



Growing up Gamers in a Digital World

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Objectives

Signs and Symptoms of Gaming Use Disorder

Assessments Utilized to Identify Gaming Use Disorder

Treatment Strategies for Gaming Use Disorder



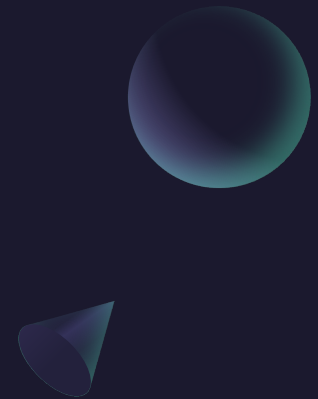


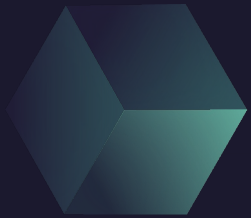
Introduction

- This presentation will highlight the changing landscape of gamers as the age in which problem behaviors for gaming disorder is skewing younger. Providers will begin seeing more youth and families present for services who have missed fundamental development stages resulting in an at-risk population for anxiety, depression, diminished self-actualization, and reduced academic, employment, and relationship achievement. Utilizing a combination of developmental models to assist clients with these challenges, providers will be able to recognize current stages of maturation and how to help clients excel into a life they can be successful in.

What do our gamers get from these activities

- Competition-dopamine
- Connection to peers-some oxytocin
- Status
- Creativity-serotonin

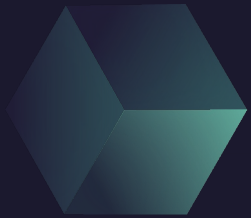




Signs and Symptoms

- Pre-occupation
 - Thinking about the game even when they aren't playing it
- Withdrawal
 - Becoming irritable or frustrated when not being allowed to play the game
- Tolerance
 - Needing to spend more and more time or money to get the same effect
- Loss of interest in other hobbies or people
 - Game begins to take over more of their focus





Signs and Symptoms



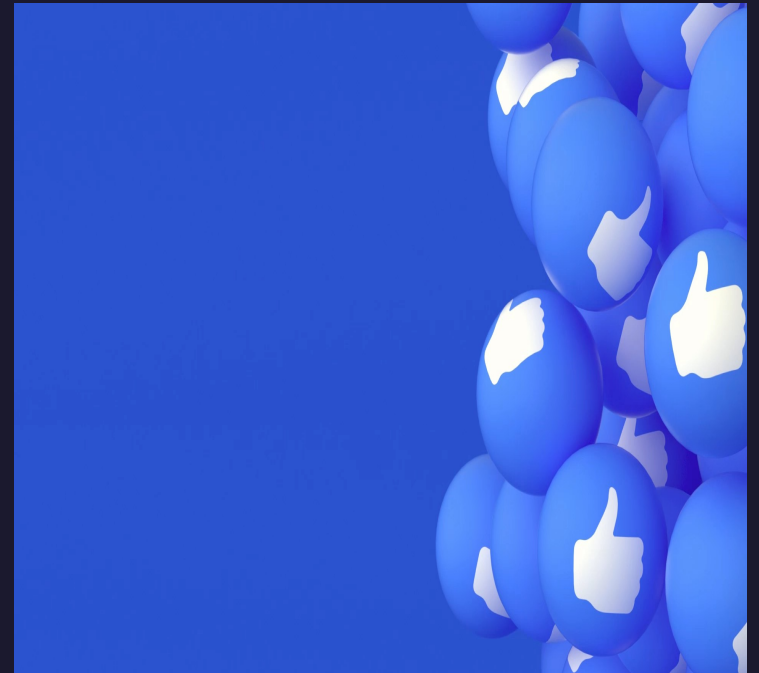
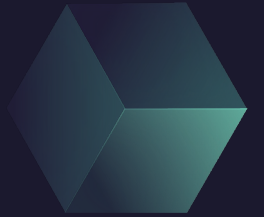
- Continued use despite negative consequences
 - Family members complain, restrict gaming, running out of money, grades begin to suffer
- Lying about the amount of time or money spent on gaming
- Gaming to escape negative moods or distressing situations
- Jeopardizing school, work, or home relationships
 - Need 5 or more criteria in order to be considered having the disorder

Impact on Social Skills and Other Harmful Effects



Social Skills

- Social media and video games have changed the way we interact
- Kids no longer text
- Using our computers, consoles or discord servers to have interactions rather than in person
 - Social interactions are more transactional and impersonal
 - Affects our mirror neurons in the way we communicate
- Why are kids moving away from traditional forms of communication
 - Faster
 - Rejection hurts less than in person
 - False sense of needs being met

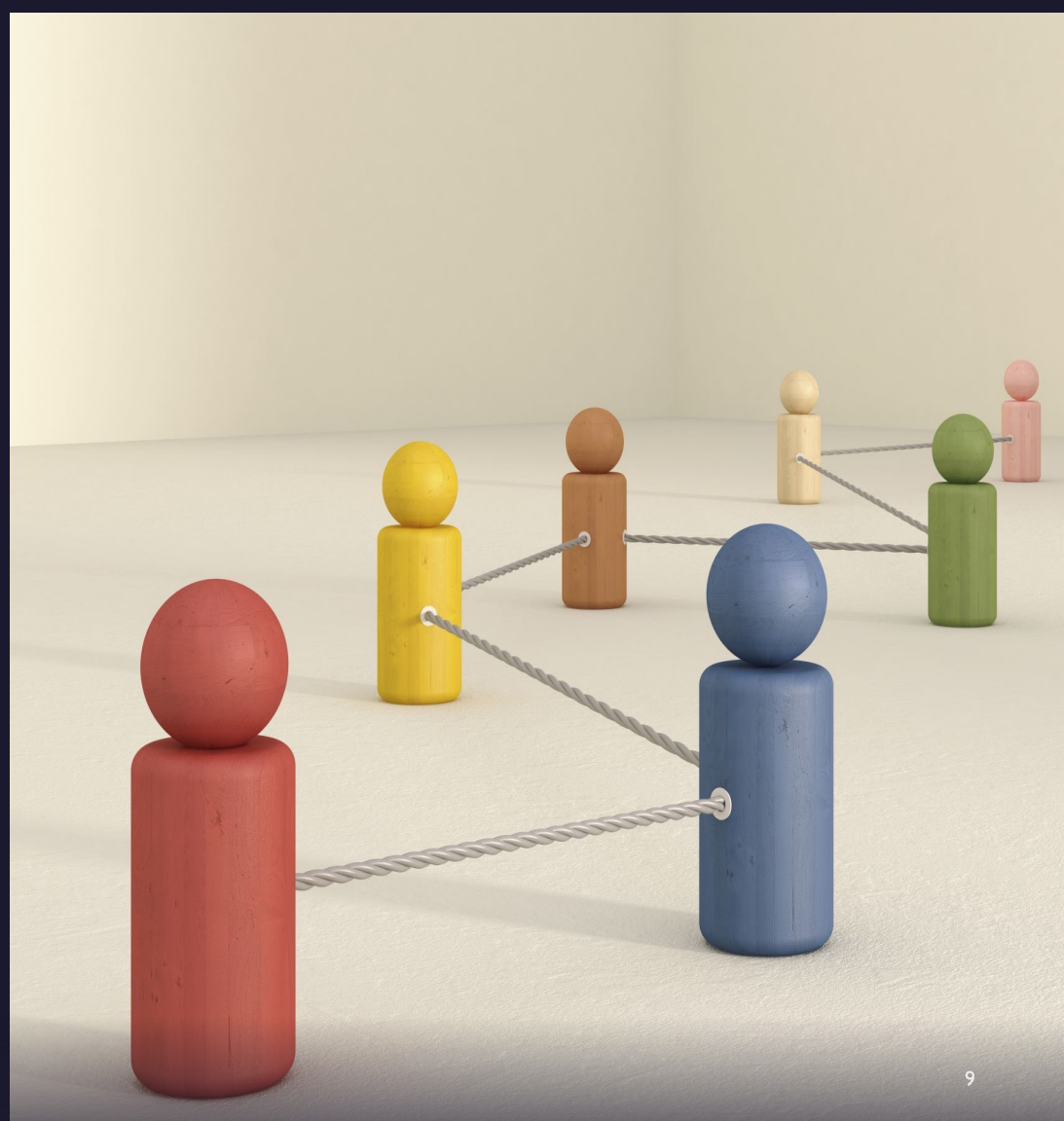


Social Skills

- More loneliness
 - Inability to flirt or no interest in it
 - Less sexual activity amongst teens and young adults
- More anxiety and depression
 - Seeking activities where we feel competent
 - Highlight reel phenomenon, FOMO

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Other Harmful Effects

- Higher unemployment rates amongst males in their 20's
 - Pre-pandemic
- Can cause problems in college or high school with grades
- Aggressive thoughts and behaviors especially present who excessively play video games when they are under 10 years old
- Poor social interaction
 - Poor cooperative interaction
- More difficulty with relationships
 - Gamers appear to have more difficulty initiating relationships-ERP and Pornography

Other Harmful Effects

Increased risk of ADD or ADHD due to highly interactivity of video games

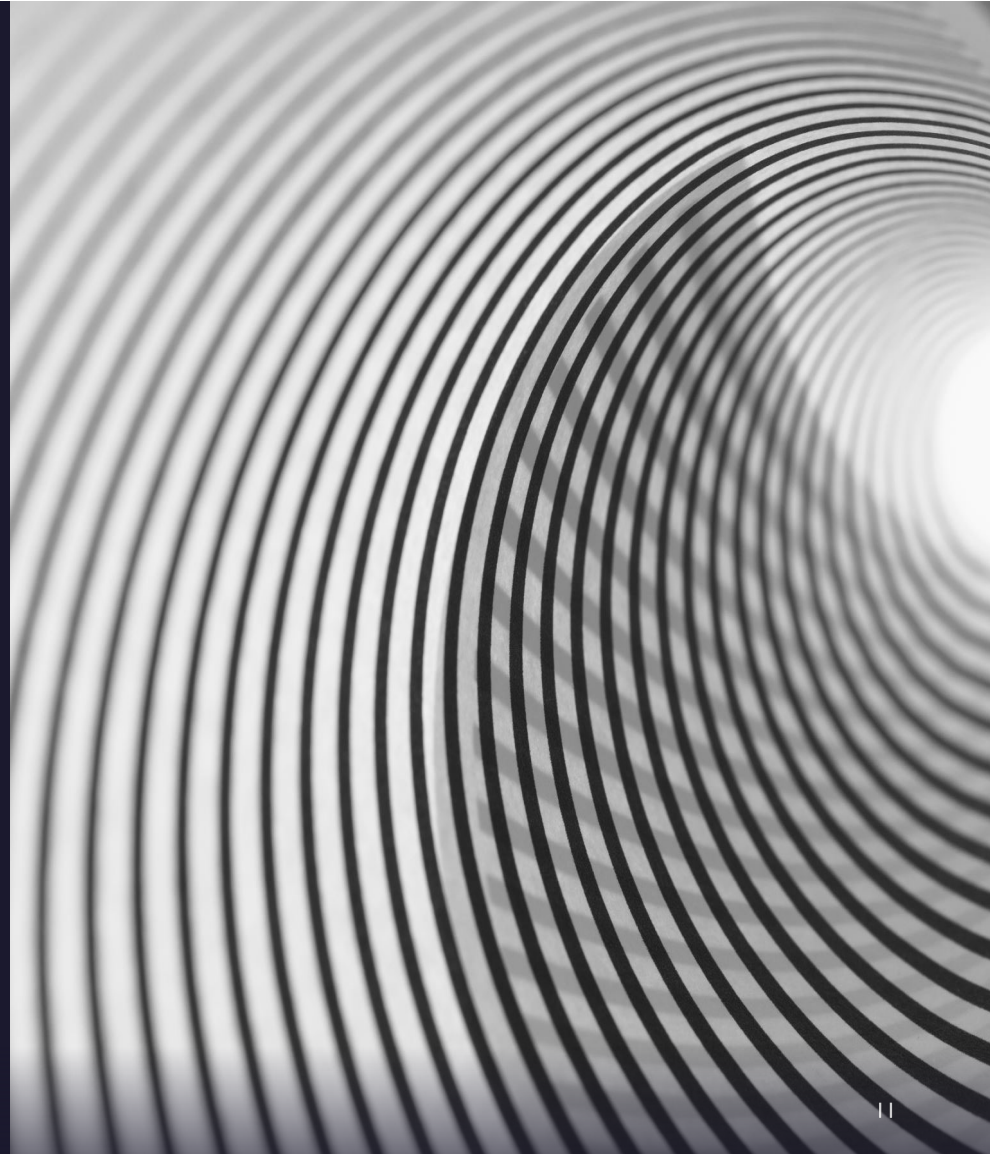
- Attention span is decreasing in human beings since the advent of mobile phones (Boys adrift)
- Experiencing higher rates of ADD and ADHD

Lowered metabolism

- Increased weight gain-Found people who are eating more during the game whether they are hungry or not, which means either the part of the brain that says we are full is impaired or the reward center is activated to make us eat more

Musculoskeletal disorders of upper body due to sitting for prolonged periods of time

- Gamers thumb happens when thumb tendons become inflamed, swell and cause limited movement
- Trigger finger-when finger gets stuck in the bent position due to repeated stress
- Tennis elbow-painful inflammation of tendons in the elbow



Belief System

- Belief system is built around the game or social media presence
- Being good at the game equals being good at life
- Getting a job is less important than what I am doing online
- My online friends are more important than real life relationships
 - They understand me better



Belief System

- My career is going to online
- Failure would be fatal especially in front of other people
- The game gives tangible markers of success
- I have time to learn the skills I need
 - Relationships can wait, job can wait etc.



What other countries are trying



- China-under 18 year olds are restricted from playing more than 3 hours per week
 - Need to use real name to ensure they are not using under their parent's name
 - Setting up treatment centers which focus on military training and therapy
- South Korea has over 400 tech addiction centers
 - Cinderella law in 2011
 - Video gamers under the age of 15 aren't allowed to play video games after midnight
 - Detox Centers-400



Assessments

Knowing what we are looking at

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Assessments

- Internet Addiction Test
 - Developed by Dr. Kimberly Young
 - 20-item self-report questionnaire
 - Can be used from adolescent onward
 - Answer questions on 6 point scale from 0 does not apply to 5 always
 - Less that 39 equates to average usage
 - 40-69 problematic usage
 - 70 or higher severely problematic usage
 - Appropriate validity, some concern with reliability within adolescent populations



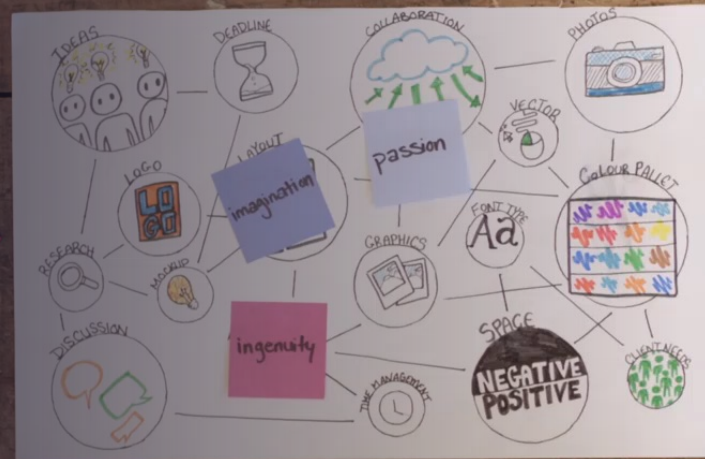
Assessments

- Internet Gaming Disorder Test
 - Developed by Hailey Pontes and Mark Griffiths in 2014
 - 20 item self-report questionnaire
 - 6 point scale ranging from 0 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree
 - Has good reliability and validity scores
 - Uses the DSM criteria as basis for questions
 - 71 is cut-off point-want to talk about this one



Treatment Strategies for Gaming Use Disorder

Competency, Fidelity and Love



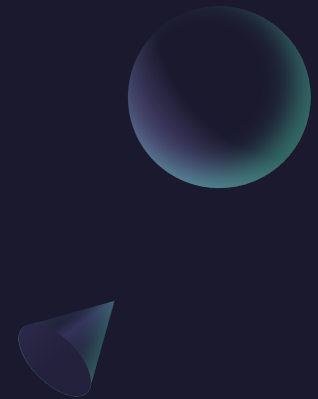
Erik Erikson's Stages of Development

Stage	Crisis	Age	Value	Category 4
Stage 4	Industry vs. Inferority	5-12	Competency	5
Stage 5	Identity vs. Role Confusion	12-18	Fidelity	3
Stage 6	Intimacy vs. Isolation	18-40	Love	2.8

Competency

Stage 4-Industry vs Inferiority

- Attempting to teach a sense of competency
 - Begin asking what the client wants to achieve
 - Explore barriers and help develop treatment plans for these barriers
 - Build confidence in client's ability to be a change agent in their own life
 - Utilize competitive drive innate to gamers, but direct it towards self
 - Gamers and failure
 - Reset the definition of play



Competency

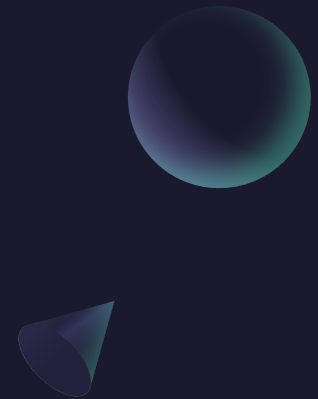
- Fear of failure
 - Both Professionally and socially
 - Eric Maisel-Why Smart People Hurt
 - You can be anything
 - Decision Paralysis
 - Leads us to taking fewer chances or only participating in games we will win
 - Gamer who won't play a game with friends until they feel good enough
 - Difficulty into breaking into the market as influencer or Esports player
 - Without competency, clients are unable to know who they are outside of the game or social media persona



Fidelity

Stage 5-Identity vs Role Confusion

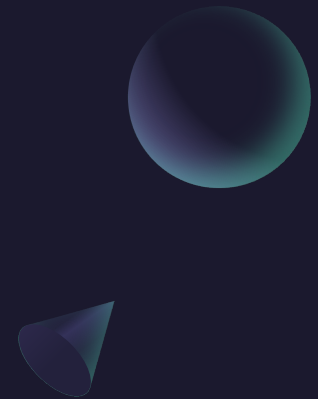
- Teaching fidelity-The ability to know who you are and to be the same person everywhere
 - Typically a time where individuals are trying on new behaviors anyway
 - Avatar vs person
 - Skill building-instilling a static view of the self
 - Values Card Sort helpful
 - As a result, many find themselves trying on new behaviors without a static sense of who they are
 - Begin to adopt beliefs about their abilities or skills based on negative feedback loop
 - Become more reluctant to take chances and thus spending more time isolated as they don't know
 - Help clients uncover the sense of who they are



Love

- Stage 6-Intimacy vs. Isolation

- Assisting client with resolving intimate relationship difficulties
- Gamers and porn
- (Janet can you add the information you gained on this from last presentation, think that video will go well here)
- Lack the confidence to initiate friendships or intimate relationships
- May turn to games and avatars because there is less chance of rejection and can be more bold online
- Role playing conversations
- Point out the difference in personal narrative versus game narrative



Motivational Interviewing

- As mentioned before gamers have many beliefs about the world that keep them stuck
 - Use motivational interviewing to challenge these beliefs
 - Trying to break them out of contemplation
 - Goal is to assist clients in trying new activities such as finding a job, seeking a new hobby or relationship
 - Empowering them to create the life they want outside of the game

Motivational Interviewing

- Pre-contemplation client
 - First build therapeutic rapport
 - Client may be coming in only to appease outside pressures so the important factor here is to neutralize their suspicion
 - Start by asking what they want out of therapy, not if they are willing to give up gaming
 - Begin to explore advantages and disadvantages of gaming



Motivational Interviewing



- Contemplation
 - This client is able to see their gaming is causing some issues in their lives
 - May still want to keep gaming in their life, but do want it to stop causing them problems
 - Help them explore possible solutions
 - Pro-Con list
 - Rebuild or “level up” in the skill areas they feel are lacking
 - Help them look for the balance they are seeking
 - Determine if they can maintain it
 - Physical/emotional connection is still important

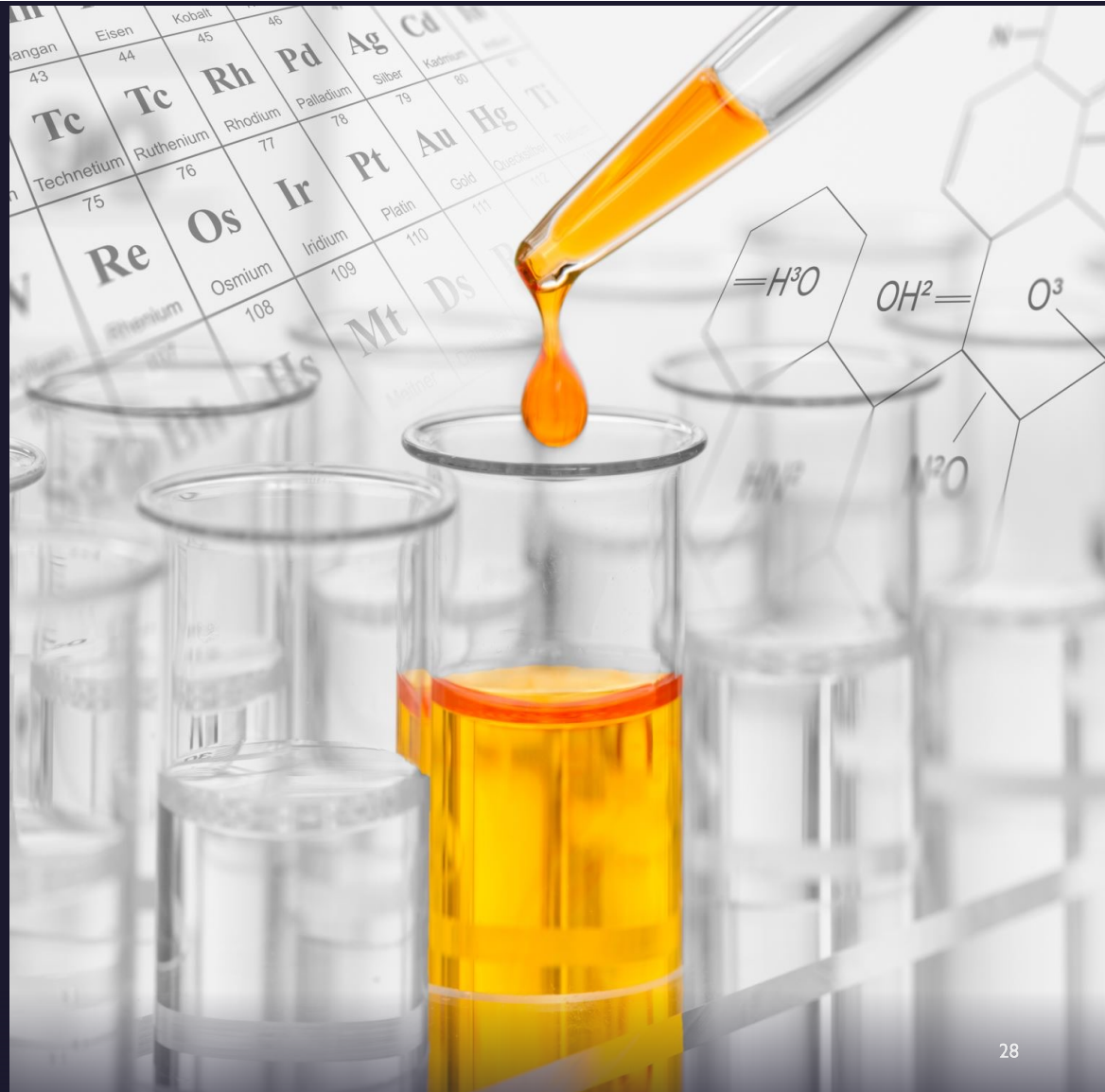
Motivational Interviewing

- Motivated Clients
 - 90 day detox-assists clients in reassessing what is fun and what they enjoy
 - Utilize this time to develop new hobbies
 - Log productivity
 - Optimal for all clients, but historically experience difficulty getting those in contemplation or pre- contemplation to attempt this
 - Reassess throughout treatment
 - Help clients pass through developmental stages 4, 5, 6
 - Want to begin to help clients find alternative activities in their life



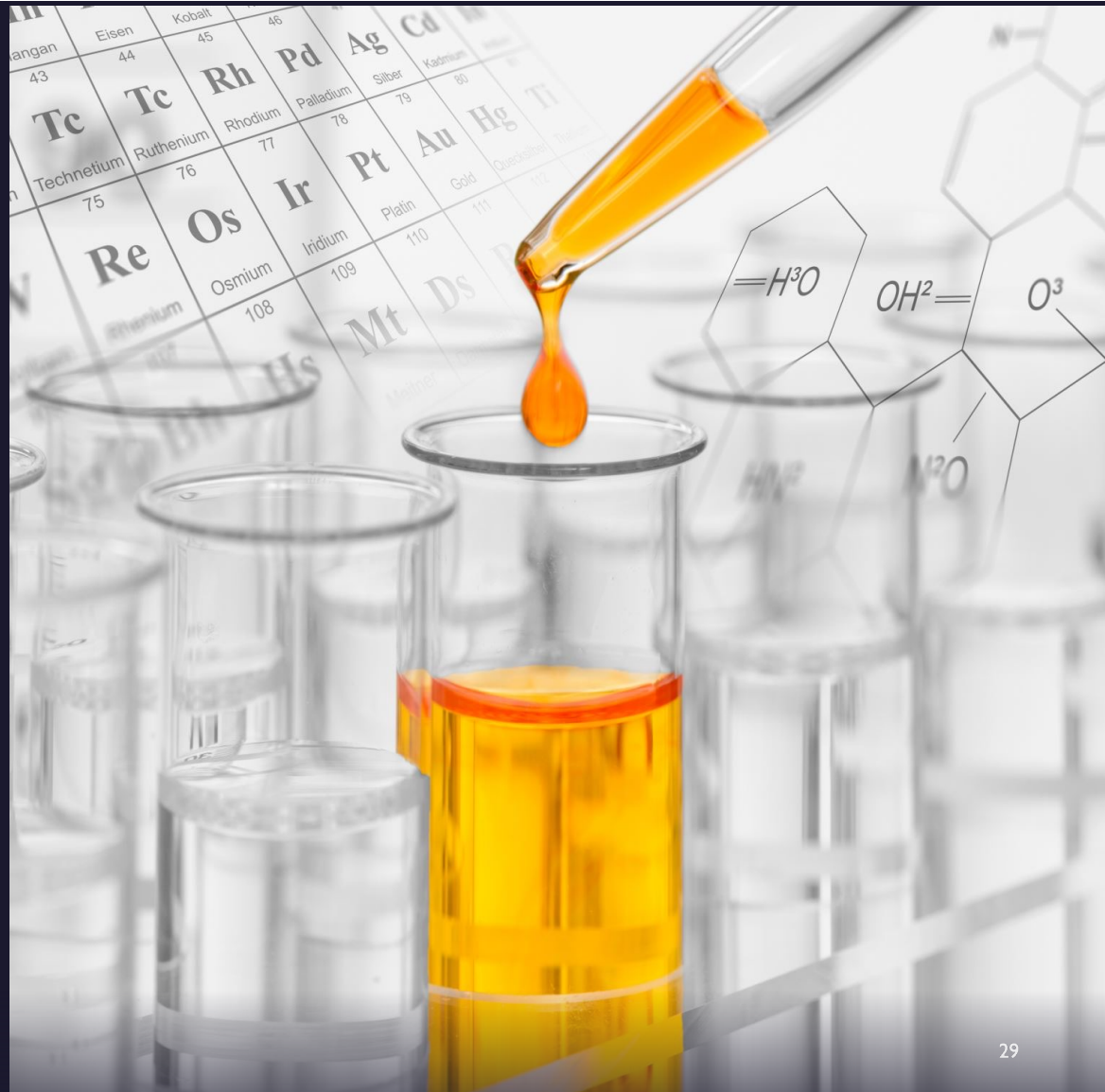
Replacing Chemicals

- Dopamine
 - Competition releases dopamine so for gamers drawn more toward competitive games we need a replacement
 - Exercise
 - Listening to music
 - Creating lists with tangible rewards-applying for jobs, interacting with 5 new people
 - Get plenty of sleep
 - Find other competitive avenues
 - Diet
 - Bananas , healthy fats, blueberries, lean proteins (chicken fish) etc.



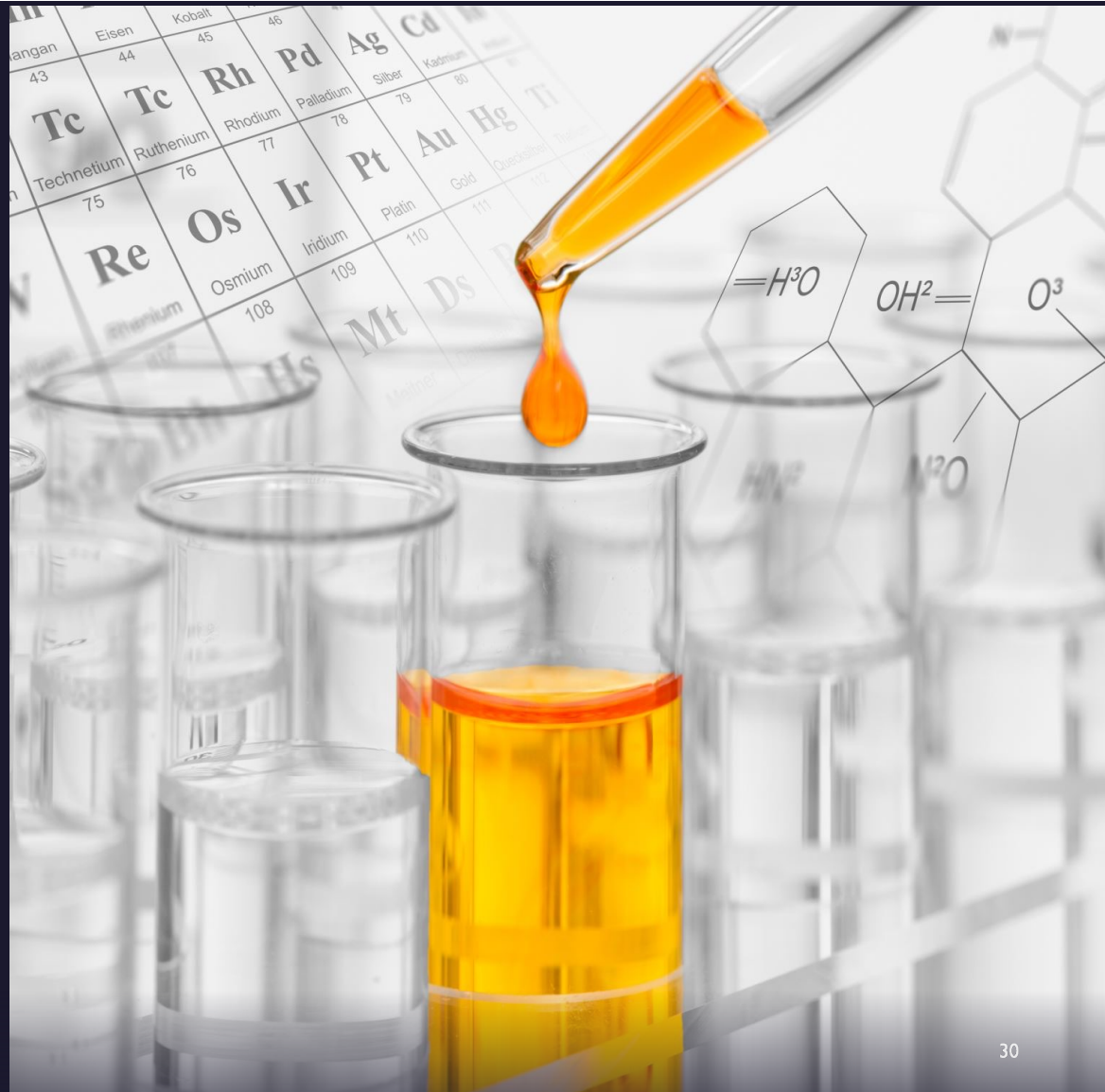
Replacing Chemicals

- Serotonin
 - Music-listening and creating
 - Anti-depression light, anti-rumination strategies
 - Sunlight and nature
 - Aerobic exercise
 - Coding activities
 - Adding Vitamins D, B6 & B12 to diet
 - Trying new things



Replacing Chemicals

- Oxytocin
 - Spending time with friends IRL
 - Altruistic or selfless behavior
 - 5 friends-dunbar
 - Some form of affection
 - Sensory stimuli, pets,
 - Weighted blankets, stuffed animals
 - Yoga
 - Music-listening and creating



Strategies for Families

A blurred photograph of a colorful playground. The playground features yellow and blue structures, red slides, and red climbing frames. Several children are visible, some playing on the equipment and others standing on the ground. The background shows trees and a clear sky.



Strategies for Families

- Talk and Listen to teens about what they are experiencing online
 - Highlight reel phenomenon
 - FOMO
 - Practice taking time away from games
- Set rules and boundaries
 - Follow user agreements
 - Most suggest age of 13
 - Have consequences to when they break the boundaries
 - Model appropriate screen time
 - Draft a contract about acceptable use of technology
 - Let them know the monitoring you will be doing as well



Strategies for Families

Family therapy

- Want to teach parents this is not a matter of fault, it is a matter of finding ways to increase positive family time
- Also want to process through the emotions which are happening in family dynamic
- Want to reset the way in which we play and the way in which our children play



Strategies for Families

Play (Mildred Parten)

- Onlooker behavior—Playing passively by watching or conversing with other children engaged in play activities.
- Solitary independent—Playing by oneself.
- Parallel—Playing, even in the middle of a group, while remaining engrossed in one's own activity. Children playing parallel to each other sometimes use each other's toys, but always maintain their independence.
- Associative—When children share materials and talk to each other, but do not coordinate play objectives or interests.
- Cooperative—When children organize themselves into roles with specific goals in mind (e.g., to assign the roles of doctor, nurse, and patient and play hospital).



Strategies for Families

Taking breaks

- Indoor breaks
 - Jumping jacks, burpees, high knees, jump rope, hop, creative jumps
 - Hula Hoop
 - “Keep It Up” with a beach ball, balloon, volleyball
 - Shadowbox
 - Run, skip, or grapevine down the hallway (or combination of all)
 - Shoot Nerf Baskets
 - Push Ups, Planks, Bridges



Strategies for Families

Indoor breaks continued

- Yoga Poses and/or Stretches
- Bear Crawl/Crab Walk around the house
- Ping Pong (don't need a table for this)
- Golf (ball into a cup or box)
- Dance
- Balance Test (put a book on your head and walk around-great for posture)



Strategies for Families

Outdoor Breaks

- Go for a walk (go for distance or go for time)
- Take a Bike or Scooter Ride
- Go Skating (in-line or traditional)
- Play catch with your kids or dog
- Shoot Baskets
- Dribble a Soccer Ball



Strategies for Families

Outdoor Breaks (Continued)

- Hacky Sack
- Play on a swing set, monkey bars, slides, climbing wall
- Loft a volleyball with a friend/parent/neighbor, or play against a wall
- Build a Snow Man
- Work in the lawn
- Garden

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Thank You

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