium for people with mental health problems

  - Enhancement

The four laws of media (McLuhan, 1968)

1. Enhancement   What do new media improve?

2. Obsolescence   What do new media replace?

3. Retrieval   What do new media revive?

4. Reversal   What opposite effect new media create?

Virtual World

Compulsive behaviours online (Young, 1998):

1. cyber sexual addiction (chat rooms, cyber porn etc.) ➡ Watching pornography

2. cyber relationship addiction (online friendships) ➡ Facebook and other SNS

3. net compulsions to online gambling, auctions etc. ➡ Gambling, Shopping, etc.

4. information overload (compulsive web surfing) ➡ GPIU

5. computer addiction (gaming) ➡ DSM 5 (appendix)

Problematic Pornography Use

➢Recreational use (Minarcik, Wetterneck & Short, 2016)

➢Loss of control due to (Heatherton & Wagner, 2011):

1. Anxiety related hypothesis

2. Dysfunction of DPC (dysfunction of inhibitory role - risk behaviour)

3. Cue-reaction hypothesis (Gola, 2016)

    1. Is reaction stronger in PPU?

    2. What is the reward?

Problematic Pornography Use

OFC – orbitofrontal cortex
- anterior (secondary reward – money)
- posterior (primary reward – sex and food)

RESULTS (Gola, 2016):
- In posteriori OFC: no differences between control and PPU group
- In anterior OFC: PPU group > control

ERGO: in PPU individulas sex becomes a secondary reward??

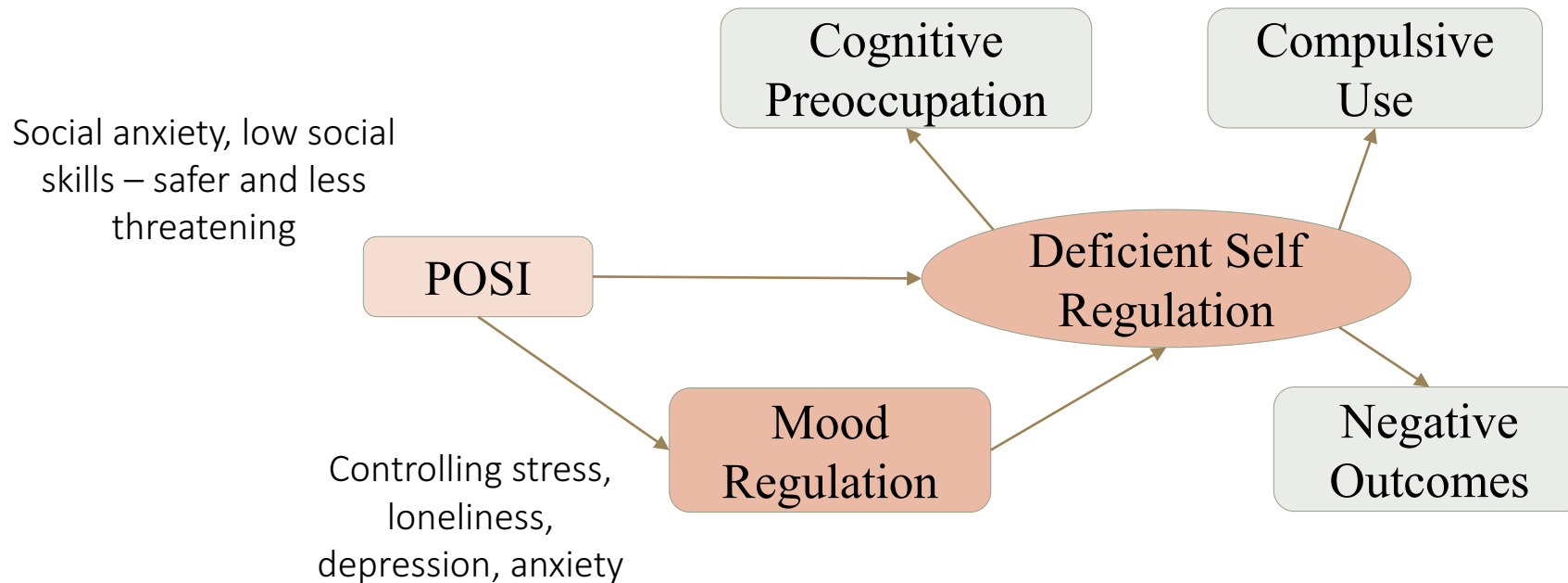# Problematic Pornography Use

CONSUMER	CUES	BEHAVIOUR	REWARD
Recreational pornography consumer	Partner	Dyadic sexual activity	orgasm
Regular pornography consumer	Explicit Sexual Material	Solitary sexual activity	orgasm
Problematic pornography consumer	Explicit Sexual Material	Solitary sexual activity	+ Explicit Sexual Material

Generalised Problematic Internet Use

1. Generalised Problematic Internet Use (Caplan, 2003, 2010)

   – Preference for online social interaction (over face-to-face)

Social anxiety, low social skills – safer and less threatening

Controlling stress, loneliness, depression, anxiety

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         Cognitive                    Compulsive
         Preoccupation                Use

POSI  ──────────►   Deficient Self
                    Regulation

         Mood                         Negative
         Regulation                   Outcomes
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Video gaming disorder

DSM V appendix (APA, 2013)

Problematic Online Game Use (POGU) (Kim and Kim, 2010; Caplan, 2002)	Problematic Online Gaming (POG) (Demetrovics et al., 2012)	Motives for Online Gaming (Demetrovics et al., 2011)
1. preference of virtual relationship	1. preoccupation	1. social
2. failure of self-control	2. overuse	2. coping, incl. escapism
3. euphoria	3. immersion	3. fantasy
4. conflict	4. social isolation	4. recreation
5. health problems	5. interpersonal conflicts	5. skill development
	6. withdrawal	6. competition

Problematic Facebook/SNS Use

Look up by Gary Turk

I have 422 friends, yet I am lonely.
I speak to all of them everyday, yet none of them really know me.

All this technology we have, it's just an illusion,
of community, companionship, a sense of inclusion
yet when you step away from this device of delusion,
you awaken to see, a world of confusion.

A world of self-interest, self-image, self-promotion,
where we share all our best bits, but leave out the emotion.

Where we type and don't talk, where we read as we chat,
where we spend hours together, without making eye contact.

This media we call social, is anything but
when we open our computers, and it's our doors we shut.

1. Enhancement
2. Obsolescence
3. Retrieval
4. Reversal

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3. Retrival
4. Reversal

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Retrieved from http://garyturk.com/portfolio-item/lookup/

Problematic Facebook/SNS Use

1. Satisfying needs through SNS:
   - To belong
   - Te self-presentation

2. the Problematic Use of Facebook:

Socio-cognitive model
lack of self-regulation when it comes to internet use is the leading reason for addiction to Facebook

Social skills model
lack of (or low) communication skills lead to substitute real life communication with Facebook

POSI → Deficient Self Regulation → Negative Outcomes

POSI → Mood Regulation → Deficient Self Regulation
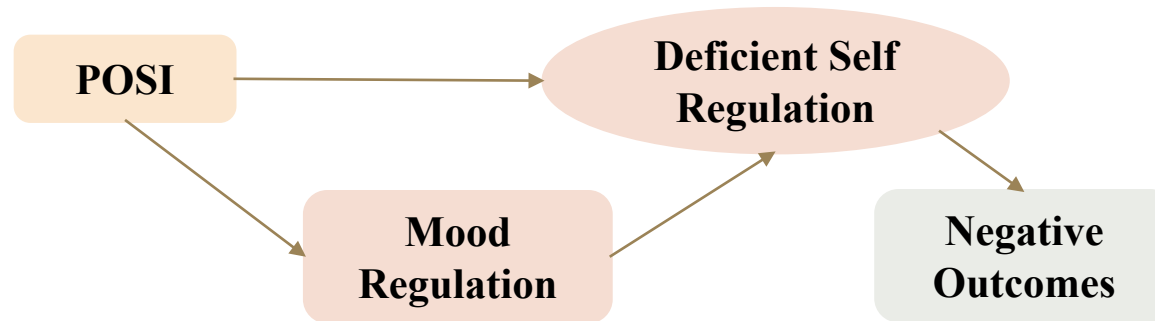
Cognitive behavioural model
that maladaptive cognitions reinforce behavioural tendencies

In summary

1. Enhancement – more possibilities

2. Obsolescence – human contact (psycho-social skills training)

3. Retrieval – pictorial, limited (abbreviations) communication

4. Reversal – *this medium called social is anything but*

Thank you

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5th International Conference on Pathological Gambling and Behavioural Addictions

20th-21st November 2017 in Warsaw, Poland.

The aim to exchange knowledge about:

➢ new research

➢ guidelines

➢ therapy

➢ prevention approaches

implemented on national and international level.

We need to keep sharing our best practices and comparing evidence-based solutions about behavioral addictions problem within communities, countries and regions

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