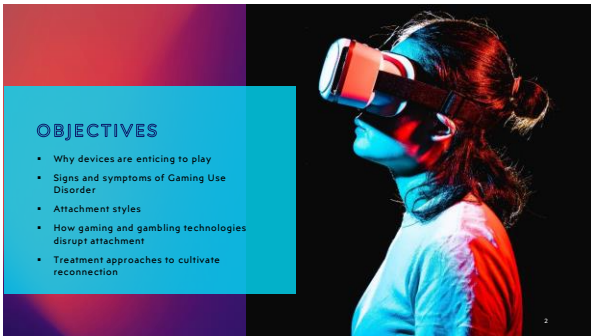
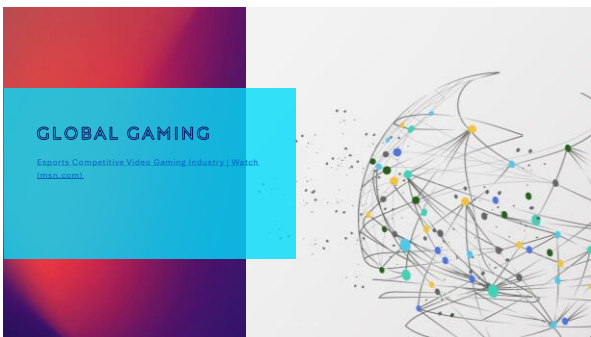




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PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Psychology Today defines parasocial relationships as "one-sided relationships in which a person develops a strong sense of connection, intimacy, or familiarity with someone they don't know, most often celebrities or media personalities. These relationships exist only in the mind of the individual, who experiences a bond despite the lack of reciprocity."

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Positive Effects

- **Reduced Loneliness:** Parasocial relationships can provide a sense of companionship, especially for people who feel isolated or lonely.
- **Emotional Support:** Fans often turn to celebrities or fictional characters for emotional support during difficult times.

Negative Effects

- **Unrealistic Expectations:** People may develop unrealistic expectations from these one-sided connections, leading to disappointment.
- **Escapism:** Excessive reliance on parasocial relationships can hinder real-life social interactions and coping mechanisms.
- **Identity Attachment:** Over-identifying with a celebrity can affect self-esteem and self-worth.

Risk Factors

- **Intensity:** The stronger the attachment, the greater the impact on mental health.
- **Duration:** Long-term parasocial relationships may have more significant effects.
- **Individual Differences:** Some people are more susceptible to these relationships than others.

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XBOX VS PLAYSTATION

Xbox

- First Generation: Xbox (2001-2009)
- Second Generation Xbox 360 (2005-2016)
- Third Generation Xbox One (2013-2020)
- Fourth Generation: Xbox Series X and Series S (2020-present)

PlayStation

- PlayStation1 (1994)
- PS One (2000)
- PS2 (2000-2004)
 - Slim
- Portable (2004)
- PlayStation 3 (2006-2012)
 - Slim, Vies, Super Slim
- PS4 (2013-2016)
 - Slim, Pro
- PS5 (2020-present)
 - Digital Edition

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THE GAMES WE PLAY

Top 10

XBOX	PLAYSTATION
10. Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge	10. Uncharted: The Lost Legacy
9. Jet Set Radio Future	9. Control
8. Rainbow Six 3	8. Marvel's Spider Man
7. Fable	7. Horizon Zero Dawn
6. The Chronicles of Reddick: Escape from Butcher's Bay	6. Grand Theft Auto (GTA 6 releases 2025)
5. Najia Golden	5. Persona 5 Royal
4. Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic	4. The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt
3. Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	3. Bloodborne
2. Halo 2	2. The Last of Us Part 2
1. Halo: Combat Evolved	1. God of War

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WHY WE PLAY

- GAMING TO ESTABLISH A SENSE OF SELF
- GAMING TO ESCAPE DISTRESSING SITUATIONS OR NEGATIVE MOODS

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SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF GAMING USE DISORDER

- TOLERANCE
- LOSS OF INTEREST
- GAMING TO ESCAPE DISTRESSING MOODS OR SITUATIONS
- JEOPARDIZING WORK, SCHOOL, OR HOME RELATIONSHIPS
- LYING ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF TIME AND/OR MONEY SPENT ON THE GAME
- CONTINUED USE DESPITE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
- PRE-OCCUPATION
- WITHDRAWAL

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GAMBLING USE DISORDER DIFFERENCES

Gambling has two criteria based on money

- Relying on others for a bail out
- Chasing losses
- Money is not the motive for gamers or gamblers
- Money is the tool not the drug

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AREAS GAMING EFFECTS

- MENTAL HEALTH
- PHYSICAL HEALTH
- FINANCIAL HEALTH

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ATTACHMENT STYLES

Anxious and/or Ambivalent

- Prone to people pleasing behaviors
- Very concerned about being abandoned
- Very afraid of rejection
- Unlikely to initiate new relationships or try new behaviors for fear of being rejected
- May become distraught or have difficulty letting go of a relationship when it is over
- Worry that their partner or friends do not love them
- Escape gamers and gamblers

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ATTACHMENT STYLES

Avoidant



- May have difficulty forming and maintaining close relationships
- Difficulty with vulnerability
- More likely to engage in casual sex or pornography
- Two types
 - Fearful Avoidant
 - Dismissive Avoidant

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ATTACHMENT STYLES

Fearful Avoidant




- May be prone to dissociation
- IRL Relationships may prove challenging
 - More likely to be impulsive and appear emotionally dysregulated
 - Have a low view of themselves and the world around them
 - Find community challenging because they don't trust that others care for them but really want the relationship
 - Find safety in activities that boost serotonin such as creative games or slot machines because these regulate them

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ATTACHMENT STYLES

Dismissive Avoidant



- High view of themselves, low view of the world
- More likely to engage in casual relationships
 - Lots of pornography and ERP in this population
 - Have difficulty with failure and vulnerability
 - Very good at projecting an image
 - No depth
 - Action gamblers, arcade kings
 - Want to be seen always succeeding
 - The competition is the reassurance they need

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ATTACHMENT STYLES

Secure



- Have a history of high self-esteem
- Do well with intimate relationships
- Able to seek out social support
- Feel good about the status of their relationships
- Higher levels of self-acceptance
- Have higher levels of autonomy
- Have a sense of purpose

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S • **STATUS** relates to how we perceive our position in relation to others we have a relationship with such as our boss, peers, direct reports, friends and family. It can include job titles, public and private forms of recognition or criticism, salary and any other aspects associated with status.

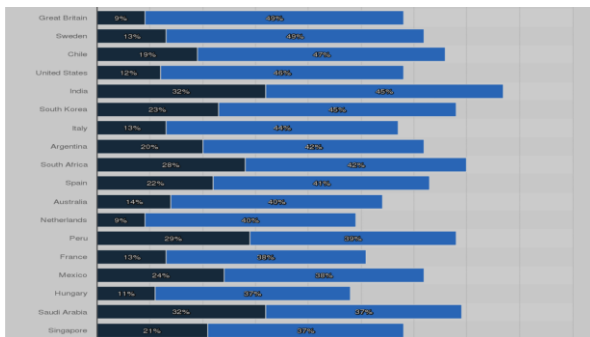
C • **CERTAINTY** relates to how sure we feel about events/people/situations that affect us. The higher the level of uncertainty, the more likely a threat state will be created.

A • **AUTONOMY** relates to the level of control we have over the decisions that affect us. The more autonomous we feel, the more engaged, confident and satisfied we tend to be.

R • **RELATIONSHIP** concerns the quality of our relationships with others/our sense of belonging. Generally speaking, people like to feel "part of the group".

F • **FAIRNESS** relates to our sense of justice and right and wrong. Our perception of whether we have been dealt with fairly can motivate and keep us engaged or if we perceive we have been treated unfairly we are more likely to respond in a defensive way.

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

- Belief System
- Chemicals Released
- Skills Lacking



ITCH DECK 19

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

BELIEF SYSTEM

Belief system is built around the game or social media presence

- "All my friends gamble/game"
- "This will be my career."
- "Getting good at the game is equal to being good at life."
- "This is more fun than other activities."
- "All my friends are online."
- The game gets rid of distressing emotions
- In both populations being seen as a failure is difficult
 - Gamblers will hide amounts of money lost
 - Gamers will hide losing

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

CHEMICALS RELEASED

Dopamine

- Competition & Status
- Tangible markers or success
 - Gambling provides financial and status markers
 - Diamond membership, coupons, etc.
- Gaming provides status markers
- Number of hours spent on upgrades to avatar or weapons, emotes or skins

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

CHEMICALS RELEASED

Oxytocin

- Relatedness and sense of belonging with video games
- Involved in the same activity, sense of normalization sets in
- Gambling is also creating this sense through other friends who are doing this
- In both cases some level of honesty is missing

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

CHEMICALS RELEASED

Serotonin

- Produces sense that all is right in the world
- Natural Mood Booster
 - Mood stabilizer
 - Sense of euphoria
 - Initiates Sex
- Memory
- Fear
- Stress response
- Digestion

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

CHEMICALS RELEASED

Endorphins

- Body's natural pain killer
- Help cope with or relieve pain and stress
- Can release endorphins when we
 - Laugh
 - Exercise
 - Have sex
 - Eat

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HOW GAMING & GAMBLING DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

SKILLS LACKING

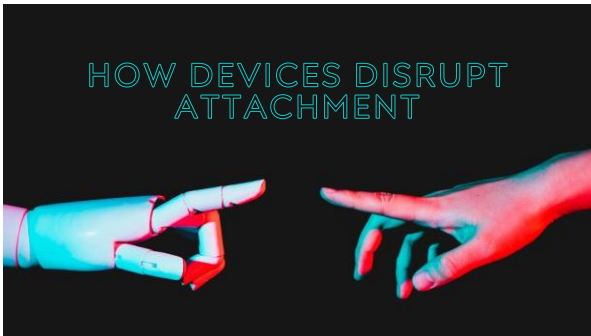
Poor social interaction

- Difficulty in initiating any types of relationships
- Lots of fear of social relationships outside of the game
- Struggle or avoid romantic relationships
- Gambling provides financial and status markers
- Rejection is less online but connection is also less
- Trouble with boundaries

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HOW DEVICES DISRUPT ATTACHMENT




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HOW DEVICES DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

Highly interactive

- Old games vs new
- More options
- Even in low numbers we are spending approximately a part-time job on these activities
- Sends notifications to keep individuals away from feelings



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HOW DEVICES DISRUPT ATTACHMENT

- Belief of social
- Mirror neurons
 - FOMO
 - Easy sense of status
 - Artificial connectedness
 - Never shut off
 - Allow us to escape



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HOW THIS DISORDER MAY PRESENT TO CLINICIANS

- Behavioral concerns or under performance
- School, Work
 - Digital Hangover
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Marital Issues
- Physical Ailments
- Headaches, eye strain, neck/body aches

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TREATMENT

WHERE DO WE START

- Finding the attachment style of your client
- Finding a relationship, group or partnership for them to practice this in
- Important to remember this isn't just romantic relationships, but is designed to help us find meaning or the Erikson value of love
 - Can find this in work, friendships, etc.
 - Different interventions based on different attachment styles

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TREATMENT


AVOIDANT DISMISSIVE

Accept yourself as perfectly imperfect exercise

- Normalize feeling of failure
- Self-compassion with Kristen Neff can be helpful because their lack of compassion for their own failures also makes them less patient with others
- Take calculated risks with your partner or ask for help from peers
- Focus on the needs of the relationship or partnership rather than "my," needs
- Volunteer for team-based activities such as service positions, groups, etc.
 - Should be an activity they do not have any experience in or are not experts in
 - Goal is to be part of the team not the expert of the team
 - Will require a lot of motivational interviewing skills to get them there

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TREATMENT

FEARFUL AVOIDANT

Be aware and be present

- Be aware of your own reactions and emotions
 - Develop mindfulness exercises to assist clients in becoming aware of their reactions
 - Role play shifting away from reacting and towards responding to their relationships
- Self-compassion with Kristen Neff can be helpful because their lack of compassion for their own failures also makes them less patient with others
- Communicate needs to your partner rather than setting it up as a test
- Determine who your safe people are. How do they make you feel? How did these relationships form
 - With Gamers this can be relationships developed when young, so they feel it is magic

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TREATMENT


ANXIOUS ATTACHMENT

Focus is shifted here to self

- Have client focus on what they need, not what others need for them
 - This will require a lot of boundary work
 - Generally discussing caretakers, escape gamblers, escape gamers
 - They do not want to be focusing on themselves as that has never been taught, nor is it safe historically for them
- Help reframe messages from the inner critic
 - This voice was learned long ago but is no longer based in reality, IFS work on the younger parts of themselves
- Ask for help on things client would normally do for others
- Afraid people they love are mad at them, so normalize conflict in the relationships and that this does not mean they are being abandoned
- Learn to sit with uncomfortable feelings rather than running for them

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TREATMENT


OTHER PLACES TO INCREASE CONNECTION

Recovery meetings can assist as well as they have a sense of community

- Different motivations with these types
- Dismissive Avoidant will believe the individuals are beneath them, so will need to work on this feeling of failure in being around others with similar problems
- Anxious will have difficulty believing others will take an interest in them
 - Will need to build on successes in other relationships same
 - Will need to be asking for help, not volunteering to help
- Fearful Avoidant
 - Will need to work with them on finding safe people
 - How do you find safe people and trust them

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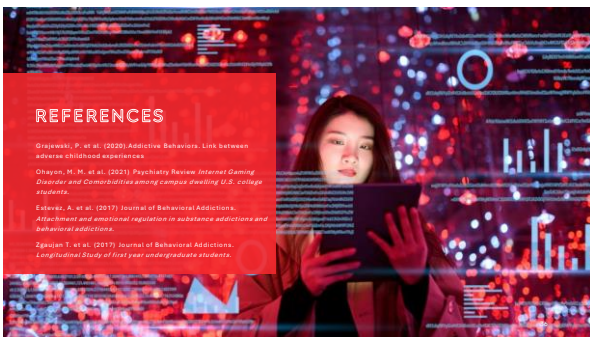
TREATMENT

OTHER PLACES TO INCREASE CONNECTION

- Other groups they can join
- Legos, Dungeon and Dragons for Gamers
- Church groups, Community, Volunteer sites
- Bumble BFF

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