

Pathological Gambling: A Clinical Guide to Treatment

edited by Jon E. Grant, J.D., M.D., M.P.H., and Marc N. Potenza, M.D., Ph.D. American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc., Arlington, Va., 2004, 270 pages, \$42.50 (paper).

Both Dr. Grant and Dr. Potenza, the editors of *Pathological Gambling: A Clinical Guide to Treatment*, are to be congratulated for tackling a condition whose etiology has been variously described as an addiction, an impulse control disorder, a mood disorder, and a member of the obsessive-compulsive spectrum group of disorders. Their task is further complicated by the negative stigma assigned to those who gamble to excess. As stated in the introduction, the main purpose of the book is to describe the clinical background, potential causes, and treatment options for pathological gambling.

The text is divided into 4 sections offering 14 chapters and an appendix. Part I covers the subject of public health and epidemiology. It highlights the significant financial impact of gambling on society in addition to its potential relationship to other psychosocial issues. Part II comprehensively examines the clinical aspects of gambling and potential relationships with other psychiatric conditions such as personality disorders, substance use disorders, obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorders, and affective disorders. It also looks at the influence of age-related categories such as adolescence and older adults and includes potential gender comparisons. Part III focuses on the issue of etiology and includes an excellent look at possible behavioral and neurobiologic contributions to gambling. Part IV is composed of perhaps the most important chapters for clinicians in that it gives an outstanding summary of prevention efforts, discusses instruments to both screen for and evaluate gambling conditions, and provides an outline for treatment options that include behavioral interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, Gamblers Anonymous, and pharmacologic therapies. The appendix lists screening and assessment instruments such as the Gambling Symptom Assessment Scale and the South Oaks Gambling Screen that should be helpful additions to clinical efforts to both identify and provide care for individuals seeking assistance.

In summary, this text offers an outstanding review of the clinical literature on pathological gambling, with consistently well-written chapters supported by current references, and provides clinicians with useful information on the diagnosis and treatment of this serious individual and social challenge.

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Pathological Anxiety: Emotional Processing in Etiology and Treatment

edited by Barbara Olatov Rothbaum, Ph.D.
The Guilford Press, New York, N.Y., 2006, 272 pages, \$32.00.

In May 2002, a distinguished collection of researchers gathered in Philadelphia for a conference in honor of Edna B. Foa, arguably one of the most renowned researchers in the field of anxiety disorders. *Pathological Anxiety: Emotional Processing in Etiology and Treatment* was the result of that meeting. The life and research career of Dr. Foa are described in this book, as well as the way her understanding of anxiety disorders can be

applied not only to our theoretical understanding of anxiety but also to its assessment and treatment.

One of the major contributions that Dr. Foa has made to the study of pathological anxiety is her work on the emotional processing of fear. This is a framework in which pathological anxiety is considered the result of a pathological system of feared stimuli, feared responses, and associated meaning. Treatment involves both activating this pathological fear system and then developing a modified and corrective response that is activated concurrently. Several of the essays in this book update and elaborate on this theory.

One of my favorite chapters in this book is Chapter 4, "Fearful Imagery and the Anxiety Disorder Spectrum." This chapter discusses ways in which the various anxiety disorders are similar and different in terms of their anxiety responses and defenses against them. Particularly interesting is the conceptual model presented on p. 58 that links the anatomical target first to the effect on the amygdala, then to the behavioral sign of fear or anxiety. Frequently I have patients with anxiety disorders ask me, "Why am I this way?" Although this figure does not address all of the symptoms with which patients can present, for many patients this could be a useful tool with which to explain the neuroanatomical basis for why they feel the way they feel and behave the way they behave.

There are several other chapters in this book that are of potential interest, including one that reviews the major clinical screening tools for anxiety and one on the use of virtual reality for exposure-based treatment of anxiety disorders. This would be a good book for mental health providers who are interested in learning more about the life and work of Dr. Foa, the many ways other researchers have elaborated on her work, and what the future of anxiety disorder research may hold.

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Social Skills Training for Schizophrenia: A Step-by-Step Guide, 2nd ed.

by Alan S. Bellack, Ph.D.; Kim T. Mueser, Ph.D.;
Susan Gingerich, M.S.W.; and Julie Agresta, M.S.S., M.Ed.
The Guilford Press, New York, N.Y., 2004, 340 pages,
\$39.00 (paper).

Social skills training is a mainstay of psychiatric rehabilitation programs for individuals with schizophrenia. An important advantage for those wishing to use this approach is that it is manualized. *Social Skills Training for Schizophrenia: A Step-by-Step Guide*, 2nd edition, by Alan S. Bellack, Kim T. Mueser, Susan Gingerich, and Julie Agresta, who are all leading experts in the field, provides a step-by-step approach for conducting the training. The first edition of this book provided a hands-on approach, which both new and experienced clinicians could use to conduct effective skills training. It gained wide acceptance and application in rehabilitation programs for schizophrenia.

While much of what is taught, and how it is taught, remain essentially unchanged, the second edition is a significant improvement over the first. There are a number of important modifications and additions. For example, an overview chapter deals with evidence-based support for the efficacy of social skills training in enhancing social functioning, but the evidence does

not support a reduction in relapse rates associated with social skills training. A new chapter offers skills training for individuals with comorbid substance abuse. There are some revisions to the content of many of the chapters. Overall, this is a much more user-friendly version, enhanced by a manual/workbook style.

Contents are divided into 2 parts. Part 1 contains chapters dealing with the principles, format, and techniques of social skills training. For example, the steps of social skills training are as follows: (1) Establish a rationale for the skill. (2) Discuss the steps of the skill. (3) Model the skill in a role play, and review the role play with the group members. (4) Engage a group member in the role play using the same situation. (5) Provide positive feedback. (6) Provide corrective feedback. (7) Engage the group member in another role play using the same situation. (8) Provide additional feedback. (9) Engage other group members in role plays and provide feedback as in steps (4) through (8). (10) Assign homework that will be reviewed at the beginning of the next session.

Part 2 contains steps for teaching specific social skills. Four basic social skills are the building blocks on which effective communication is based. They include the ability to listen to other people, making requests of others in a positive and diplomatic fashion, and expressing feelings to others, including both positive and negative feelings. Other specific social skills covered include conversation, assertiveness, conflict management, communal living, friendships and dating, health maintenance, vocational/work skills, and coping skills for drug and alcohol abuse.

This book should be required reading for all those involved in the comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation of individuals with schizophrenia. We recommend it highly.

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