



FINDING MEANING IN THE ERA OF FINANCIAL ADVERSITY

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Outline

- Introduction
- Using Bronfenbrenner's theory to understand the problem
- Intervention: Logotherapy
- Conclusion



Introduction

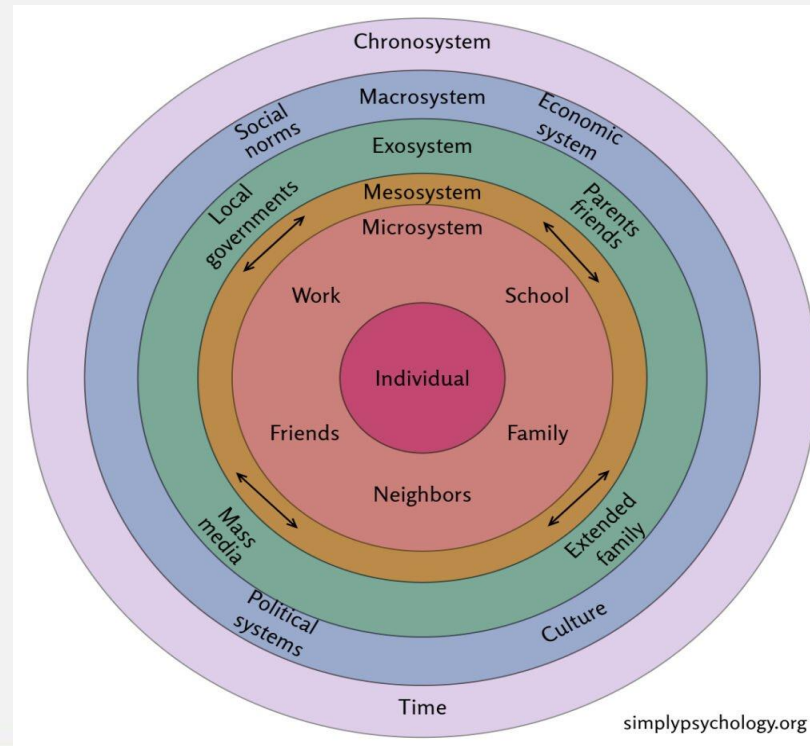
- “Gambling is a silent but destructive epidemic that is fast becoming a crisis in South Africa” (Woosey, 2025).
- “South Africans spent R1.5 trillion on gambling activities during the 2024/25 financial year, which is R400 billion increase from the year before” (BusinessTech, 2025).



Overview of clinical cases (PG 2023-2025)

1 Session	2 Sessions	3 Sessions	4 Sessions	5+ sessions
21	12	7	0	2 (1 hospitalised)

Understanding the presenting problem





Causes of gambling: Thematic analysis

- **Microsystem (individual factors):** Financial stressors, poor problem solving skills, personality traits, mental illness, and existential vacuum.
- **Meso system (social relationships):** Family pressure (Black tax), peer influence/pressure, Discourses around wealth.
- **Exo system (External factors):** Accessibility and availability of gambling opportunities, advertising etc.
- **Macro system (Higher societal level):** Economic conditions of the country.



Voices of the clients

- **Micro system:** *“I have financial problems. I play to have money. I won R60 000 in 2024. I think if I can win R300 000, I will pay off my debts”* (PG case 2).
- **Meso system:** *“The whole family depends on me. My salary cannot meet all the needs. I just have to gamble”* (PG case 3).
- **Exo system:** *“The person who came with the idea of gambling is the devil. Doc, you can’t stop. I gamble throughout the night”* (PG case 4).
- **Macro system:** *“Things are not going well in this country. Everything is just expensive. The salary is little. No jobs, You just have to stay where you are. I gamble just to augment my salary”* (case 5).



Psychological impact of gambling: Thematic Analysis

- **Microsystems:** Deepening financial stressors, impaired decision making, cognitive distortions, anxiety and depression, violence.
- **Meso-system:** strained relationship with family members, colleagues and sometimes with community members (loan sharks), social isolation.
- **Exo-system:** Abuse of gambling resources (e.g. counselling services)
- **Macro-system:** Unemployed individuals depending on grants.

Intervention

- Bio-psycho-social-spiritual Approach
- Client Centred Approach
- Psychodynamic
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy





Intervention: Logotherapy

- Form of psychotherapy developed by Viktor Frankl.
- Focuses on finding meaning for our suffering (Finding meaning in the mist of financial adversity).
- Finding meaning is a primary motivational force for wellbeing.
- Practising logotherapy enhances resilience, mental health & life satisfaction by focusing on purpose & personal responsibility

Key principles

- **Freedom of choice:** Individual has the power to choose one's attitude towards financial struggles.
- **Will to meaning:** Willingness to find meaning and purpose in life.
- **Meaning of life:** Finding significance in everyday experiences (Higher calling and purpose).



Logo-aims

- To assist individuals to discover (find) their unique meaning and purpose.
- To assist individuals to develop a sense of hope and optimism.

Objectives

- **Meaning of life:** We are called to live life. Every life is worth living.

We are called to find meaning in unavoidable suffering, by transforming it into a heroic act.

- **Meaning of the moment:** To explore the tasks of the moment and find purpose in present circumstance.
- **Ultimate meaning:** To explore “who am I? within the whole. One has to feel as being part of the universal order in which each person has a unique code.

Logo-techniques

- **De-reflection (Reframing suffering):** View financial struggles as opportunities for growth
- **Focus of values:** Prioritize what truly matters, such as career, relationship, personal growth etc.
- **Creative values:** Engage in activities that bring joy and fulfilment, despite financial challenges.
- **Experiential values:** Appreciate the beauty and the wonder of life, even in difficult times.
- **Attitudinal values:** Reflect on challenging circumstance and reconnect with personal values. This process cultivate a positive attitude, resilience and hope.
- **Find your purpose worksheet:** Explore and identify gifts, talents, skills and abilities that will help in finding purpose in life.



Thank you

