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# Implementation and Efficacy of Integrative Couple Treatment for Pathological Gambling (ICT-PG) Delivered in Specialized Treatment Facilities: A Real-life RTC


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**AGRI, Banff, BC, Canada,**
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Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de la Capitale-Nationale Québec
Université Laval

# Context



- My interest in couple/family treatment
- No need of more studies to illustrate the large negative consequences of gambling on partners
- Despite the many consequences of gambling on quality of couple relationship, most therapies for problem gambling favour an individual approach.
- Two exploratory studies (unpublished)
- 1ST: Qualitative study about the experience of 6 partners of PG (5 females), receiving 6 hours of treatment:
    - 2 hours individual therapy
    - 2 hours of group treatment
    - 2 hours of couple therapy
  - Conclusions:
    - They appreciated the three modalities
    - Group therapy illustrated the angriness of partners
    - Couple therapy was preferred
    - Gamblers were terrified by couple therapy before the 1st session but they asked for more after the two sessions

# Context



- 2nd: Pilote study, 5 therapists, 11 couples, developing the couple intervention
  - Some innovative research points to the potential of Couple treatment for gambling problems (Lee, 2002; Lee, 2009, 2014, 2015; Lee & Aosoga, 2015)
  - Inspired by the McCrady & Epstein Alcohol Behavioral Couple Therapy (ABCT), our team developed the Integrative Couple Treatment for Pathological Gambling (ICT-PG) (Tremblay et al. 2015)

# Integrative Couple Treatment for Pathological Gambling (ICT-PG)



## Treatment objectives

- Reduce or stop gambling-related behaviours.
- Reduce psychological distress and improve the well-being of both partners;
- Increase relationship satisfaction and mutual support between partners

## Clinical process

- ≈ 45-60 min. with gambler
  - Partner expresses her point of view, while maintaining the focus on the gambling behaviours
- ≈ 30-45 min. relationship aspects
  - Mutual positive reinforcement
  - Communication and negotiation skills
  - Partner's behaviours that facilitate gambling and those that reinforce its cessation.

| | Gambler | Partner | Couple |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 & 2 | • Hear the request<br>• Listen to what is expected from each person<br>• General objectives of sessions<br>• Verify recent gambling behaviour<br>• Stop draining money<br>• Rules/expectations from participants<br>• Feedback (evaluation, admission)<br>• Functional analysis of gambling behaviour or at-risk situations | • Hear the request<br>• What is expected from each person<br>• General objectives of sessions<br>• Feedback (evaluation, admission) | • Mutual reinforcement |
| 3 | • Clinical work related to gambling | | • Mutual reinforcement |
| 4 | • Clinical work related to gambling | | • Communication skills |
| 5 | • Clinical work related to gambling | | • Communication skills |
| 6 | • Clinical work related to gambling | • Stop reinforcement of gambling situations | |
| 7 | • Clinical work related to gambling | • Stop reinforcement of gambling situations | • Reinforcement of non-gambling situations |
| 8 | • Clinical work related to gambling<br>• Prevent relapse/at-risk situations | | • Reinforcement of non-gambling situations |
| 9 to 12 | Sessions 9 to 12 are merely an extension of previous sessions. The therapist spend more time on any given aspect. In real life clinic, the number of couple therapy sessions as been observed up to 40. | | |

# Each Session Outcome Monitoring

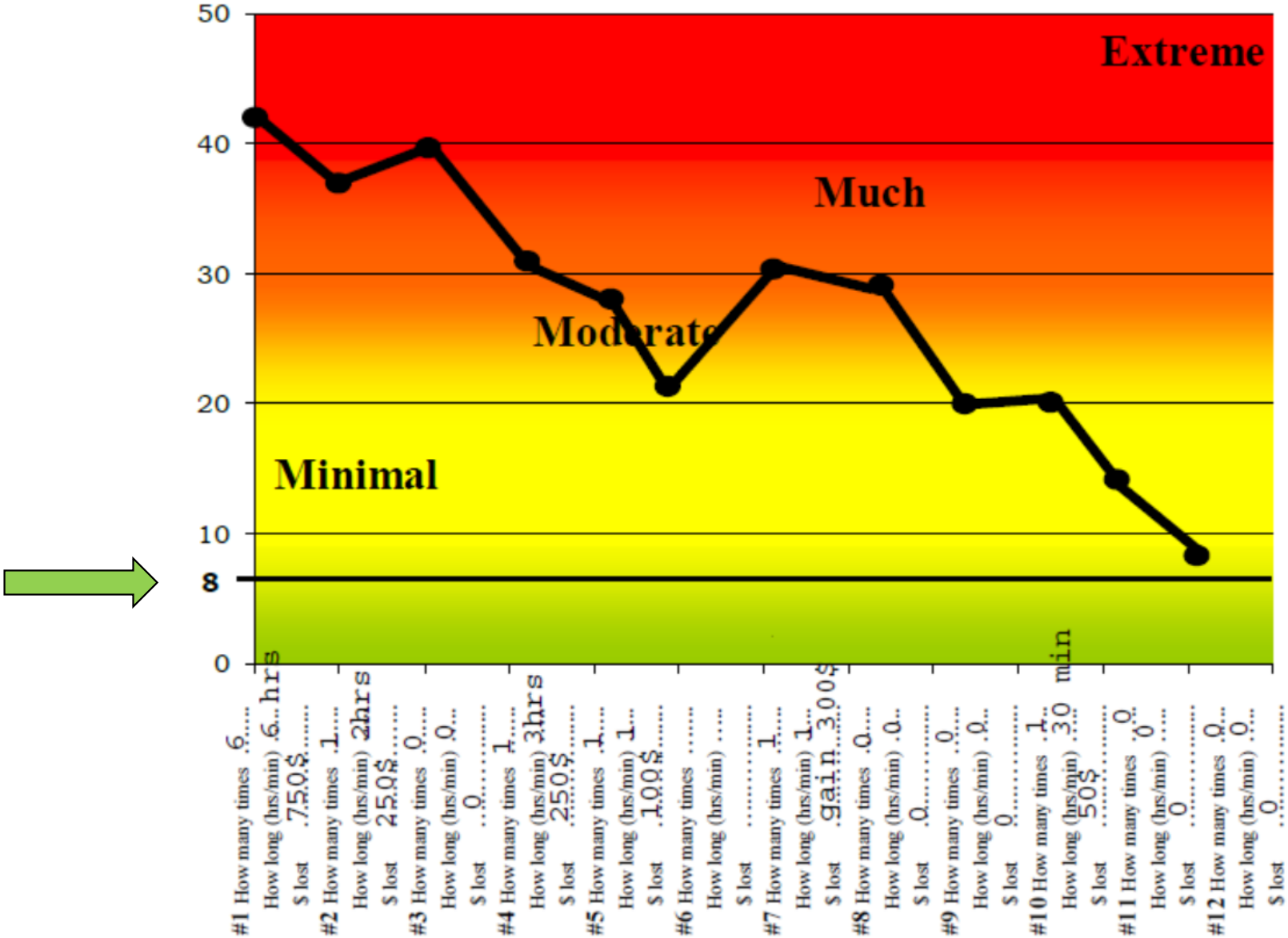


## Brief assessment each session

- Couple members answer questionnaires at the beginning of the session or in the waiting room (4 min.).
  - Gambling behaviours / last 7 days: Craving intensity, number of time, time spent, money lost
  - Psychological distress, / last 7 days
  - Relationship satisfaction / last 7 days
- Psychotherapist corrects and transposes scores on graphics
- Discussion with the couple about the results.

## Goals

- Motivation: Graphic representation of progresses
- Identify non-progressing individuals / couples
- Identify therapeutic alliance difficulties (relationship, goal, task; Bordin)


50
40
30
20
10
8
0
Extreme
Much
Moderate
Minimal
#1 How many times .6....
How long (hrs/min) .6...hrs
$ lost .750$.....
#2 How many times .1....
How long (hrs/min) .2hrs
$ lost .250$.....
#3 How many times .0....
How long (hrs/min) .0...
$ lost ..0.....
#4 How many times .1....
How long (hrs/min) .3hrs
$ lost .250$.....
#5 How many times .1....
How long (hrs/min) .1...
$ lost .100$.....
#6 How many times .....
How long (hrs/min) .....
$ lost .....
#7 How many times .1....
How long (hrs/min) .1...
$ lost .gain.300$.....
#8 How many times .0....
How long (hrs/min) .0...
$ lost .0.....
#9 How many times .0....
How long (hrs/min) .0...
$ lost 0.....
#10 How many times .1...
How long (hrs/min) .30 min
$ lost .....
#11 How many times .0...
How long (hrs/min) .....
$ lost 0.....
#12 How many times .0...
How long (hrs/min) .0...
$ lost 0.....

## Proportion of partners who used each strategy: Reinforcement of gambling behaviours



À traduire

| | % Often / Every day | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Individual Therapy | | | | Couple Therapy | | | |
| | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 |
| Paying acounts | 39 | 23 | 8 | 21 | 47 | 20 | 6 | 10 |
| Do not talk about gambling problems at friends | 33 | 23 | 12 | 21 | 41 | 22 | 14 | 10 |
| Hide gambling habits to family | 31 | 20 | 15 | 7 | 48 | 33 | 17 | 14 |
| Listen and reassure gambler after a big lost | 22 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 26 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Reimburse debts of gamblers | 17 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Provide money to the gambler for gambling habits | 6 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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# Integrative Couple Treatment for Pathological Gambling / ICT-PG : Description of the Therapeutic Process

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with the support of his partner. The treatment aims to eliminate those behaviours in the couple that might facilitate gambling and to reinforce behaviours that support the cessation of gambling. Another goal of the ICT-PG is for the couple to learn better skills for communication, conflict resolution, and mutual reinforcement, always with the objective of facilitating the reduction and cessation of gambling habits. This paper is a description of the therapeutic process of the ICT-PG.

Le jeu compulsif peut avoir de profondes conséquences sur la vie d'une personne, des conséquences qui vont de l'ordre financier, psychologique à relationnel et qui affectent, en particulier les relations de couple. Malgré que

# METHOD

# Recruitment



- Participants recruited in nine Addiction Specialized Treatment Centers (Quebec province, Canada)

- Recruitment period: 47 months
  - March 2011 to April 2013
  - October 2014 to June 2016

## Assessed for eligibility (*n* = 98 couples)

**Excluded (*n* = 18 couples)**

- 4 couples – Low commitment towards relathionship
- 3 couples – Severe violence – 12 last months
- 3 couples – Problematic substance use – gambler
- 2 couples – Gambling habits at low risk – gambler
- 2 couples – Mental health problems (serious and unstable) – partner
- 1 couple – Problematic alcohol use – gambler
- 1 couple – Problematic gambling habits – partner (DSM-V diagnosis of GUD)
- 1 couple – Cohabitation < 1 year
- 1 couple – Refused orientation

## Participants randomized (*n* = 80 couples)

| Individual treatment (*n* = 36) | ICT-PG (*n* = 44) |
|---|---|
| *Potential follow-ups: 72 individuals*<br>3 months post-admission, *n* = 60 (83.3%)<br>9 months post-admission, *n* = 53 (73.6%)<br>18 months post-admission, *n* = 42 (58.3%) | *Potential follow-ups: 88 individuals*<br>3 months post-admission, *n* = 82 (93.2%)<br>9 months post-admission , *n* = 76 (86.4%)<br>18 months post-admission , *n* = 70 (79.5%) |
| Total follow-ups<br>155/216 (71.7%) | Total follow-ups<br>228/264 (86.3%) |

# Equivalence of groups on stratification criteria

| | Individual % (n) | ICT-PG % (n) | p values – $\chi^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Male** | 80,6 % (29) | 70,5 % (31) | n.s. |
| **Mental health problems** | 77,8 % (28) | 72,75 % (32) | n.s. |
| **At-Risk Gambling – Partner** | 0 % (0) | 6,8 % (3) | n.s. |
| **At-Risk Alcohol Use – Gambler** | 16,7 % (6) | 20,5 % (9) | n.s. |

| | Individual treatment | | ICT-PG | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Gamblers % (n)** | **Partners % (n)** | **Gamblers (n)** | **Partners (n)** |
| **Age** | *M* = 40.8 (SD = 12.3) | *M* = 39.6 (SD = 13.8) | *M* = 42.2 (SD = 13.5) | *M* = 42.2 (SD = 13.4) |
| 20-29 | 22.2 (8) | 36.1 (13) | 22.7 (10) | 20.5 (9) |
| 30-39 | 27.8 (10) | 13.9 (5) | 22.7 (10) | 22.7 (10) |
| 40-49 | 25.2 (9) | 25.2 (9) | 27.2 (12) | 29.5 (13) |
| 50-59 | 16.6 (6) | 16.6 (6) | 15.9 (7) | 18.2 (8) |
| 60 + | 8.3 (3) | 8.3 (3) | 11.4 (5) | 9.1 (4) |
| **Individual Annual Income** | | | | |
| Under of $25 000 | 27.8 (10) | 36.1 (13) | 14 (31.8) | 34.1 (15) |
| $25 001 – $60 000 | 47.3 (17) | 47.2 (17) | 19 (43.2) | 45.5 (20) |
| $60 001 - $100 000 | 22.2 (8) | 11.1 (4) | 9 (20.5) | 15.9 (7) |
| $100 000 and over | - | - | 1 (2.3) | 4.5 (2) |
| Missing | 2.8 (1) | 5.6 (2) | 1 (2.3) | - |
| **Couple Annual Income as reported by the gambler** | | | | |
| Under of $25 000 | 13.9 (5) | | 6.8 (3) | |
| $25 001 – $60 000 | 33.3 (12) | | 36.4 (16) | |
| $60 001 - $100 000 | 36.1 (13) | | 29.5 (13) | |
| $100 000 and over | 13.9 (5) | | 25.0 (11) | |
| Missing | 2.8 (1)) | | 2.3 (1) | |

**Chi square test & T-test = n.s.**

## Types of services gamblers received (Period covered: Admission to 18 months)

| Type of service | Individual (*n* = 36)<br>*M* (SD)<br>*n with 0 sessions (%)* | ICT-PG (*n* = 44)<br>*M* (SD)<br>*n with 0 sessions (%)* | Total (*n* = 80)<br>*M* (SD)<br>*Min – Max* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Individual | 8.14 (6.6)<br>1 (2.8%) | 0.93 (2.1)<br>32 (72.7%) | 4.18 (5.9)<br>1 – 24 |
| Couple | 1.14 (2.9)<br>25 (69.4%) | 10.02 (6.1)<br>2 (4.5%) | 6.03 (6.6)<br>0 – 37 |
| Group | 0.94 (2.9)<br>32 (88.9%) | 0.00 (0.00)<br>44 (100%) | 0.43 (2.0)<br>3 – 13 |
| Total (ind. + couple + gr.) | 10.22 (8.4)<br>0 | 10,91 (6.8)<br>1 (2.3%) | 10.60 (7.5)<br>1 - 37 |
| Phone Intervention | 1.42 (2.5)<br>21 (58.3%) | 0,70 (1.4)<br>30 (68.2%) | 1.03 (2.0)<br>1 - 12 |
| No Show at a session | 1.64 (2.8)<br>19 (52.8%) | 1.61 (2.5)<br>27 (61.4%) | 1.63 (2.6)<br>1 – 11 |

30% received a few couple sessions

27% received a few ind. sessions

=

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*; P<0,10£

# Types of services partners received (Period covered: Admission to 18 months)

| Type of service = | Individual (*n* = 36)<br>*M* (SD)<br>*n with 0 sessions (%)* | ICT-PG (*n* = 44)<br>*M* (SD)<br>*n with 0 sessions (%)* | Total (*n* = 80)<br>*M* (SD)<br>*Min – Max* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Individual & Evaluation | 0.64 (2.1)<br>27 (75.0%) | 0.64 (3.0)<br>36 (81.8%) | 0.64 (2.6)<br>1 - 20 |
| Couple | 1.14 (2.9)<br>25 (69.4%) | 10.05 (6.1)<br>2 (4.5%) | 6.04 (6.6)<br>0 – 37 |
| Group | 0.83 (2.3)<br>31 (86.1%) | 0.20 (1.4)<br>43 (97.7%) | 0.49 (1.9)<br>3 – 10 |
| Total (ind. + couple + gr.) | 2.61 (5.3)<br>16 (44.4%) | 10.9 (7.3)<br>2 (4.5%) | 7.16 (7.7)<br>1 – 37 |
| Phone Intervention | 0.17 (0.6)<br>33 (91.7%) | 0.55 (1.5)<br>34 (77.3%) | 0.38 (1.2)<br>1 - 8 |
| No Show at a session | 0.19 (0.5)<br>30 (83.3%) | 1.27 (2.1)<br>28 (63.6%) | 0.79 (1.7)<br>1 – 7 |

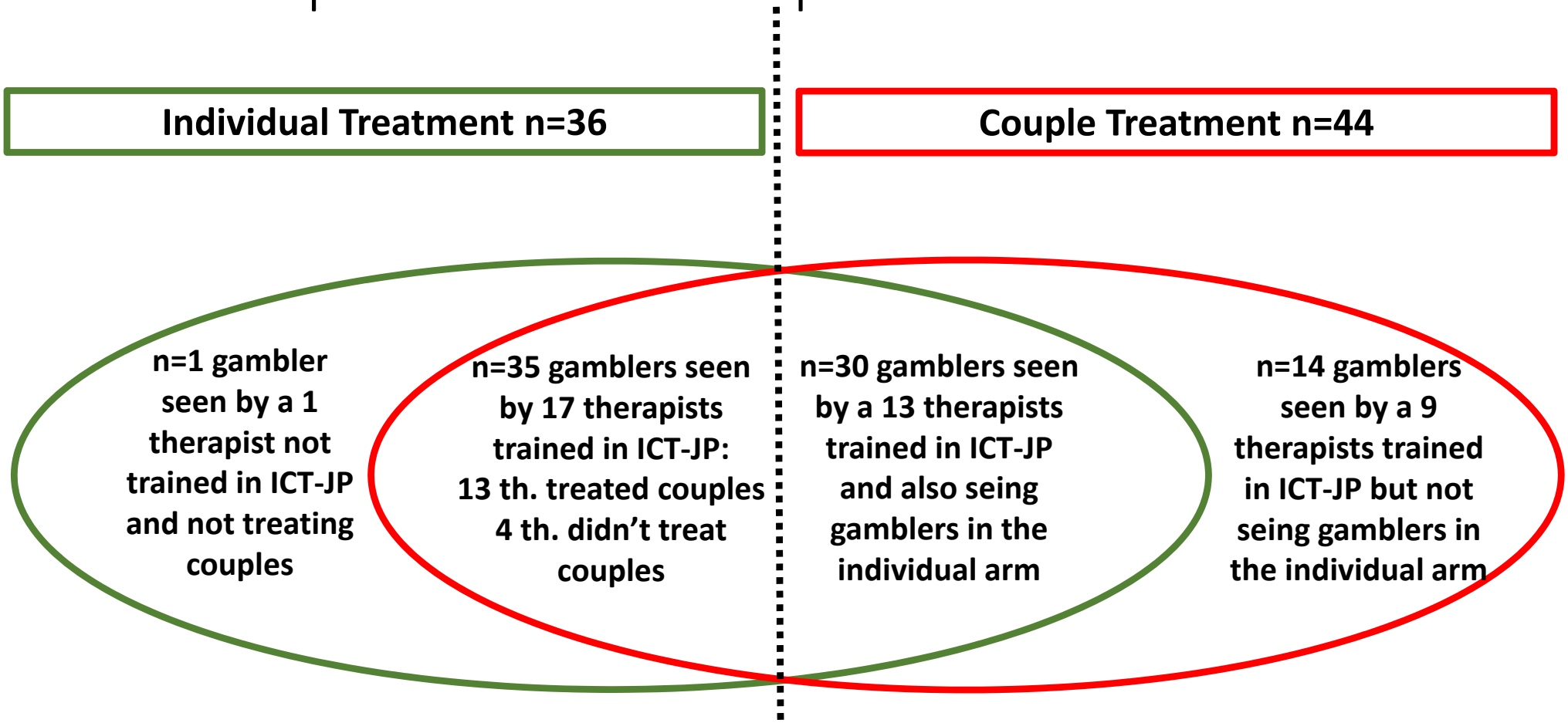
18% received a few ind. sessions

≠

56% received no services

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*; P<0,10£

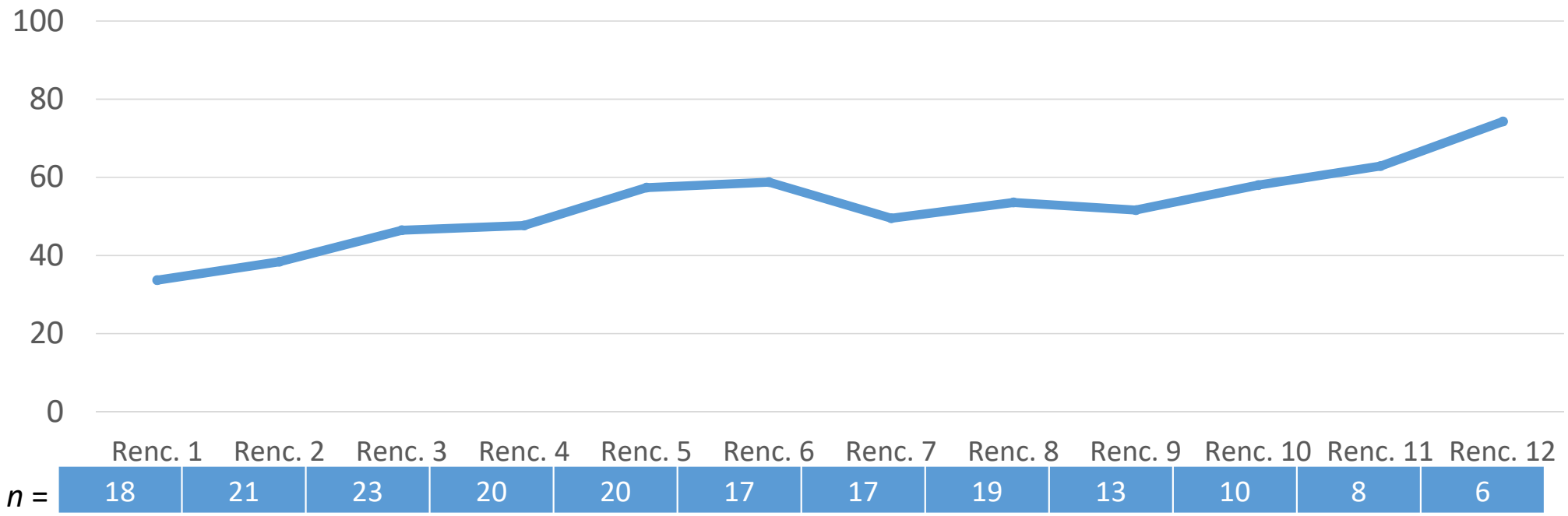
# Equivalence of groups / Gambling Treatment
# All therapists trained in Improved Ladouceur model



# Conformity of Couple Treatment

- 39 therapists (psychologists, social workers, psychoeducaters, counsellors)
- 2.5 days of training
- 310 hours of clinical supervision revising videos
  - Once a month
  - 3 hours
  - 6 groups
  - During two phases of 18 months
- Supervisors
  - 4 researchers who are also clinical psychologists

# % time devoted to couple aspects of treatment



# Aspects of Couple Treatment Addressed by Therapists



| | | Number of sessions where this topic was addressed *M* (SD) | Number of therapists who addressed this topic (*n* = 37) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mutual Reinforcement | 4,26 (2,26) | 89,2% (33) |
| 2 | Communication Training | 6,09 (3,35) | 89,2% (33) |
| 3 | Problem Solving Training | 2,82 (2,91) | 75,7% (28) |
| 4 | Partner Strategies Enabling Gambling | 2,26 (1,81) | 73,0% (27) |
| 5 | Partner's Strategies Favouring Sobriety | 0,88 (1,15) | 46,0% (17) |

# Assessment



***Gambling habits***

- Only for the gamblers:
  - Gambling Symptom Assessment Scale (G-SAS) (Kim, Grant, Potenza, Blanco, & Hollander, 2009), last 7 days;
  - Impaired Control Over Gambling (ICOG), (Baron & Dickerson, 1994), last 3 months;
  - Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) (Ferris & Wynne, 2001), last 3 months;
  - Detection of the Need for Help Gambling (DÉBA-Jeu), (Tremblay & Blanchette-Martin, 2009), last 3 months;
- For the gamblers and their partner:
  - Gambling related beliefs inventory (Ladouceur, Jacques, Giroux, & Sévigny, 2004).

***Couple functionning*** (for the gamblers and their partner):

- Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-4), (Sabourin, Valois, & Lussier, 2005), last 3 months;
- Marital Status Inventory (MSI), (Weiss & Cerreto, 1980), last 3 months;
- Couples Support Questionnaire, (Brassard, Houde, & Lussier, 2011), last 3 months;
- Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory Self-Spouse, (Boyd & Roach, 1977), last 3 months;
- Marital Problem Solving Scale (MPSS), (Baugh, Avery, & Sheets-Haworth, 1982), last 3 months.

***Individual*** (for the gamblers and their partner):

- Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D), (Radloff, 1977), last 7 days;
- Psychiatric symptom index, (Ilfeld, 1976), last 7 days.

# RESULTS

# Number of persons at each follow-up



| Gamblers | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Individual<br>*n* | ICT-PG<br>*n* |
| **T1**<br>**Admission** | 36 | 44 |
| **T2**<br>**3 months** | 30 | 41 |
| **T3**<br>**10 months** | 26 | 38 |
| **T4**<br>**22 months** | 22 | 35 |

| Partners | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Individual<br>*n* | ICT-PG<br>*n* |
| **T1**<br>**Admission** | 36 | 44 |
| **T2**<br>**3 months** | 30 | 41 |
| **T3**<br>**10 months** | 27 | 38 |
| **T4**<br>**22 months** | 20 | 35 |

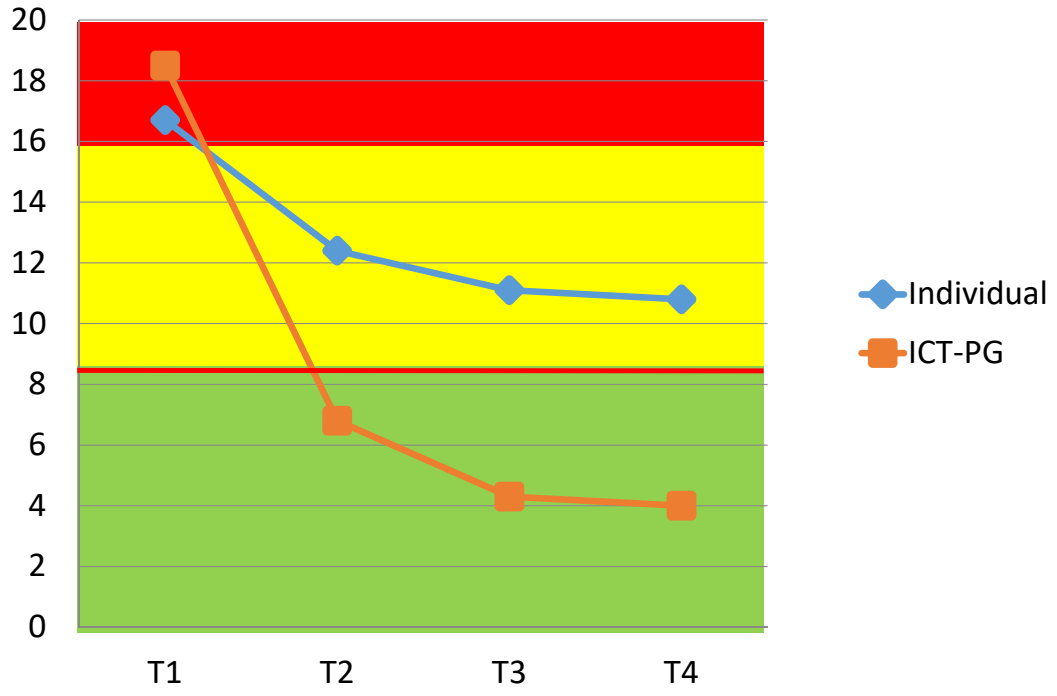
# Gambling habits

# Gambling Symptom Assessment Scale (G-SAS)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 16,66 (1,20)[abc] | 18,52 (1,08)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 12,39 (1,31)[a] | 6,85 (1,14)[a] | ** |
| **T3** | 11,08 (1,44)[b] | 4,30 (1,17)[b] | *** |
| **T4** | 10,80 (1,53)[c] | 4,01 (1,21)[c] | *** |
| **Tot** | 13,17 | 8,77 | **** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



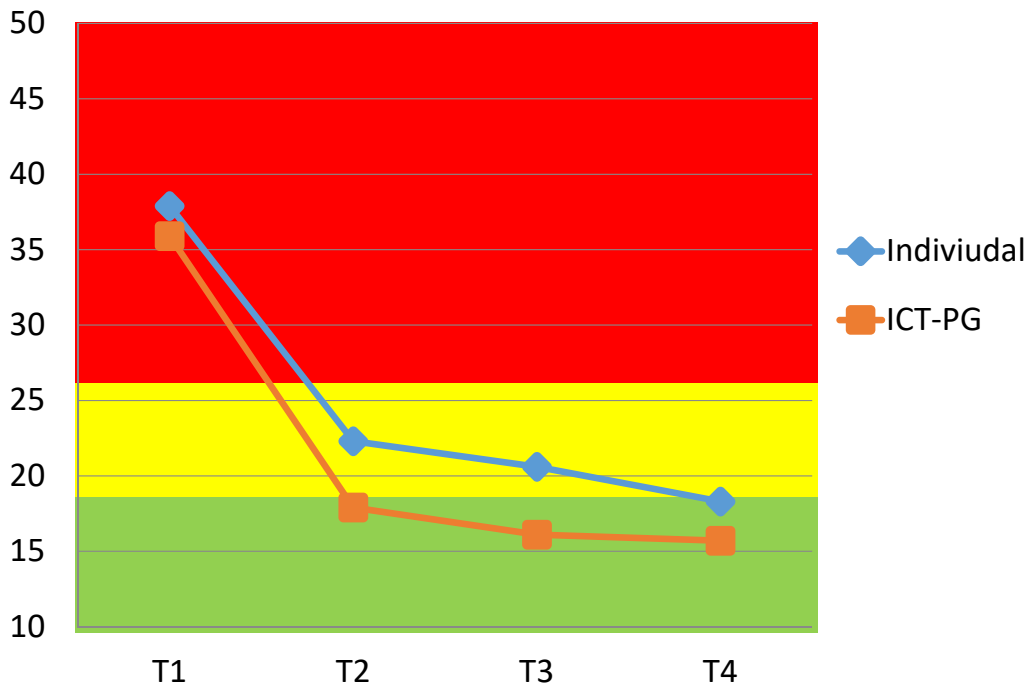

(Kim, Grant, Potenza, Blanco, & Hollander, 2009)

# Impaired control over gambling (ICOG)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 37,92 (1,44)[abc] | 35,95 (1,29)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 22,31 (1,58)[a] | 17,89 (1,34)[a] | * |
| **T3** | 20,59 (1,69)[b] | 16,11 (1,41)[b] | * |
| **T4** | 18,26 (1,86)[c] | 15,69 (1,45)[c] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 25,89 | 21,85 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



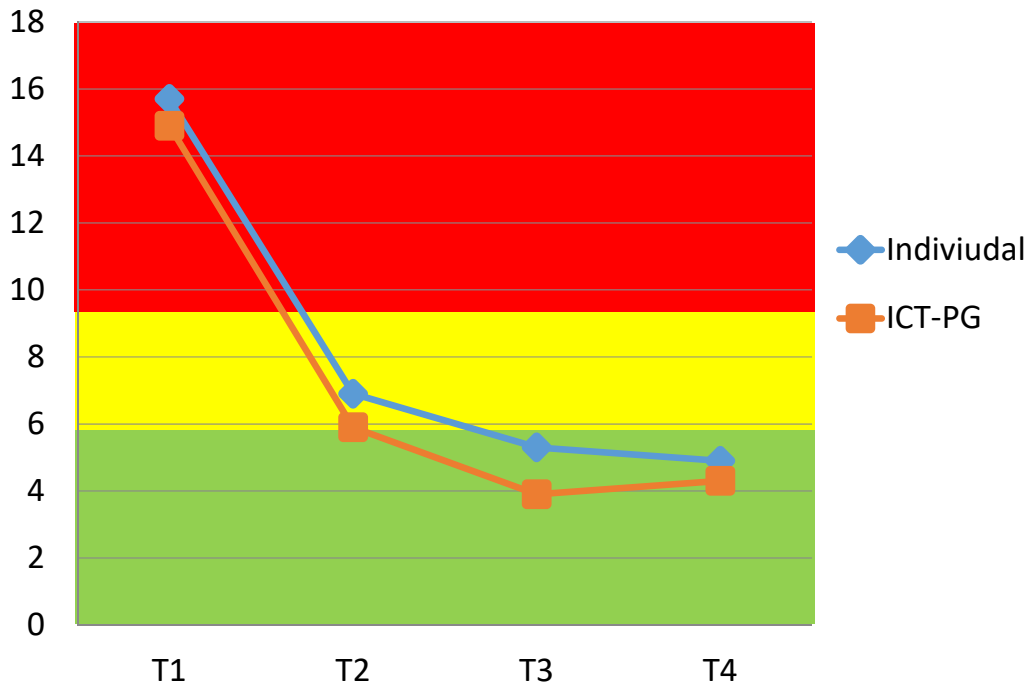

(Baron & Dickerson, 1994)

# Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 15,68 (0,82)[abc] | 14,85 (0,74)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 6,97 (0,89)[a] | 5,86 (0,77)[a] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 5,31 (0,97)[b] | 3,98 (0,80)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 4,91 (1,08)[c] | 4,26 (0,83)[c] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 8,91 | 7,43 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



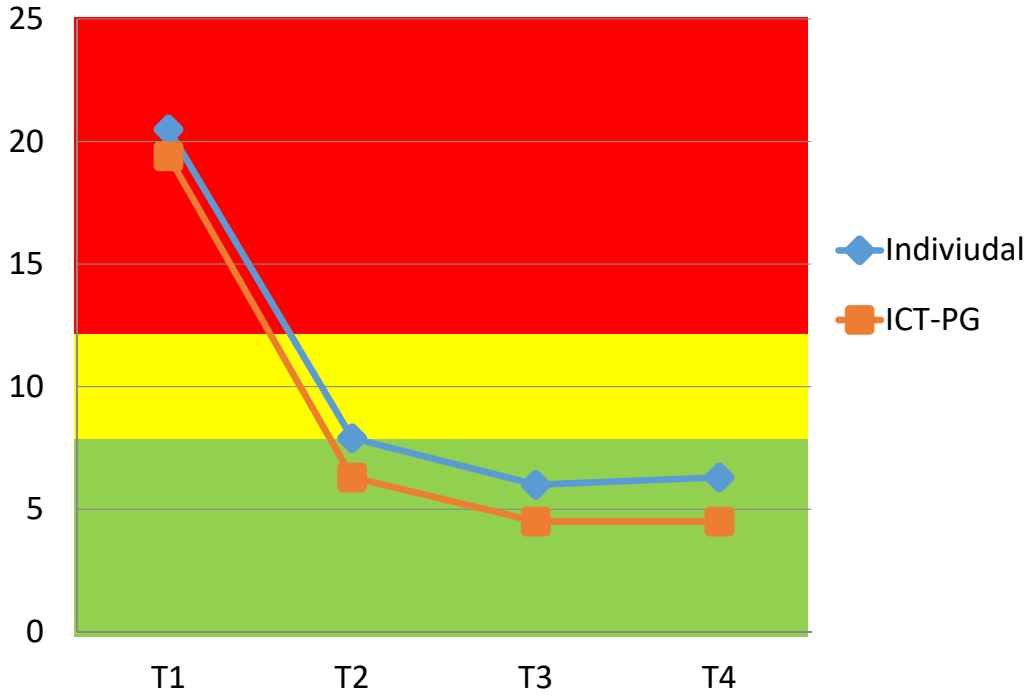

(Ferris & Wynne, 2001)

# Detection of the Need for Help Gambling (DÉBA-Jeu)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 20,45 (0,97)[abc] | 19,41 (0,88)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 7,90 (1,07)[a] | 6,29 (0,90)[a] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 6,01 (1,14)[b] | 4,47 (0,95)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 6,26 (1,27)[c] | 4,47 (0,98)[c] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 11,15 | 8,86 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



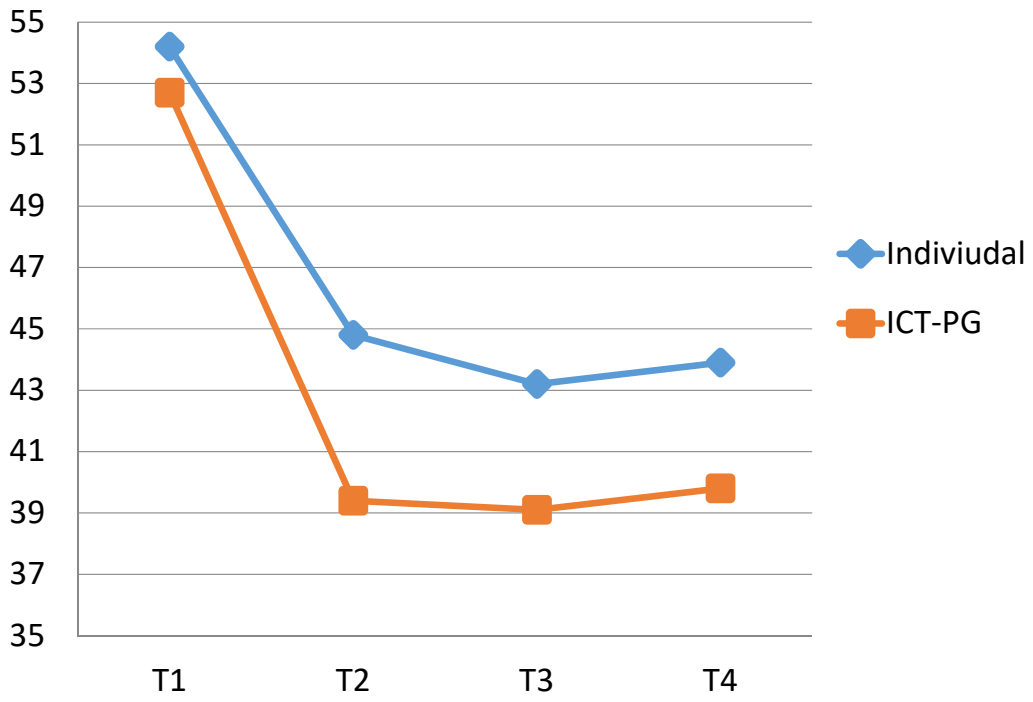

(Tremblay, Ménard, Ferland et Blanchette-Martin, 2005)

# Gambling related beliefs inventory - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 54,23 (1,53)[abc] | 52,67 (1,38)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 44,78 (1,67)[a] | 39,44 (1,44)[a] | * |
| **T3** | 43,26 (1,79)[b] | 39,11 (1,48)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 43,86 (1,94)[c] | 39,80 (1,56)[c] | * |
| **Tot** | 47,18 | 43,00 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



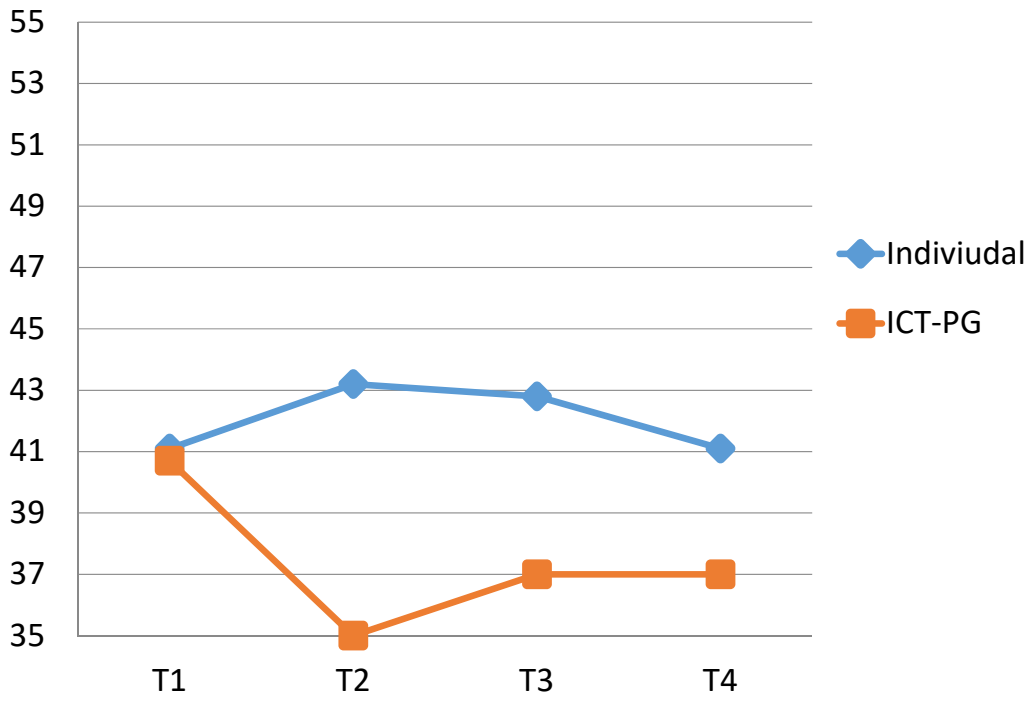

(Ladouceur, Jacques, Giroux, & Sévigny, 2004)

# Gambling related beliefs inventory - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 41,05 (1,08)[ab] | 40,74 (0,98)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 43,22 (1,12)[a] | 35,03 (0,99)[ade] | **** |
| **T3** | 42,84 (1,13)[bc] | 37,12 (1,01)[bd] | *** |
| **T4** | 41,08 (1,19)[c] | 37,38 (1,02)[ce] | * |
| **Tot** | 41,98 | 37,78 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*




(Ladouceur, Jacques, Giroux, & Sévigny, 2004)

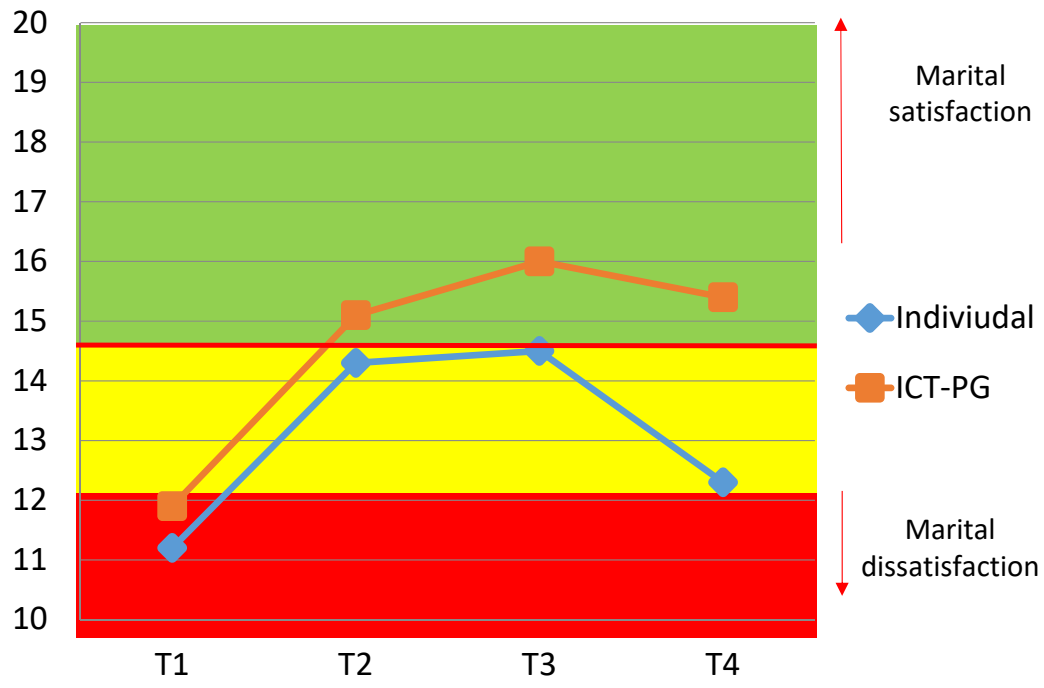
# Couple

# Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-4) - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 11,20 (0,53)[ab] | 11,96 (0,48)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 14,29 (0,58)[ac] | 15,09 (0,49)[a] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 14,49 (0,61)[bd] | 16,08 (0,51)[b] | * |
| **T4** | 12,30 (0,70)[cd] | 15,43 (0,55)[c] | *** |
| **Tot** | 12,96 | 14,52 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



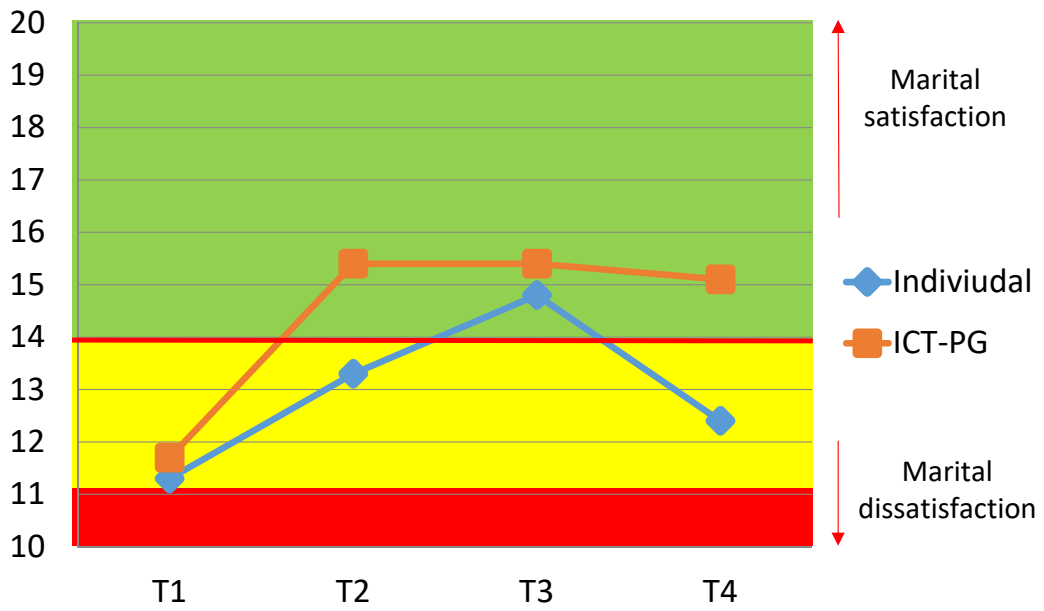

(Sabourin, Valois et Lussier, 2005)

# Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-4) - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 11,29 (0,35)[abc] | 11,67 (0,32)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 13,28 (0,37)[ad] | 15,42 (0,32)[a] | **** |
| **T3** | 14,76 (0,38)[bde] | 15,35 (0,34)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 12,38 (0,41)[ce] | 15,05 (0,35)[c] | **** |
| **Tot** | 12,74 | 14,16 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



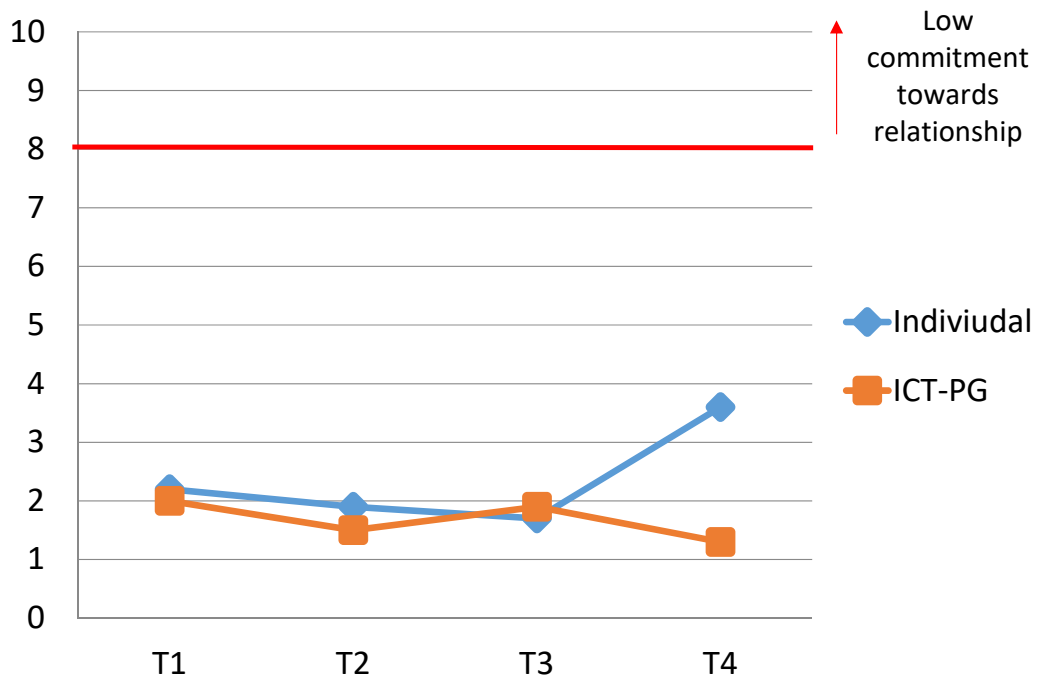

(Sabourin, Valois et Lussier, 2005)

# Marital Status Inventory (MSI) - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 2,18 (0,28)[a] | 2,02 (0,25)[a] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 1,91 (0,30)[b] | 1,48 (0,26) | n.s. |
| **T3** | 1,65 (0,32)[c] | 1,90 (0,27) | n.s. |
| **T4** | 3,63 (0,38)[abc] | 1,27 (0,30)[a] | **** |
| **Tot** | 2,22 | 1,70 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



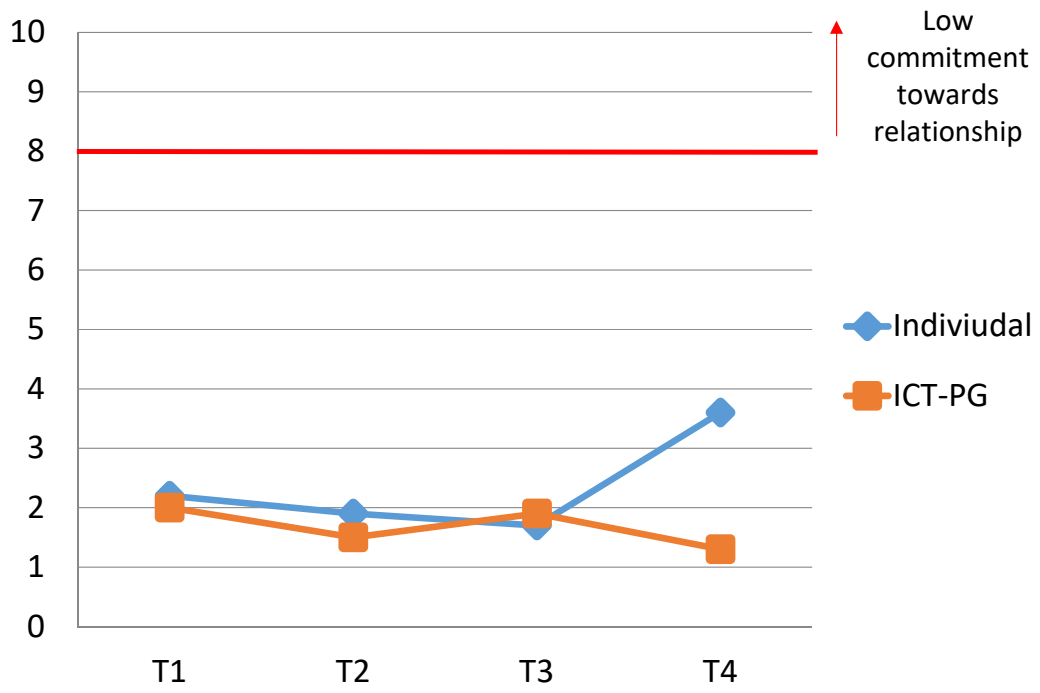

(Weiss et Cerreto, 1980)

# Marital Status Inventory (MSI) - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 4,10 (0,26)[abc] | 4,14 (0,23)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 3,59 (0,27)[ad] | 2,19 (0,24)[a] | *** |
| **T3** | 2,15 (0,28)[bde] | 2,26 (0,24)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 3,33 (0,31)[ce] | 2,17 (0,25)[c] | ** |
| **Tot** | 3,42 | 2,81 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



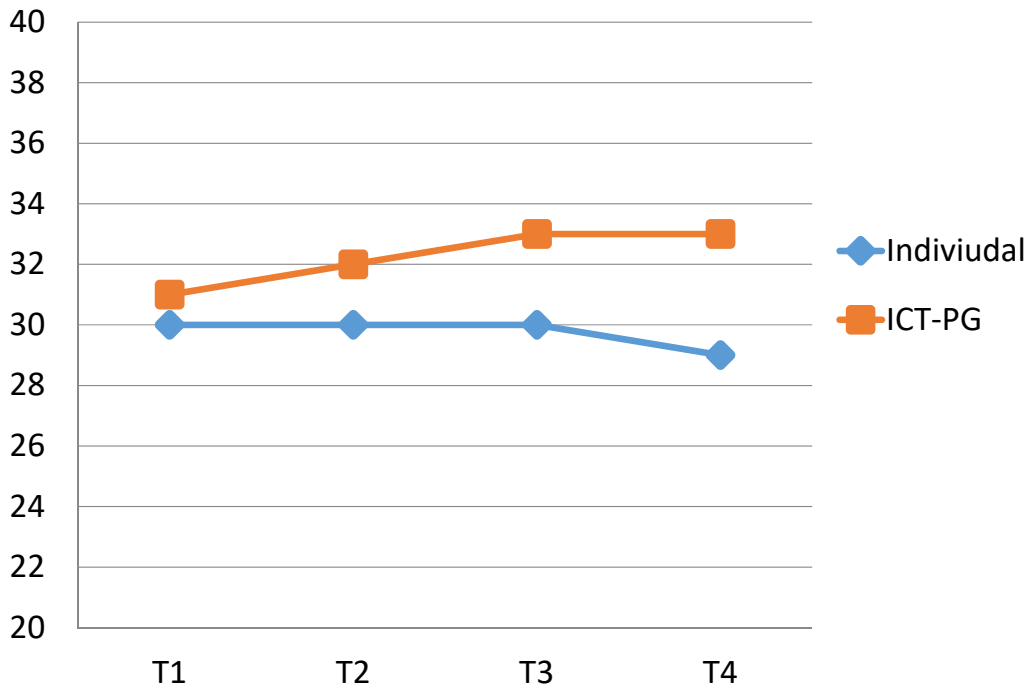

(Weiss et Cerreto, 1980)

# Mutual Support Questionnaire - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 30,68 (0,51) | 31,10 (0,46)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 30,77 (0,56) | 32,65 (0,48)[a] | ** |
| **T3** | 30,64 (0,59) | 33,30 (0,49)[b] | *** |
| **T4** | 29,66 (0,67) | 33,67 (0,54)[c] | **** |
| **Tot** | 30,51 | 32,56 | **** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



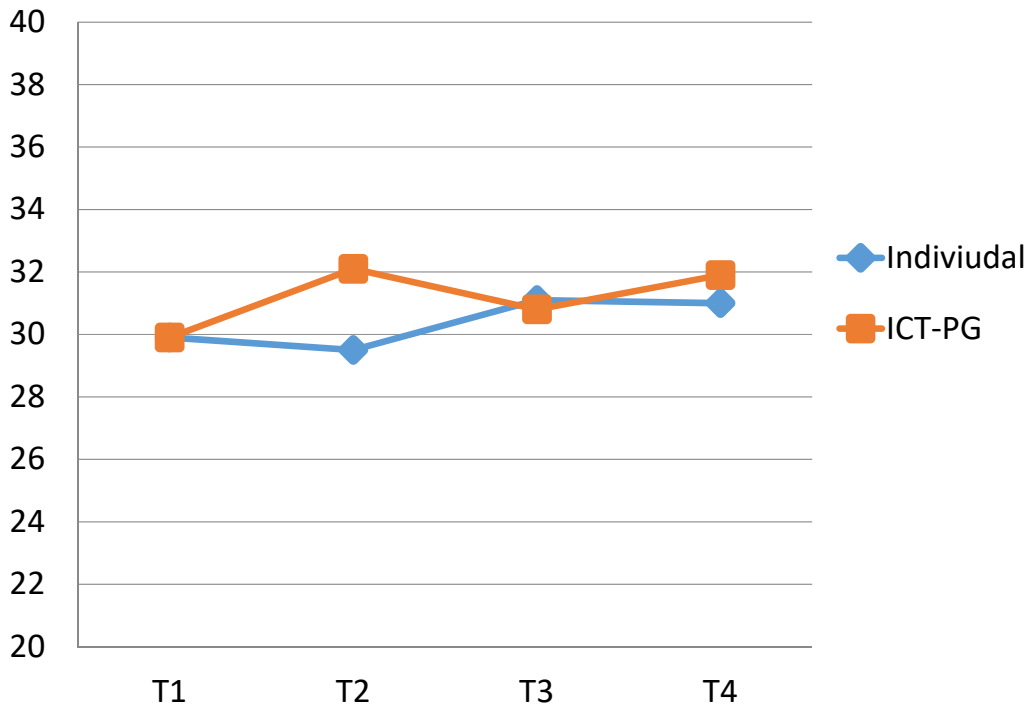

(Brassard & Lussier, 2004)

# Mutual Support Questionnaire - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 29,90 (0,51)[ab] | 29,93 (0,46)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 29,46 (0,53)[cd] | 32,05 (0,47)[ad] | *** |
| **T3** | 31,09 (0,54)[ac] | 30,83 (0,47)[bde] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 30,99 (0,58)[bd] | 31,85 (0,49)[ce] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 30,21 | 31,05 | n.s. |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



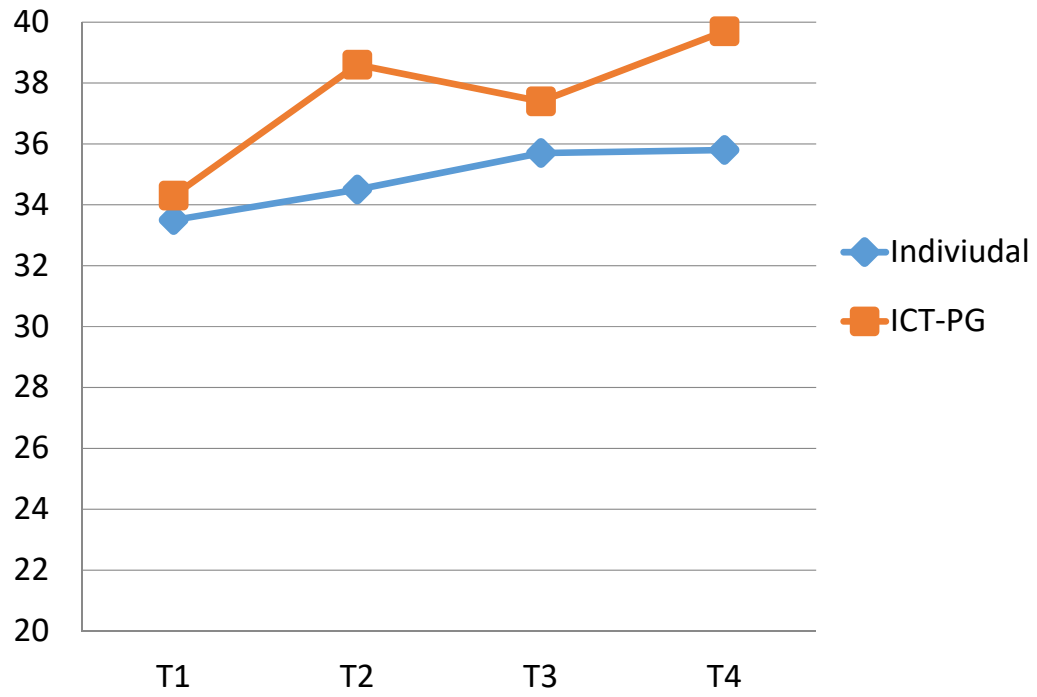

(Brassard & Lussier, 2004)

# Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory Gamblers (oneself evaluation)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 33,48 (1,00) | 34,34 (0,90)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 34,48 (1,09) | 38,57 (0,94)[a] | ** |
| **T3** | 35,66 (1,17) | 37,41 (0,97)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 35,86 (1,32) | 39,68 (1,06)[c] | * |
| **Tot** | 34,63 | 37,25 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



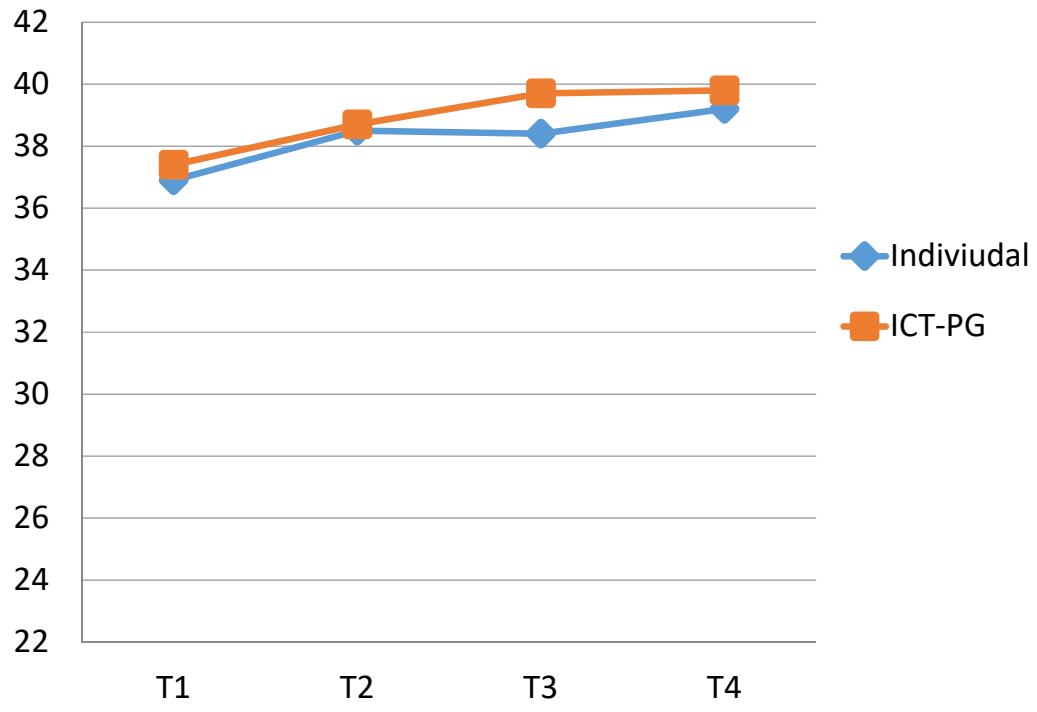

(Boyd & Roach, 1977)

# Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory Partners (oneself evaluation)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 36,99 (0,58)[abc] | 37,39 (0,53)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 38,45 (0,61)[a] | 38,69 (0,54)[ade] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 38,42 (0,62)[b] | 39,73 (0,54)[bd] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 39,24 (0,67)[c] | 39,82 (0,57)[ce] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 37,99 | 38,74 | n.s. |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



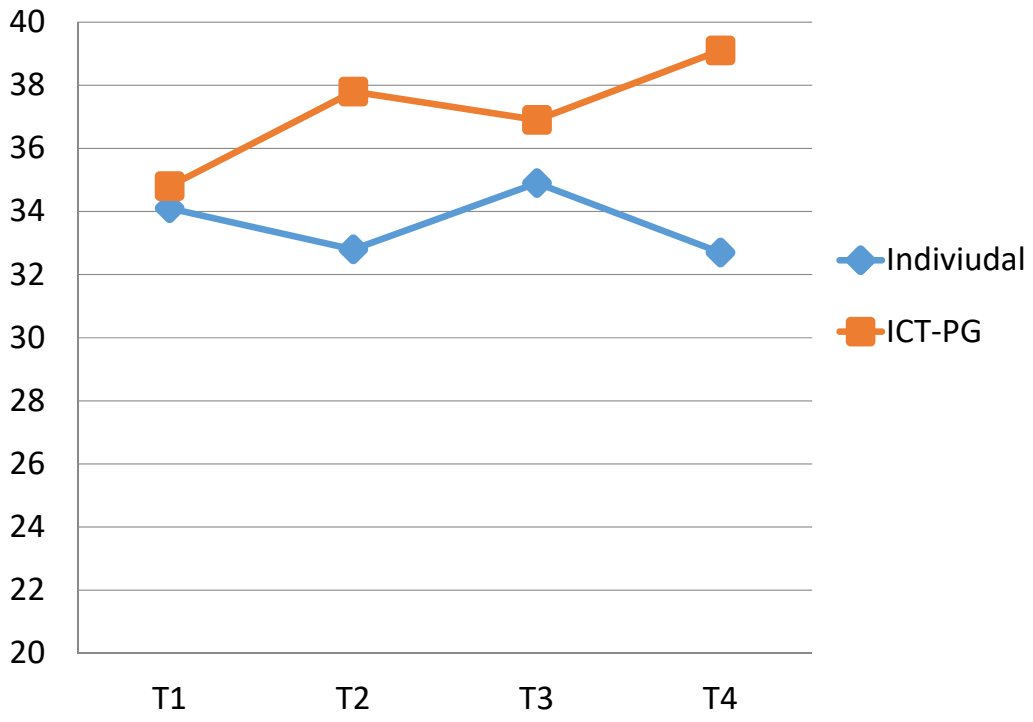

(Boyd & Roach, 1977)

# Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory Gamblers (partner evaluation)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 34,11 (1,19) | 34,81 (1,05)[ab] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 32,84 (1,29) | 37,80 (1,11)[a] | ** |
| **T3** | 34,97 (1,38) | 36,89 (1,14) | n.s. |
| **T4** | 32,68 (1,63) | 39,06 (1,21)[b] | ** |
| **Tot** | 33,74 | 36,94 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



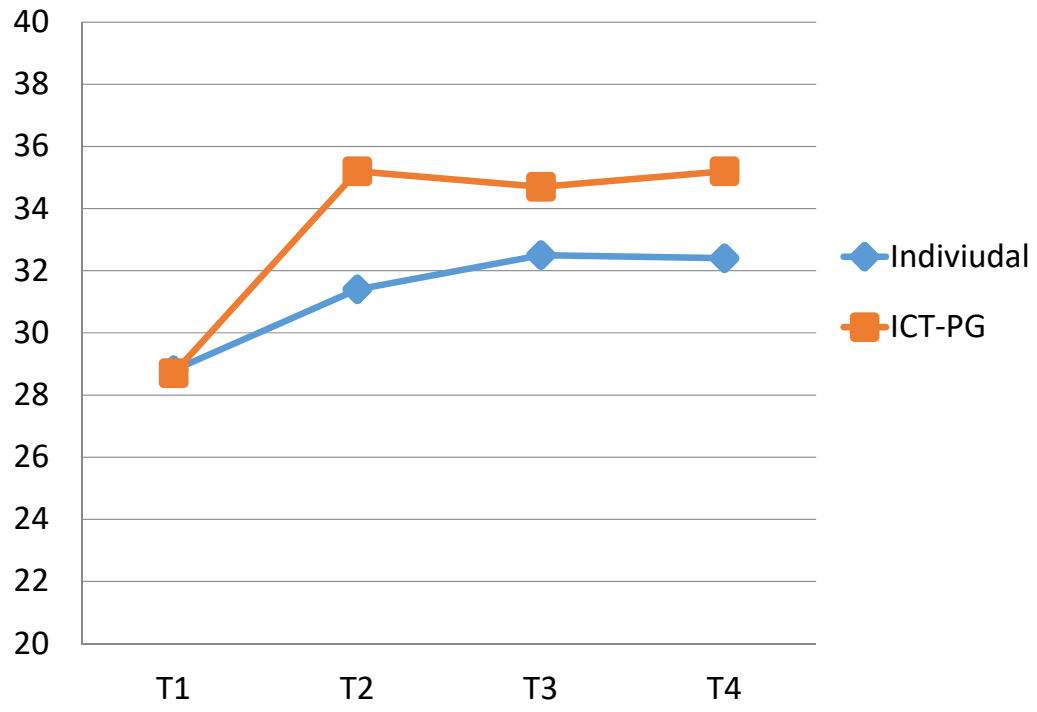

(Boyd & Roach, 1977)

# Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory Partners (Gambler evaluation)



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 28,76 (0,80)[abc] | 28,69 (0,72)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 31,36 (0,82)[a] | 35,22 (0,73)[a] | *** |
| **T3** | 32,50 (0,84)[b] | 34,65 (0,75)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 32,43 (0,90)[c] | 35,15 (0,78)[c] | * |
| **Tot** | 30,84 | 32,93 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



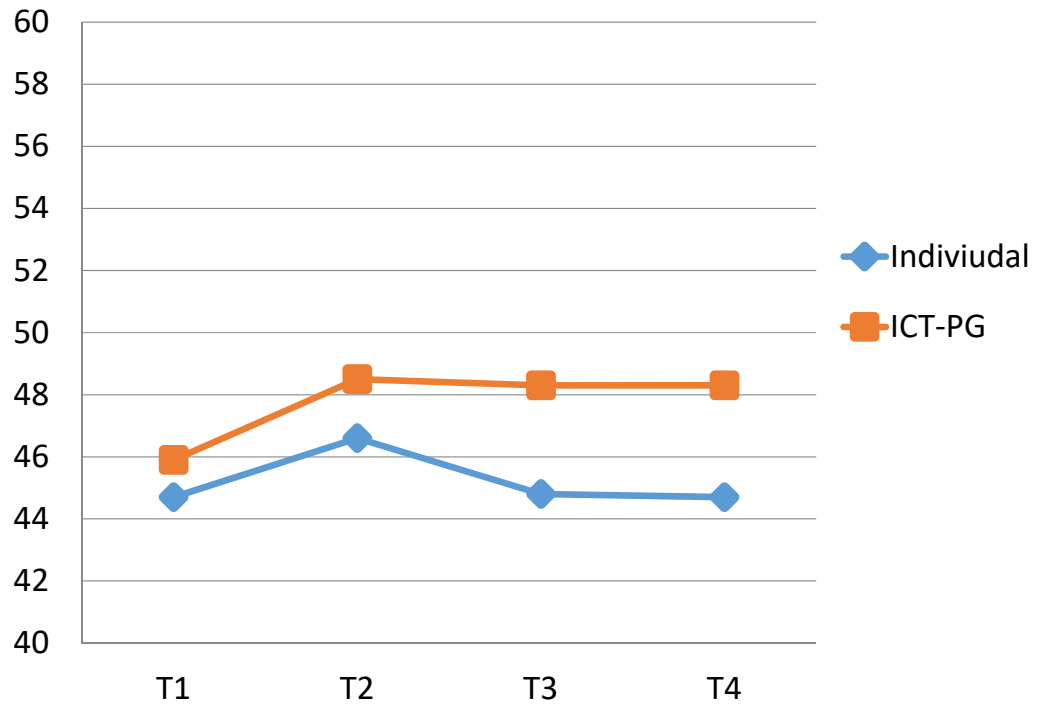

(Boyd & Roach, 1977)

# Marital Problem Solving Scale (MPSS) - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 44,67 (1,05) | 45,95 (0,95)[a] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 46,63 (1,15) | 48,53 (0,98)[a] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 44,75 (1,23) | 48,30 (1,02) | * |
| **T4** | 44,70 (1,40) | 48,29 (1,12) | * |
| **Tot** | 45,21 | 47,68 | ** |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



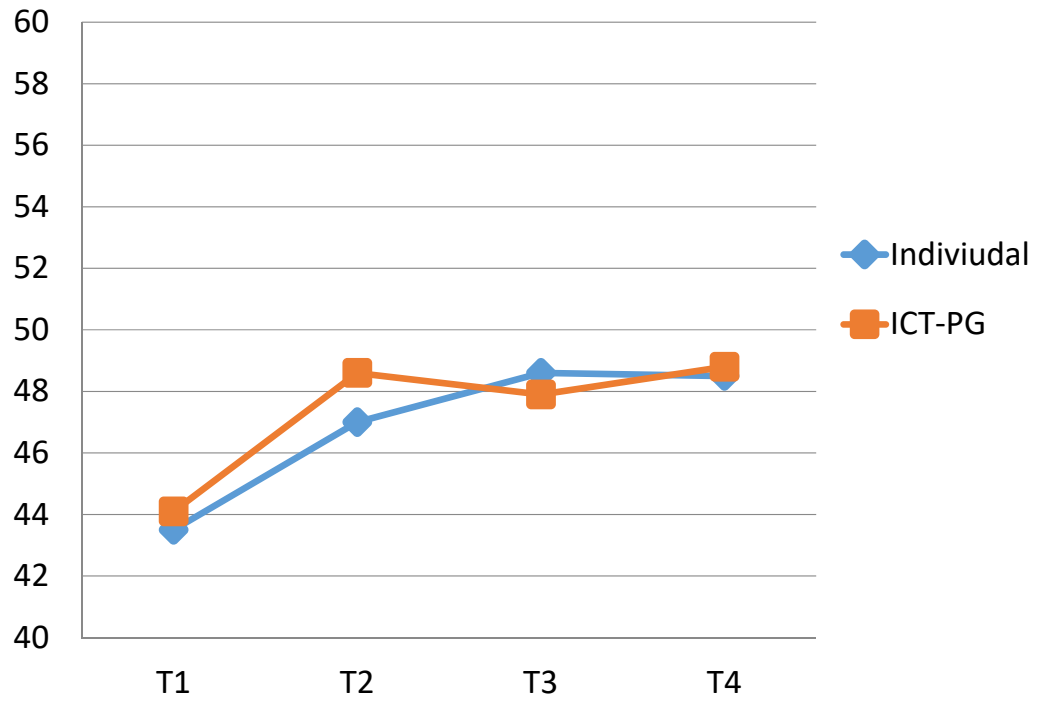

(Baugh, Avery, & Sheets-Haworth, 1982)

# Marital Problem Solving Scale (MPSS) - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 43,53 (0,74)[abc] | 44,14 (0,67)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 47,02 (0,77)[ade] | 48,58 (0,68)[a] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 48,62 (0,80)[bd] | 47,90 (0,69)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 48,54 (0,88)[ce] | 48,75 (0,73)[c] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 45,21 | 47,06 | n.s. |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*




(Baugh, Avery, & Sheets-Haworth, 1982)

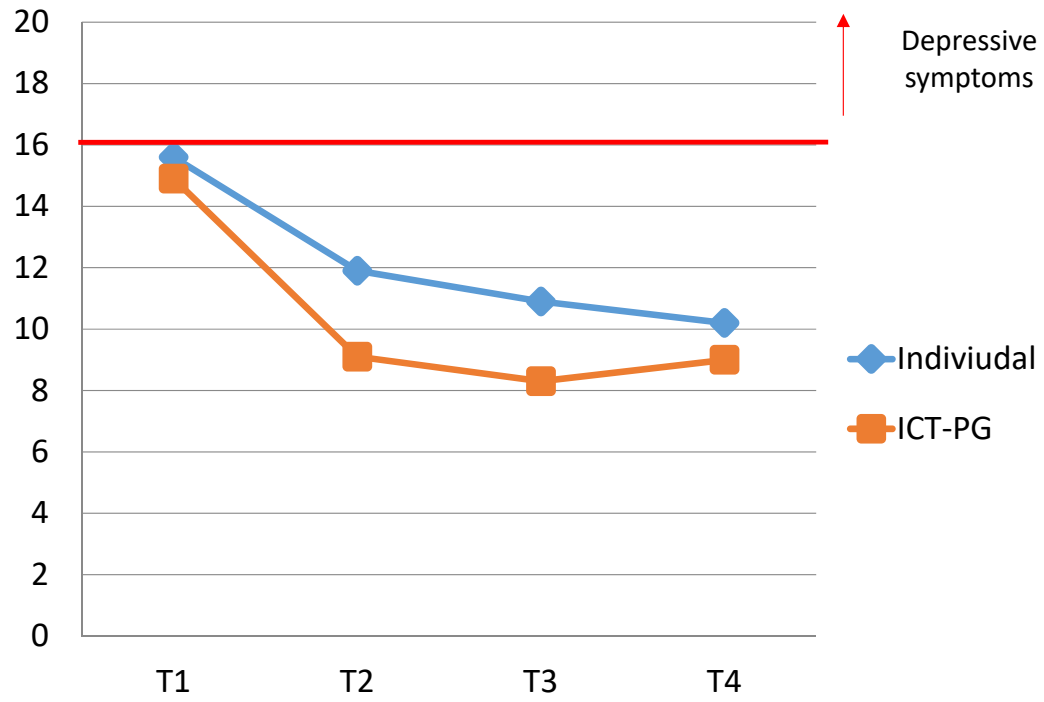
# Personnal

# Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D) - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 15,56 (1,14)[abc] | 14,88 (1,03)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 11,86 (1,24)[a] | 9,08 (1,06)[a] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 10,96 (1,33)[b] | 8,29 (1,10)[b] | n.s. |
| **T4** | 10,22 (1,48)[c] | 9,01 (1,15)[c] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 12,56 | 10,51 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



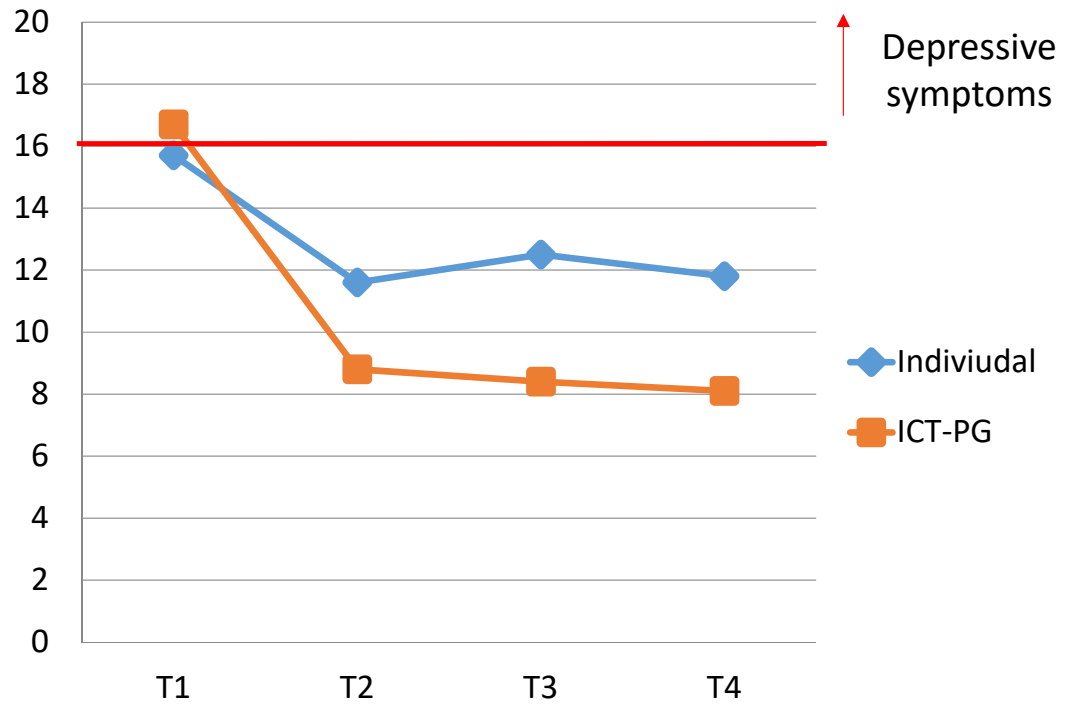

(Radloff, 1977)

# Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D) - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 15,67 (0,85)[abc] | 16,71 (0,76)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 11,63 (0,89)[a] | 8,81 (0,78)[a] | * |
| **T3** | 12,46 (0,92)[b] | 8,37 (0,79)[b] | *** |
| **T4** | 11,81 (0,99)[c] | 8,07 (0,82)[c] | ** |
| **Tot** | 13,32 | 11,02 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



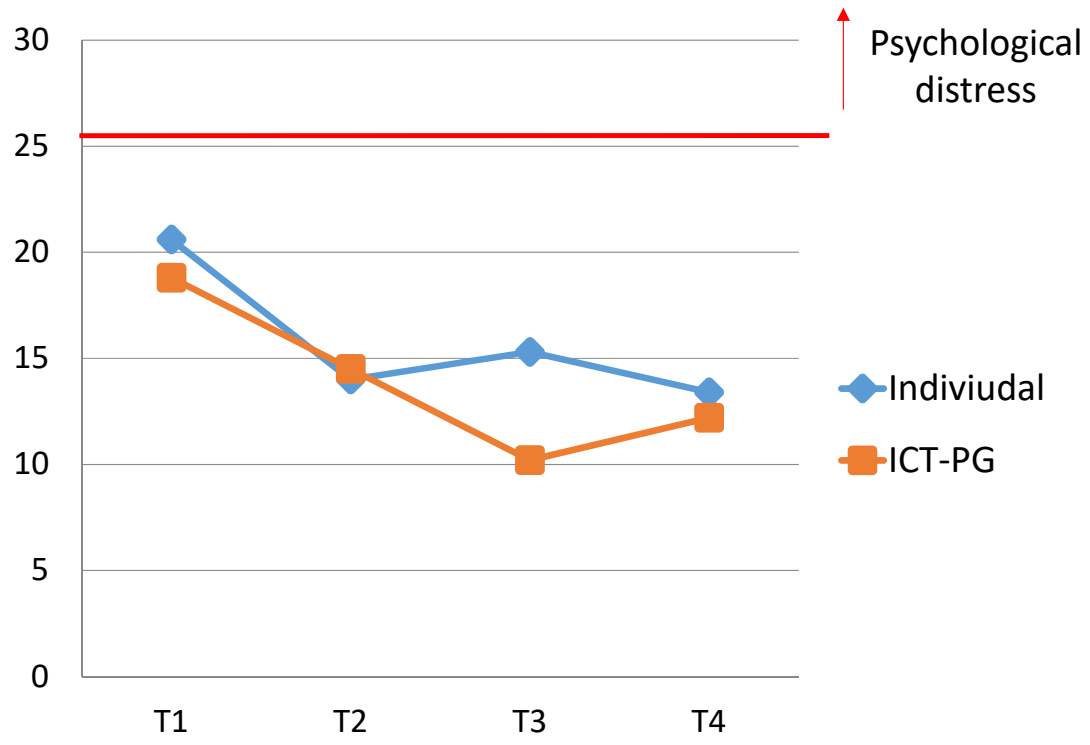

(Radloff, 1977)

# Psychiatric symptom index - Gamblers



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 20,58 (1,58)[abc] | 18,83 (1,43)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 14,04 (1,73)[a] | 14,45 (1,48)[ad] | n.s. |
| **T3** | 15,26 (1,84)[b] | 10,19 (1,53)[bd] | * |
| **T4** | 13,43 (2,04)[c] | 12,24 (1,59)[c] | n.s. |
| **Tot** | 16,38 | 14,20 | n.s. |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*



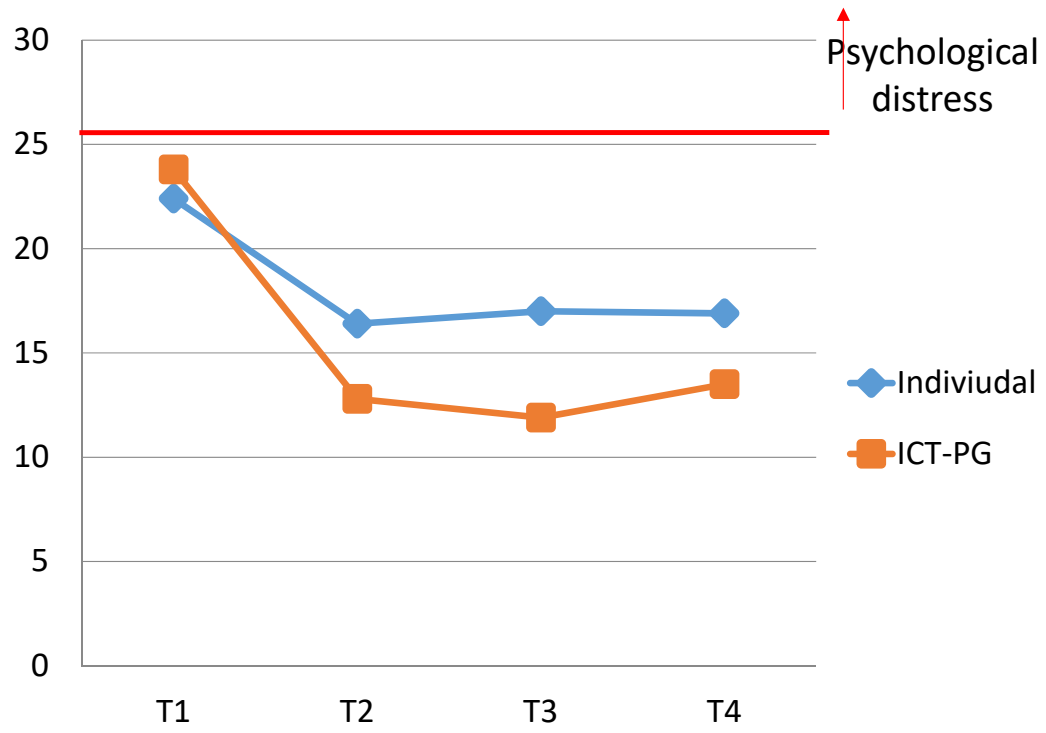

(Ilfeld, 1976)

# Psychiatric symptom index - Partners



| | Individual *M* (SD) | ICT-PG *M* (SD) | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **T1** | 22,38 (1,08)[abc] | 23,75 (0,97)[abc] | n.s. |
| **T2** | 16,40 (1,13)[a] | 12,76 (0,99)[a] | * |
| **T3** | 17,03 (1,16)[b] | 11,94 (1,01)[b] | *** |
| **T4** | 16,96 (1,25)[c] | 13,45 (1,04)[c] | * |
| **Tot** | 18,84 | 16,13 | * |

P<0,0001****; P<0,001***; P<0,01**; P<0,05*




(Ilfeld, 1976)

# Conclusion



- Globally, participants in both modalities improved over time.
- On many indices of gambling severity, the gamblers in ICT-PG showed a better improvement at follow-ups: better reduction in gambling addiction, capacity of control and erroneous cognitions.
- Partners get far more psychological benefits when they are included in ICT-PG than when the gambler has access to individual treatment
  - Observation and limitation: Partners in Individual modality receive few services
- The couple modality is also associated with a better couple functioning observed on different variables at both follow-ups: Marital satisfaction, mutual support, degree of commitment, communication and negotiation abilities.
- The results illustrate the necessity to offer a better diversity of treatment modalities to gamblers and their partner.
- Further research should help understand how to improve this type of intervention by responding to questions like:
  - What is the optimal number of couple sessions?
  - Can we have a combination of couple and individual sessions?
  - The effectiveness of ICT-PG with concomitant problems related to substance abuse/mental health and gambling.

# Qualitative study

frontiers in Psychology

ORIGINAL RESEARCH
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# The Experience of Couples in the Process of Treatment of Pathological Gambling: Couple vs. Individual Therapy

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OPEN ACCESS

**Context:** Couple treatment for pathological gambling is an innovative strategy. There are some results supporting its potential effectiveness, but little is known about the subjective

# Method

- Individual interviews
- 9 month after admission in treatment
- n=21 couples
  - n=8 Individual therapy
  - n=13 Couple therapy

# Seven Main Themes

- Revealing gambling behaviors to the partner
- Develop mutual comprehension and the need for help to attain it
- Better mutual comprehension improves mutual support
- Commitment to and regularity in treatment
- For many, gambling is a relational problem. For a few, gambling is not related to couple's life
- Format and structure
- Conditions favouring one treatment or the other

# 1. Revealing gambling behaviors to the partner

- All gamblers noted that one of the delicate tasks of the change process was to be honest about their gambling cravings and behaviours, in particular toward their partner.
  - “Sometimes it’s better your girlfriend doesn’t know certain things. They’re not really lies, they’re personal things you don’t want her to be aware of.” [5191-Gambler_CoupleTherapy4]
  - “When you are an addict, whether it’s alcohol, gambling, or drugs, you’re a liar too. [So, your partner] she doesn’t really know [what you do].” [14331-Gambler_CoupleTherapy]

# 2. The need to develop mutual comprehension and the need for help to attain it

- a) The partner’s need to understand the change process
- b) The need to have discussions about their mutual experiences
- c) The benefits of having a neutral person present
- d) The practice of communication

# 3. Better mutual comprehension improves mutual support

- a)The couple approaches the gambling problem together
- b) No longer reinforce gambling behavior
- c) Gambling behavior interpreted as meanness
    - “My wife, she thought I wanted to hurt her, but that wasn’t it at all. Gambling is stronger than I am, I go even though I know I shouldn’t.” [16311-Gambler_CoupleTherapy]
- d) Gamblers develop a better understanding of their partners’ suffering
- e) The partners help the gamblers to avoid relapses
- f) The couple starts to do enjoyable activities together again
    - “We’ve been together for 24 years and we’ve never held hands [saying] ‘I love you’ and things like that. So now we’ve learned to do it.” [3180-Gambler_CoupleTherapy]

# 4. Commitment to and regularity in treatment

- The couples in both treatments raised the issue of the gamblers' motivation, particularly the need to help them go to treatment regularly.
- Several of the gamblers selected for couple treatment mentioned that, if it had not been for the presence of their partners, they would not have continued the treatment

  - "I don't know if I would have made it to the end. Sometimes it takes a little kick in the butt. I don't know if I would have had the motivation to come every time, it's easier to do it together. [. . . ] Sure I'm the one who has the problem, [but with] someone to support you all the time, it's a bit easier." [5191-Gambler_CoupleTherapy]

  - "If we had been in couple treatment together, it would have certainly lasted longer. He would probably have gone right to the end [of the treatment]. Even if I had to drag him on a leash [to the meetings]." [14280-Partner_IndividualTherapy]

# 5. For many, gambling is a relational problem. For a few, gambling is not related to couple's life

- Several couples in both treatments considered that gambling problems were intertwined with the couples' relationship and that it was therefore necessary to discuss everything during the couple meetings
- For these participants, opting for couple treatment was an obvious choice, responding more directly and effectively to the gambling problem and its relationship dimension.
    - "I think all couples would be better off doing the couple therapy. Because I think the person living with someone who has a [gambling] problem suffers as much as the gambler. You help two people in difficulty. Two birds with one stone." [16311- Gambler_CoupleTherapy]
- Inversely, some gamblers oriented in individual treatment considered that they were much better off in individual treatment, believing that their partners would have wasted their time in these meetings.
  - No gambler in couple therapy expressed this point of view

# 6. Format and structure

- Most of the couples were satisfied with the services received, whether it was the individual or couple therapy.
- A few people who were selected for individual treatment and subsequently received couple therapy, considered that a combination of the two types of treatment would have been beneficial, beginning with individual meetings and then working with the couple.
- The gamblers oriented in individual treatment agreed for the most part that it would have been too difficult to begin with couple meetings.

# 7. Conditions favouring one treatment or the other

- Individual treatment is favored by participants in situations where:
  - Gamblers had great difficulty expressing themselves and where the partners talked a lot and even too much
  - Gamblers did little to meet the family's needs and invested little in the couples' relationship, their partners felt relieved to know their gambling spouses were consulting individually, as this gave them the impression they had a bit less to carry on their shoulders.
  - The gamblers had to explore different elements of their childhood or adolescence, it was sometimes advantageous to turn to individual treatment, thereby giving the gamblers all the space they needed to talk about themselves freely.

# 7. Conditions favouring one treatment or the other

- Couple treatment is favored by participants in situations where:
  - The couple already has a trusting relationship (e.g., to reveal personal information concerning his past);
  - The persons want to save their relationship

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