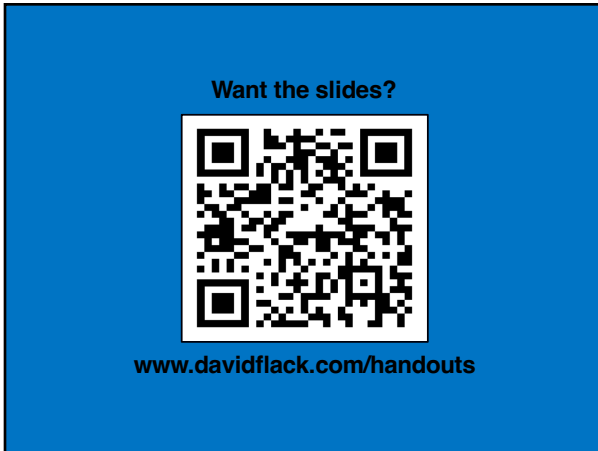
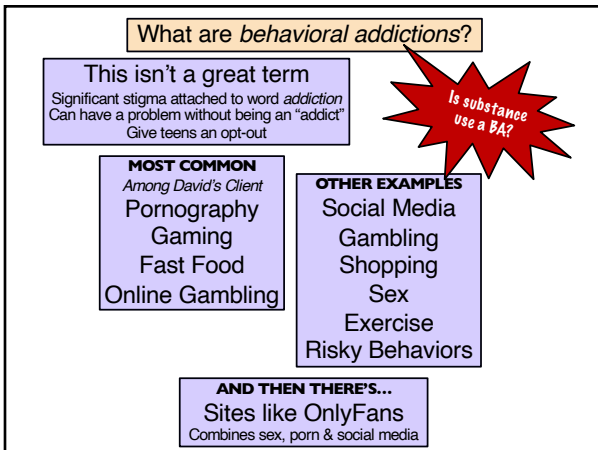




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PREVALENCE

- Lack of diagnostic criteria makes it difficult to accurately identify prevalence
- Wildly varying statistics, some clearly biased or intentionally deceptive
- Tech-based BAs have increased dramatically since COVID
- Tech-based BAs are relatively new & quickly evolving

DAVID'S VERY INFORMAL META-ANALYSIS
10-12% of US teens have BAs

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DIAGNOSING BAs

Gambling Disorder DSM-5-TR / 312.31	A persistent and problematic gambling behavior pattern leading to significant distress or impairment
Compulsive Sexual Behavior Disorder ICD-11 / F52.8	A persistent pattern of failure to control intense, repetitive sexual impulses or urges resulting in repetitive sexual behavior
Gaming Disorder ICD-11 / 6C51	Significantly impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming, and continuation despite negative consequences
Impulse Control Disorders DSM-5-TR & ICD-11	Various specific diagnoses, all identifying difficulty controlling impulses

US insurance companies
don't cover ICD-11 codes

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STAGES OF USE

No Use Ever

Experimental Use

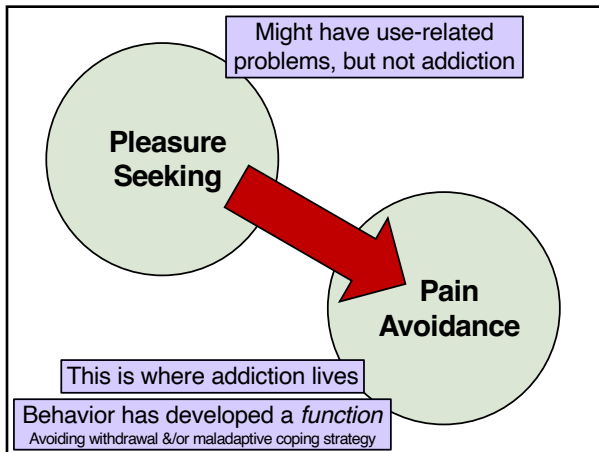
Occasional Use

Regular Use

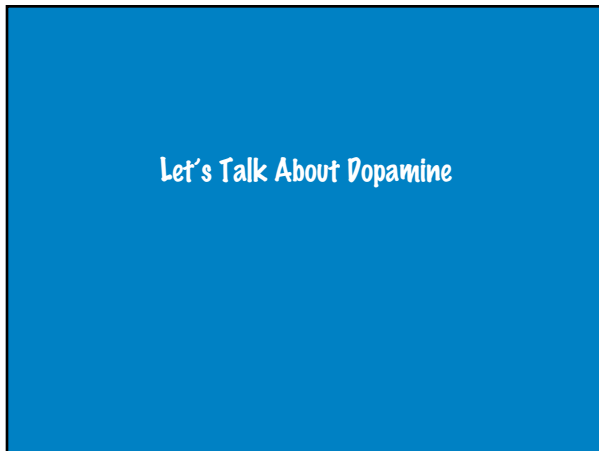
Abuse / Misuse

Addiction

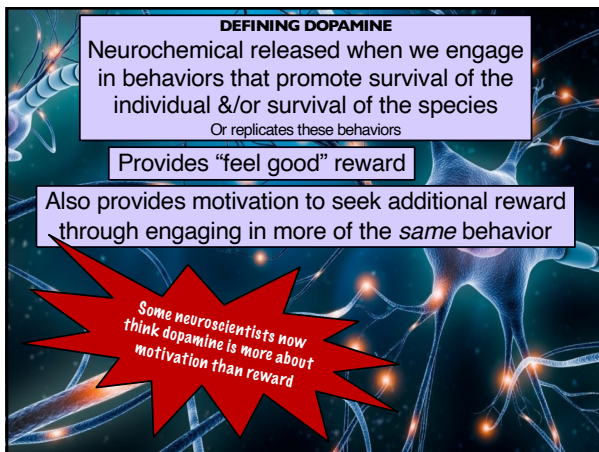
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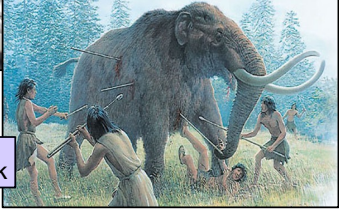


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Potentially addictive behaviors provide “cheap” dopamine

CHEAP DOPAMINE
Low effort + high reward

EARNED DOPAMINE
Requires effort or risk



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Cheap dopamine doesn't last long, resulting in dopamine crashes & increased dopamine-seeking behaviors

Excessive releases of dopamine result in receptors shutting off

Receptors shutting off leads to *more* dopamine crashes, increased risk taking & impulsive behaviors

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But Wait, There's More...

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DESIGNED FOR COMPULSIVITY

Fast food is designed for compulsivity in an entirely different way

EXAMPLES
Videogames
Gambling
Social Media
Pokémon Cards

Variable ratio reinforcement
Trading cards, loot boxes, scratch tickets, slots

A FEW OTHER DESIGN CHOICES
Getting "close" to winning
Multi-sensory, immersive environments
In-game rewards, power ups & likes
Fast paced play

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GENETIC CONSIDERATIONS

There is likely a genetic predisposition for BAs

The Dopamine Double Whammy

Individuals who engage in BAs might produce less dopamine than most people

OTHER POSSIBLE FACTORS
Inheritable personality traits
Epigenetic vulnerabilities

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REPLICATES SURVIVAL NEEDS

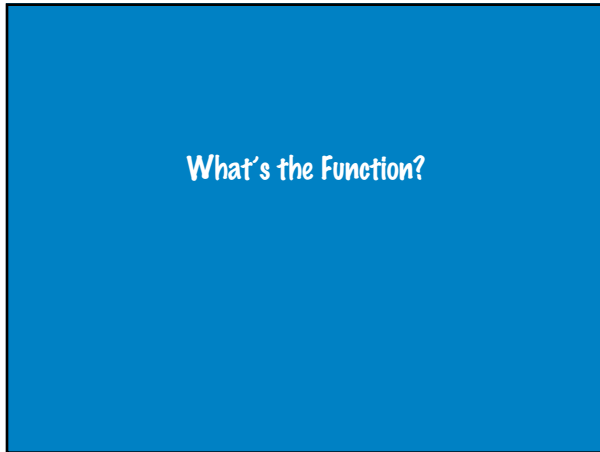
EXAMPLES
Sex
Porn
Food
Fast Food
Shopping

"A zombie apocalypse probably isn't gonna happen, but I'll be ready if it does. And, I guess that makes me feel safer."
Nate, former client

Perceived survival needs can feel as strong as real ones

Behaviors that replicate survival needs lead to especially big dopamine bursts

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UNPACKING FUNCTION

- A strong function makes a behavior *seem* like a survival need
- People will *always* defend their perceived survival needs
- If we don't address function, lasting change is unlikely
- There isn't *always* a function to BAs

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Problematic Pornography Use

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BEFORE WE PROCEED

- Teens view porn
- Some people have strong opinions about this... and that's *not* the focus of this presentation
- We can't talk about porn without acknowledging sex & masturbation
- It's not our job to judge

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A FEW STATISTICS

- About 70% of US teens have been exposed to online porn
- Intentional about 20-40%
- Unintentional about 30-50%
- Male teens more likely to view porn
- Data from one study of online viewing: 66% of male teens, 39% of female teens
- Use increased during COVID

(Jhe, Addison, Lin & Pluhar, 2023)

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Limited scientifically valid data about effects of porn on teens

Most negative outcomes data is based on corollaries or biases
(Jhe, et al, 2022)

Example: Adolescents who view porn become sexually aggressive

NO DATA

In my experience, most teens who view porn think it's a problem

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SOME LEGITIMATE CONCERNS

- Promotes unrealistic perspectives on sex & body image
- The “numbing of sexuality”
- Ethics of porn
- Likely exacerbates mental health concerns
- Potential for addiction

(Jhe, Addison, Lin & Pluhar, 2023)

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SUD CRITERIA (DSM-5-TR)

Physical Dependence	Impaired Control	Social Problems	Risky Behaviors
• Withdrawal • Tolerance • Cravings	• Using larger amount or more often than intended • Unable to stop or cut down	• Neglecting responsibilities & relationships • Giving up activities that used to be important • Failure to complete tasks at home, work or school	• Using in risky situations • Continued use despite known problems

What might these criteria look like if applied to pornography use?

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