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Walkers and credit card warriors: A qualitative study of self-regulation strategies and problematic gaming in veterans

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Background: Internet gaming disorder (IGD) has been associated with difficulty with self-regulation. Although military veterans are at increased risk for mental/behavioral health problems, few studies have examined links between veteran mental health and problematic gaming/IGD. We explored gaming self-regulation among veterans receiving mental/behavioral health treatment to identify strategies that seemed protective against the development of problematic gaming. Methods: We interviewed 20 military veterans who played video games and received mental/behavioral health treatment. We used open coding to develop codes for an analytic framework then summarized data into an analytic framework matrix. Results: Eleven individuals described feeling that their gaming was problematic, while eight individuals did not. Those who did not describe problematic gaming discussed focusing on priorities, using self-discipline and scheduling their gaming time as ways they regulated gaming time. Those who described past problems with gaming focused on priorities and substituted behaviors such as hobbies and exercise. Gamers who felt their gaming was currently problematic reported few strategies and did not discuss priorities or self-discipline. Discussion: Gamers at risk for IGD may benefit from support in identifying priorities and substituting healthy behaviors.

OP-29
Examining primary and secondary exercise dependence in a large community based sample

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Background: Exercise dependence (EXD) has been theorized to occur in primary (e.g., EXD is the sole pathology) and secondary (e.g., EXD secondary to another pathology-usually eating disorders) variants. However, extant research has relied on bias samples; typically athletes, students, or eating disorder patients. Thus, research is needed to examine primary and secondary EXD risk in diverse samples. The purpose of this study was to examine relevant clinical symptoms of primary and secondary EXD in a large community-based sample.