## A narrative perspective on therapy: "Externalizing The Gambling Problem"

Spontaneous - playful - fun - and it's useful too

10th SNSUS conference on gambling and problem gambling 1 - 3 of June 2015

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## Narrative theraphy

- \* Michael White (1948-2008) and David Epston
- \* How you construct meaning in life. People are organizing life after "stories of my life". People becomes the stories they tell about themselves and their experiences.
- \* The externalization of the problem separate the person and the problem. The person can see the problem as something outside of them (action or thought) that can be considered and done something about. That makes it manageable and soluble
- \* Seek to be a respektful, none blaming approach wich centres people as experts in their own life

# Why?

#### \* Commom to many problem gamblers

- \* shame
- \* loss of controll
- \* feeling of low self esteeme
- \* gone beyond their own values
- \* isolation
- \* Help the patient distangle from litte function toughtes about themselves
- \* Find a more active position to The Gambling Problem

Why do we engage in externalizing conversations?

- \* Help them examine, evaluate and change their relationship to the problem
- \* A persons believes, skills, principles and knowledge will becomes more visible
- \* Reduce guilt an blame and yet leave room for responsibility
- Reduce unproductive conflicts in relationships; gives room for co- operation when problem is not within the identity of the person

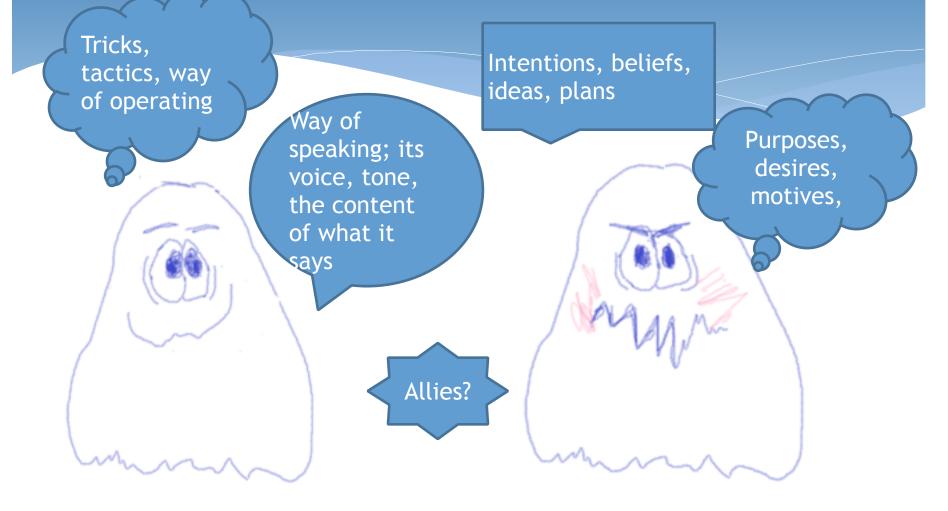
The person is not the problem-the problem is the problem

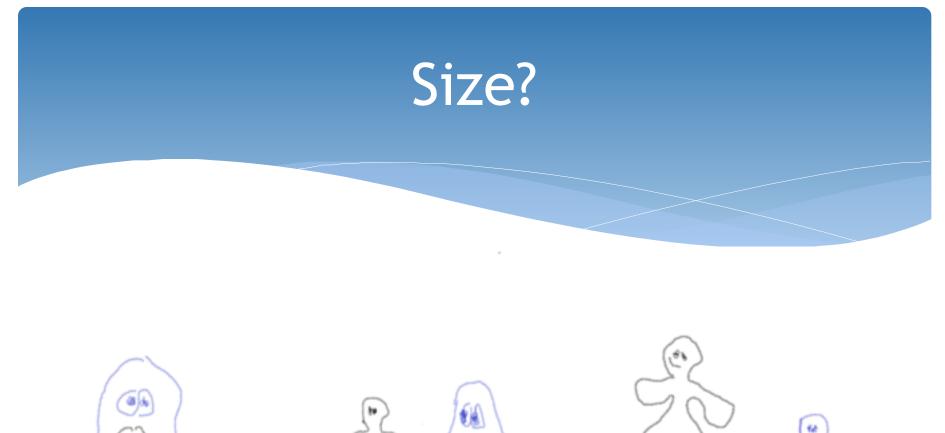
- \* By focusing on problems effect on lives rather than the problem inside or part of people, distance is created
- \* This makes it easier to investigate and evaluate the problems influences
- \* The therapist is a collaborator -investigating reporter
  - \* Always maintain a stance of curiosity
  - Always ask question to which you genuinely do not know the answer

# Exploration and personification of The Gambling Problem

- \* Imagine the problem being a thing/ personifying
- \* Finding a metaphorical name;
  - \* The Monster", "The Troll", "The Devil", "The Demon", "The Psychopath", "The Lover", "The Fireball", "The Spirit"
- \* Does it f. ex have a color, size? What does it look like? Is it with you everywhere or in one place/situation?

### Getting to know The Problem











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# Investigate and Evaluate

- \* Describe the relationship with The Problem
  - \* ambivalence, love/hate, oppressive, troubled, conflictual
- \* What type of relationship do you want?
  - \* occasional, relaxed, end the relationship
- \* Mapping the effect on life and the relationship to important others
- \* Evaluating The Problems effects
- \* Why?

#### (Re)- Discovering values, hopes and dreams

- \* What .... do you think have led you to want changes/seek therapy?
- \* What hope, dreams and values has been at the expense of the problem?
- \* What values are important to you?
- \* What type of person do you like to appear as?
- \* What do you want the further story of you/ you life to be?

# (Re)-Discovering values, hopes and dreams

- \* Can help a person in finding a good reason to make the change
- \* Helps him find out who he wants to be
- \* It gives him the *motivation* to change and the *hope* that it is possible to live in harmony with him selves and closer to his own standard
- \* We experience that this focus integrates the change in the person and makes him stronger and more determined in the process of making changes
- \* He will be his own coach and the values are his compass

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