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Emotional dysregulation and stress in Gambling Disorder (GD) and Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD)

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Statement of the problem: Many people, both children, teenagers, and adults, begin to get involved in gambling or Internet video games in order to relax, disconnect from problems, or from hard work and thus improve their emotional state. The primary psychotropic effect of this switch, associated with detachment from negative thoughts, disappears quite quickly. A constant game at the level of problematic and pathological is a distress that is caused not only by events in the games, but also by their negative consequences. The arousal phase is followed by an exhaustion phase with asthenic emotions, depression, lack of desire and strength to do anything, and cognitive dysfunction. All this we observe in patients with IGD and GD. Indicators of experienced distress are functional and structural changes in the brain, vegetative shifts, changes in the secretion of hormones of the hypatoadrenal system and neurotransmitters: cortisol, norepinephrine, and epinephrine.

Conclusion: The fact that gamblers and Internet gamers experience stress during the game, problem and pathological players experience emotional distress can be confirmed by the results of studies of the sympathoadrenal system and the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA-axis). As a result, all the above-mentioned neurobiological and clinical changes create conditions for the development of comorbid psychopathology or increasing the severity of symptoms of already present mental disorders.

Biography

Dr. Tetiana Zinchenko, the president of the International association for the study of game addictions (IASGA)/Switzerland, PhD, psychotherapist, psychologist, rehabilitologist, practicing doctor in private practice. Practical experience of 20 years in psychiatry, psychotherapy, psychological counseling. Experience in specialized clinics. Last 10 years in private practice and public organizations. Over the last 5 years, she has been specializing in group and individual psychotherapy and rehabilitation of people with various behavioral addictions. Her main research interests are the study of the influence of information technologies on consciousness, the brain and the development of human personality, as well as the study of ontology, the nature and functioning of human consciousness. Therefore, her research focused on information behavioral addictions, such as gambling addiction, Internet gaming disorder, problematic use of the Internet, social networks, etc. Tetiana is the author of numerous articles, a book, and a regular participant in international scientific conferences where she presents the results of her research.