

Central Coast Problem Gambling Service

Spring Newsletter

2009



Our newsletter is just catching the end of spring as the service has been busy with our women's groups which were well patronized. Feedback was positive with participants from our June groups wanting longer sessions, a week end workshop was a suggestion. The group held in October was equally encouraging. More sessions will be planned and scheduled in for 2010, hopefully with a whole day offered as well. Our first group was offered at The Entrance Neighbourhood Centre, the second at Lifeline Wyoming and the third will be at the north of the coast at San Remo Neighbourhood Centre early in 2010, details regarding this re group and other events will be forthcoming soon. Our plan is to provide groups to a wide section of the community using our outreach facilities where possible.

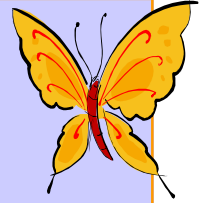
DV training was held in August facilitated by Area Health at Wyong. It was a fabulous training, offering new knowledge to support our capacity to recognize and become proactive within our service in regard to DV.

Smoking Matters was conducted at the PCC at Woy Woy where we received training sponsored by the Cancer Council of NSW and delivered by a CCWT trainer. This was a valuable training giving us new skills and enhancing our knowledge based on scientific and statistical data as well as hands on skills to support and work with clients to quit. Contact jana@acwa.asn.au for information about receiving training in your venue.



gamblinghelponline.org.au

Change.



**People don't resist change
People resist being changed.**

To be within the change process can create fear. The fear that the familiar will become unfamiliar, old practices may become threatened and tightly held beliefs challenged. This happens with menopause when physical, emotional, mental, spiritual changes occur, at times without warning, turning your world upside down, tearing away what was known and creating a new model which is relatively unknown. Forcing one on a journey of rediscovery and transformation.

Constant reminiscing and reflecting on the past keeps us bound to the past. When we always look backwards we become resistant to change and hold on to our safety nets blocking out opportunities and new experiences. We cling to labels and roles which have served us in the past and refuse to let go as we experience no guarantee of a bigger brighter future.

To allow this wonderful experience called change to come into our lives we need to acknowledge our past, thank it for assisting us thus far, release it and be willing to embrace something new. Even if you are fearful, you can still achieve your goals. Fear is an experience we create to keep us from moving forward, because something feels different.

Creating a space for change in our lives begins with an internal and external 'spring clean'.

- Use positive self talk.
- Develop and maintain strong support systems, family, friends.
- Choose to be an optimist, and view your world with wonder.
- Let go of the "what if's", this prevents action.
- Refocus and look for value and creativity.
- Ask yourself what is the first thing I need to do, write it down, do it.
- Clear out your internal and external clutter and open yourself up to new possibilities.

Allowing your inner critic to go into retirement and bringing forward your positive inner voice will allow the change process room to develop. Journal, exercise, do art, listen to music, meet with friends, phone, email or plan a visit to see family. Write letters and post cards for fun and a change and allow people to really know you by staying in tune with your self awareness.

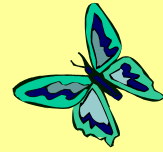
Have fun, let go and begin.....

B.Schwetz

Acceptance Affirmations

- I accept change.
- I accept who I am with joy.
- I accept others for what they are.
- Acceptance breeds acceptance. I will be accepting.

I can accept myself for who I am.



Commitment Affirmations

- Commitment is my virtue.
- My commitment to womanhood is eternal.
- I am committed to positive self talk.

I am committed to be successful.

Strength Affirmations

- I have inner strength.
- I am strong..
- My soul is strong.

Because I am a woman I am strong.



Precious Affirmations

- I am precious in the sight of God
- I am precious to me.
- I am precious because of my self worth.

Being a woman makes me precious

A List of Woman's Affirmations

- My soul is tall.
- I celebrate my beautiful soul.
- My outer frame is what it is but my soul is gorgeous.
- I love myself.
- I am capable.
- I am proud of my body for what it is
- I only care about what I think of myself.
- What others think of my is their choice, what I think of myself is my choice.
- I have character.
- My personality traits are endearing.
- The lines and wrinkles of my outer frame show my history and character.
- Being healthy is more important than being a toothpick.
- I have power to change.
- I have wisdom to know what to change.





A Snapshot of Problem Gambling on the Central Coast

Findings released from the recent Draft Productivity Commission Report on Problem Gambling suggest that the prevalence of the problem is on the decline. However it also states that due to a lack of consistency in methods used in gauging its prevalence over the years, it is difficult to confirm this for sure. The report states that poker machines are by far the main source of addiction. So with around 40 registered clubs on the coast, it's little wonder around 95% of problem gamblers here are addicted to pokies. Below is a summary of how Problem Gambling looks statistically and how the Central Coast measures up.

Prevalence

90,000 to 170,000 Australians are significant affected by problem gambling plus a further 230,000 to 350,000 moderately affected. NSW has the highest rate of problem gambling than any other state (Draft Productivity Report 2009). The Central Coast has a higher prevalence of problem gambling than the NSW average. Young men between the age of 18-24 living on the Central Coast are the biggest players of poker machines in NSW and are the highest risk group for problem gambling. (A.C. Neilson 2007). 86% of problem gamblers will not seek help, however around 200 people in the Gosford LGA alone received treatment for problem gambling last year. (NSW Office Liquor Gaming & Racing. RGF Client Data Set 2008-2009). On average a further 7 people are affected by 1 problem gambler (Productivity Commission Report 1999).

Affect as a Social Problem

Latest figures show that:

Up to 60% of money spent on gambling comes from problem gamblers

Around 80% of problem gamblers report gambling adversely affects their health

38% said it adversely affected their work and 9% were dismissed from their job

55-65% say gambling negatively affects finances with 7% using bankruptcy

72% have lost relationships

70% obtain money illegally and 51% get in trouble with police. (Draft Productivity Report 2009).

Youth Gambling

In 2008 Central Coast Problem Gambling Service carried out a research project by surveying 200 young people aged from 13-24 on the Central Coast and came up with some surprising findings. Some of which are list blow:

62% of those under 14 years old had gambled at least once for money or possessions

77% of those up to 17 years old had gambled at least once for money or possessions

96% of young people from 18-24 had gambled at least once for money or possessions

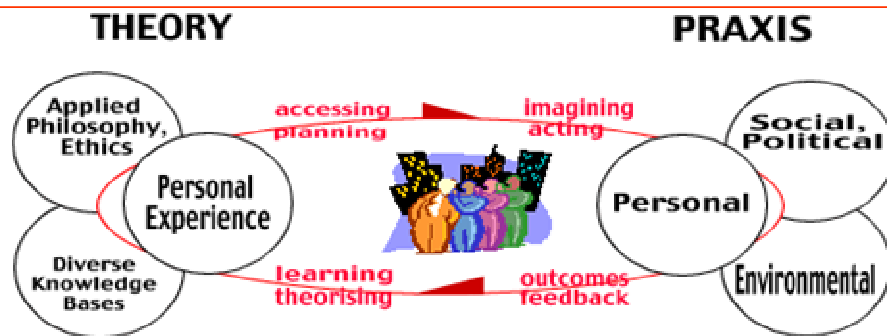
6% of people under18 had played a poker machine

25.5% of young people had lost more than they had intended when gambling (this figure rose considerably for males 18-24 to 55%)

Conclusion

Problem gambling on the decline is great news – if it can be confirmed. However it is a concerning realization that just as many people are affect by problem gambling as there are with Type 2 Diabetes. And with a further 7 people affect by each problem gambler we can safely estimate that around 10 per cent of people on the Central Coast suffer in some way. Central Coast Problem Gambling Service is funded to provide free assistance to anyone affect by gambling – not just the gambler. If you've been negatively affected in any way by gambling, whether it be your gambling, your partners, a family members, your employee, work mate or friend, give us a call on 4344 7992. We are here to help.

C. Davidson.



Social Ecology has given me a framework for exploring the whole person. As a counselor and social ecologist I found this to be a beneficial way of working with clients. Holding this model in one hand while exploring arising issues and evaluating how they interacted within the model to connect to a deeper level of awareness, growth and transformation was revealing. Being aware how the personal, social, environmental and spiritual form diverse pathways, yet remain intrinsically linked to each other brings clarity and illumination. Allowing the process to evolve, going with the client; becoming the navigator as they explore old landscapes as well as new terrain has proven insightful and a humbling journey. More info (www.zulenet.com/see/chair/html)

What is Social Ecology?

Social Ecology explores the rich diversity of relationships between the personal, social and environmental. It is premised on the view that everything we do as individuals impacts on our environments. It adopts a multidisciplinary and trans disciplinary approach to research and learning, emphasizing proactivity, creativity, participation and reflective thinking. Social action is examined critically in relation to values, personal and group well-being, social justice and cultural sustainability. It encompasses the relationships between people, their communities and their environment. It includes the 'self', the psychological dimension, as an integral part of the inquiry.

Environment can be problematic because for some it implies a separation between humans and our surroundings, whereas Social Ecology seeks to overcome dualities such as humans versus nature and self versus society. To address this, we use the word ecology to emphasize the interrelationships, co-evolution, and the emergence of patterns amid complexity within all systems. We find it very helpful in guiding our explorations of the personal, social and environmental issues and their interrelationships. (taken from Social Ecology Student Handbooks & Social Ecology brochure).

Social Ecology also recognizes diverse learning styles and assists students to build on their perceived strengths and address their weaknesses. This learning is not assessed in terms of test of knowledge, but by becoming aware of your progress by reflecting on your own capacities in reference to the sorts of skills acquired. Some skills are not easily defined; some are at a practical level, whilst others are at an awareness level.

Systemic approach.

A strong theme in all the courses is the emotion of thinking and acting in a holistic way, ecologically and systemically. To think in this way is to recognize the dynamic and complex relationships between people and their natural and social environments.

With a systemic view an awareness is developed which identifies that change in one area will affect the whole. "It is the creation of newness – providing something different by transforming a situation, managing change or providing creative alternatives.

The Philosophy.

The philosophy is based on fostering what the eminent American psychologist, Carl Rogers, described as "whole person learning", ascribed to the following attributes.

- It has the quality of personal development.
- It tends to be self initiated.
- It tends to be pervasive – it makes a difference in the life of the learner. It is largely evaluated by the learner. Its essence is personal meaning.

(B.Schwetz)