

*What is problem gambling?  
Characteristics and Dimensions  
of Gambling Behaviour*

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# *Overview*

- Definition of addiction
  - 10 Signs of Addiction
- Addiction Components Model
- What is problem gambling?
  - Global model of gambling
  - Addiction as a syndrome
    - Conclusions

***"Certain individuals use certain substances in certain ways, thought at certain times to be unacceptable by certain other individuals for reasons both certain and uncertain"***

*(Burglass & Shaffer, 1984)*

# ***Addiction: A Definition***

*(Marlatt, Baer, Donovan & Kivlahan, 1988)*

- *"Addictive behaviour is a repetitive habit pattern that increases the risk of disease and/or associated personal and social problems....often experienced subjectively as 'loss of control'....these habit patterns are typically characterized by immediate gratification (short term reward), often coupled with delayed, deleterious effects (long term costs)....attempts to change an addictive behaviour (via treatment or by self-initiation) are typically marked by high relapse rates"*

# ***10 SIGNS OF ADDICTION*** *(Carnes, 1991)*

- A pattern of out of control behaviour
- Severe consequences due to behaviour
- Inability to stop behaviour despite adverse consequences
- Persistent pursuit of self destructive or high risk behaviour
- Ongoing desire or effort to limit behaviour
- Uses behaviour as a coping strategy
- Increased amounts of behaviour because the current level of activity is no longer sufficient
- Severe mood changes around behaviour
- Inordinate amounts of time spent trying to engage in behaviour and recovering from it
- Important social, occupational and recreational activities are sacrificed or reduced because of behaviour

# *Addiction Components*

(Griffiths, 1996; 2005)

- Salience
- Mood modification
  - Tolerance
- Withdrawal
  - Conflict
  - Relapse

## Saliency (Extract 1): 'Tony'

*"If I wasn't actually gambling I was spending the rest of my time working out clever little schemes to obtain money to feed my habit. These two activities literally took up all my time"*

*(from Griffiths, 2002)*

## Salience (Extract 2): 'Brian'

*"Gamble, gamble, gamble your life away..you might as well have put it down the drain. You've got to face the truth that you're having a love affair, and it's with a machine whose lights flash, takes your money and kills your soul"*

*(from Griffiths, 2002)*

## Saliency (Extract 3): 'David'

*"During four or five years of compulsive gambling I think I missed about six or seven days of playing fruit machines - keeping in mind that about four or five of those days were Christmas days where it was impossible to gain access to a gambling machine...As you have probably gathered, I ate, slept and breathed gambling machines...I couldn't even find time to spend with the people I loved..The machines were more important than anything or anyone else"*

*(from Griffiths, 2002)*

# Addiction Components

- Salience
- Mood modification
  - Tolerance
- Withdrawal
  - Conflict
  - Relapse

# **Conflict**

*"David's parents were considering divorce because they had so many arguments. David's mother felt the rows were upsetting David and driving him out of the house into the arcades to play on the machines. It was a vicious circle. David was driving his parents into arguments which led them to be worried and unhappy which drove David into the arcades which led to more arguments and so on"*

(from *Griffiths, 1995*)

# Addiction Components

- Salience
- Mood modification
  - Tolerance
- Withdrawal
  - Conflict
  - Relapse

# *What is problem gambling?*

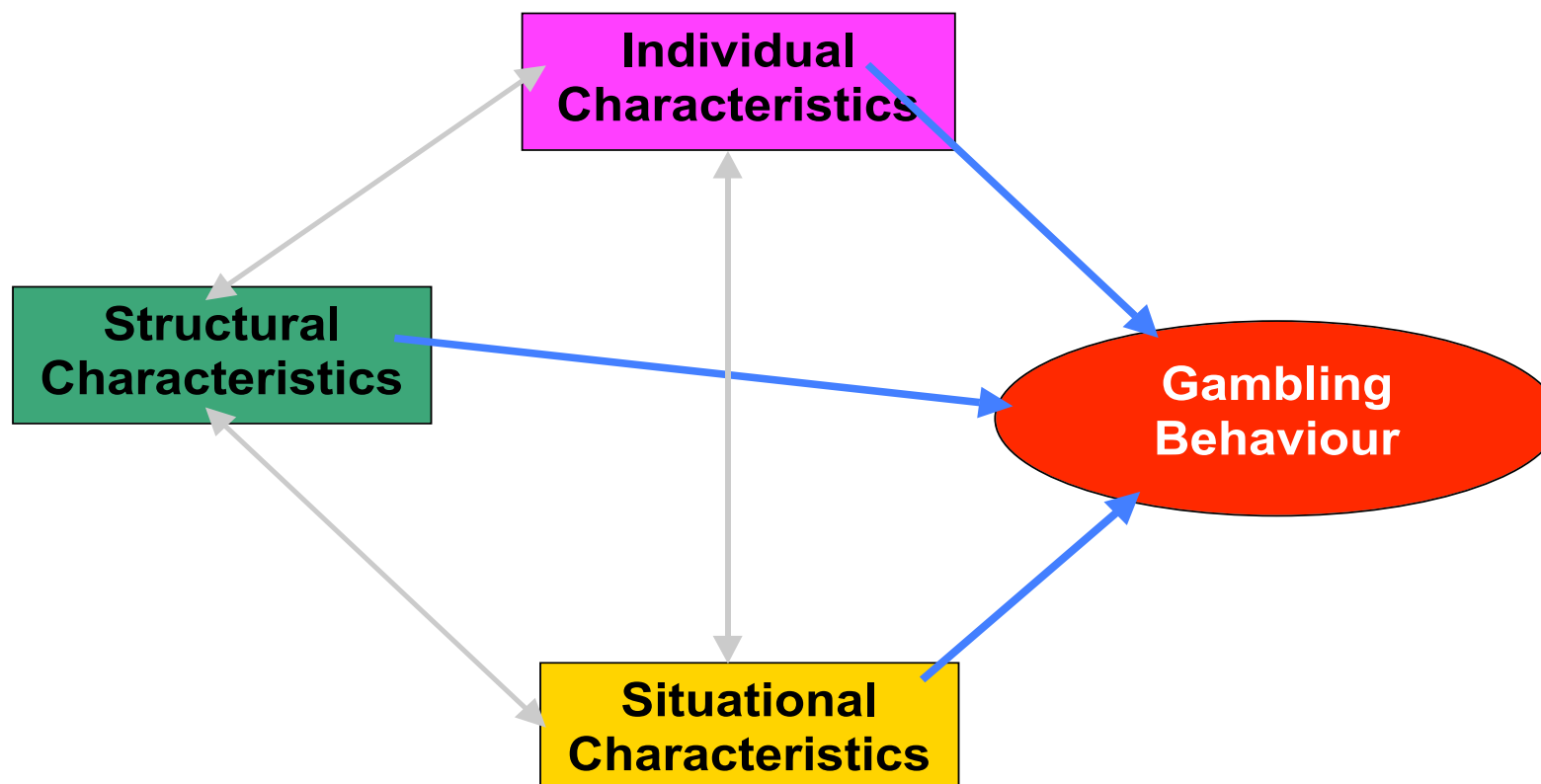
- The term 'problem gambling' has been used by many researchers, bodies, and organisations, to describe gambling that compromises, disrupts or damages family, employment, personal or recreational pursuits (Griffiths, 2004).

- Researchers internationally are beginning to move away from earlier, clinical often heavily DSM-based definitions.
- Early conceptions of PG were of a discrete 'disease entity' comprising a chronic, progressive mental illness, which only complete abstinence could hope to manage.
- Recent thinking regards problem gambling as behaviour that exists on a continuum
- Extreme, pathological presentation at one end, very minor problems at the other, and a range of more or less disruptive behaviours in between.

- Moreover, this behaviour is something that is mutable.
- Research suggests it can change over time
- Individuals move in and out of problematic status and is often subject to natural remission (*Hayer, Meyer & Griffiths, 2005*).

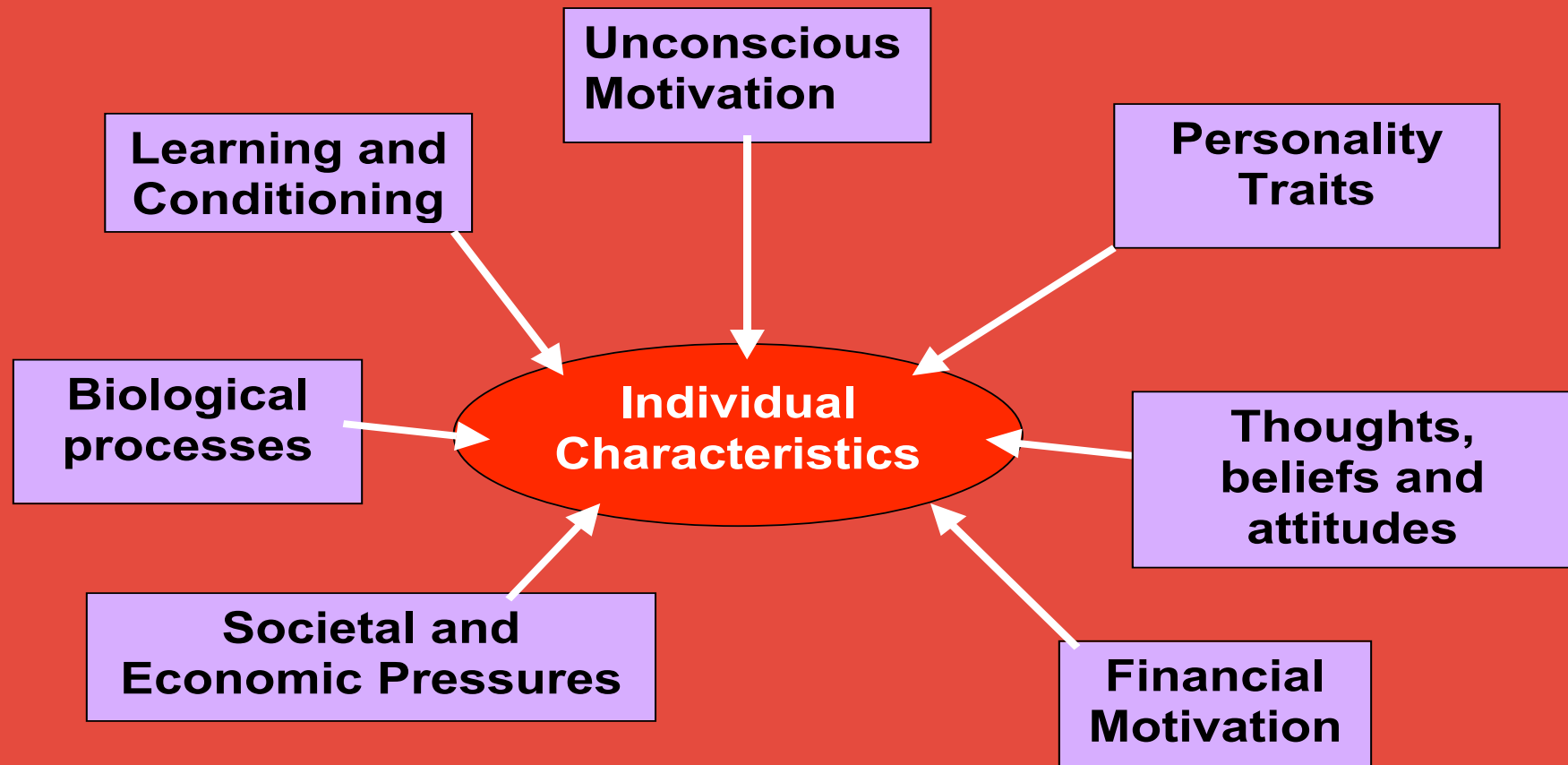
# *Global model of gambling behaviour*

*(Griffiths, 2006; Parke & Griffiths, 2007)*



# *Individual Characteristics*

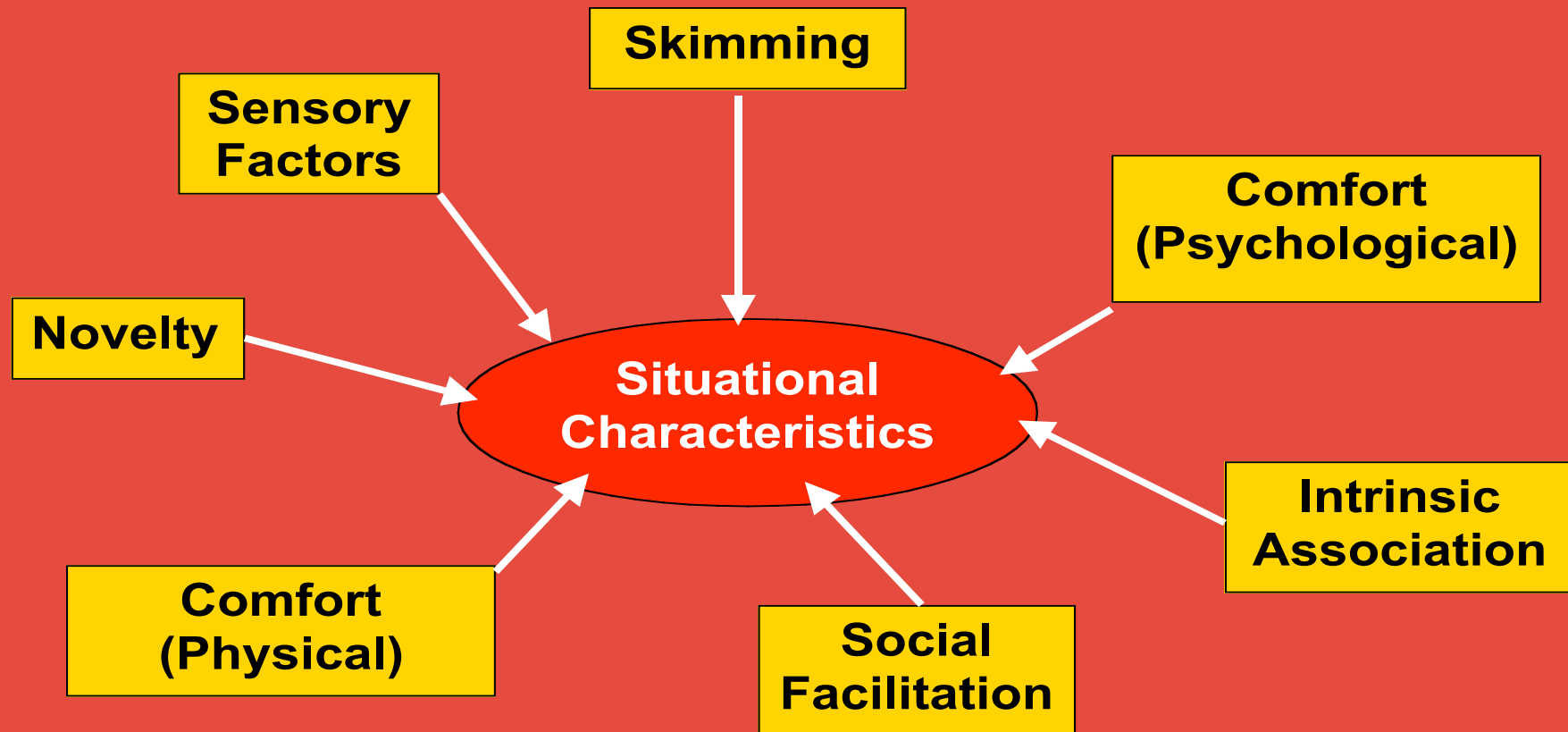
(Griffiths & Delfabbro, 2001)



# *Situational Characteristics*

(Griffiths & Parke, 2003)

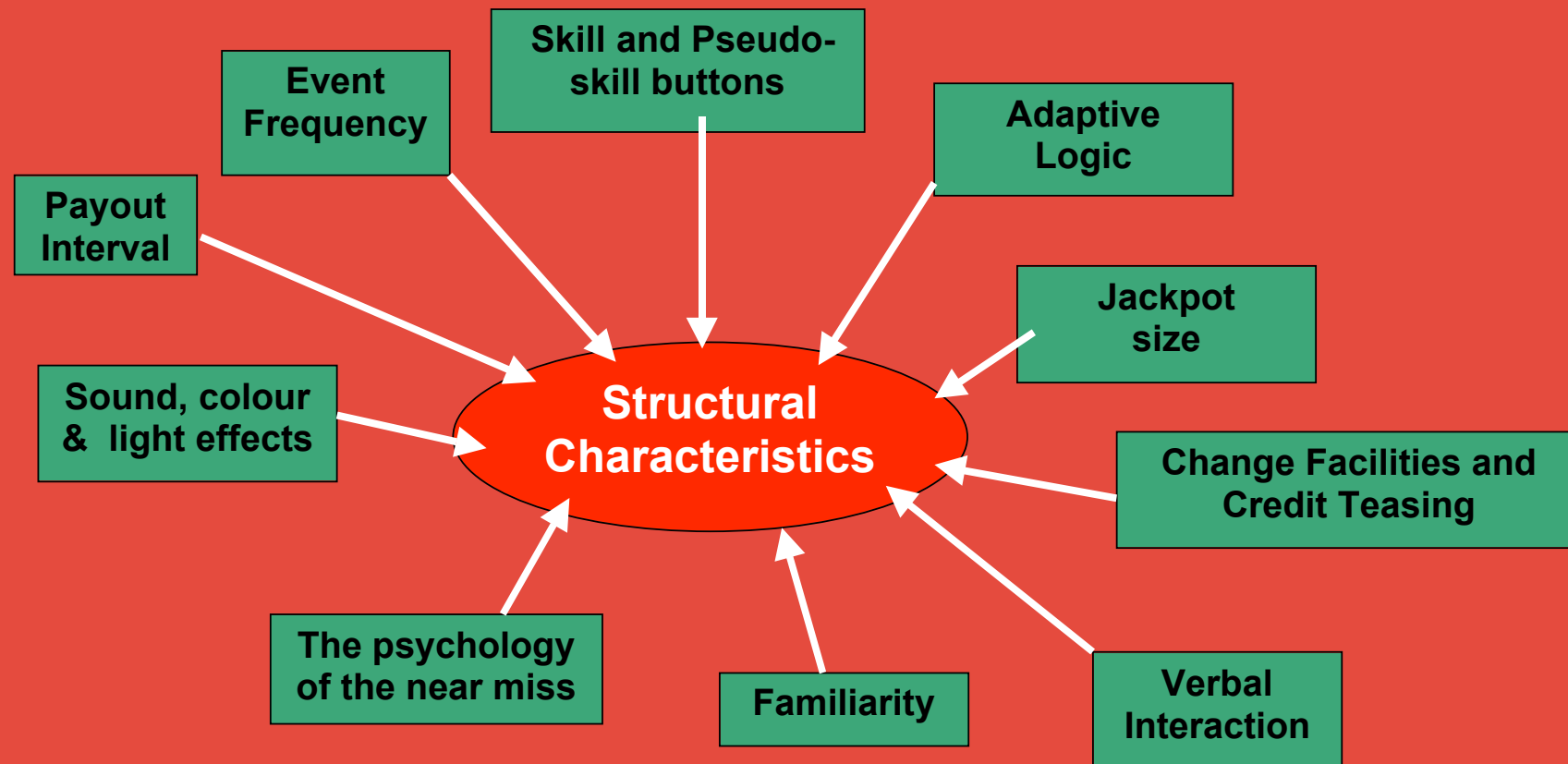
## Example: UK Amusement Arcade



# *Structural characteristics*

(Griffiths, 1993; 1995; Parke & Griffiths, 2001; 2007)

## Example: Slot machines



# *Addiction as a syndrome*

(Shaffer et al, 2004)

- Evidence suggests addiction is more of a syndrome than a single disorder
- Syndromes have both common and unique components
  - common components (e.g. depression, anxiety, impulsivity)
  - unique components (e.g., chasing, betting increased amounts of money)

# *Conclusions*

- Many research paradigms are insular and inadequate in explaining gambling addiction
- Gambling addiction is a multi-faceted behaviour which is strongly influenced by contextual factors which cannot be encompassed by any single theoretical perspective
- These factors include variations in behavioural involvement and motivation across different demographic groups, structural characteristics of activities, and the developmental or temporal nature of addictive behaviour

- Research and clinical interventions are best served by a biopsychosocial approach which incorporates the best strands of contemporary psychology, biology and sociology
- Problem gambling can be viewed as an addictive behaviour (depending upon how addiction is defined!)

# ***Components of a Successful Theory of Addictions***

(Larkin & Griffiths, 1998; 2004)

- Must synthesize pharmacological, cultural, situational and personality factors
- Must account for varying nature of addiction across cultures, individuals and time
- Must account for commonalities between all addictions
- Must be faithful to lived human experience

# Over to you for questions!

