

## Beyond Substances: Evaluating Therapeutic Modalities for Internet and Gaming Addiction Recovery

A.T.L. Andrade\*

Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Centro de Biologia da Reproducao, Caixa Postal 328, Brazil

**Keywords:** Internet addiction; gaming addiction; behavioral addictions; therapeutic modalities; cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT); mindfulness-based interventions; addiction recovery; digital detox; compulsive internet use; online gaming disorder; psychotherapy; treatment strategies

### Introduction

While substance use disorders have long dominated the focus of addiction research and treatment, the rise of behavioral addictions such as internet and gaming addiction presents new challenges for mental health professionals. Excessive engagement with digital technologies can lead to significant impairments in social, occupational, and academic functioning, closely mirroring the patterns seen in substance-based addictions. Despite growing recognition of these disorders, standardized treatment approaches remain less developed and vary widely in effectiveness[1-5]. This paper aims to evaluate the range of therapeutic modalities currently employed in the treatment of internet and gaming addiction, including cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based interventions, and emerging digital detox programs. By critically assessing the strengths and limitations of each approach, we seek to identify best practices and highlight areas for future innovation in behavioral addiction recovery [6-10].

### Discussion

The treatment of internet and gaming addiction has evolved significantly in recent years as awareness of behavioral addictions has expanded. However, unlike substance use disorders, there is no universal consensus on the most effective therapeutic approach, and treatment outcomes often vary depending on individual factors, cultural context, and the severity of the addiction. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has emerged as the most widely studied and commonly recommended modality for internet and gaming addiction. CBT aims to modify maladaptive thought patterns and behaviors that fuel compulsive technology use. Research consistently shows that CBT can reduce gaming time, improve emotional regulation, and address underlying issues such as depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Techniques like cognitive restructuring, behavioral activation, and skills training help individuals develop healthier coping mechanisms. However, while CBT has demonstrated short-term efficacy, maintaining long-term recovery often requires ongoing support and relapse prevention strategies.

Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs) are also gaining traction as complementary approaches. Mindfulness practices help individuals cultivate greater awareness of their cravings and automatic behaviors without judgment, thereby interrupting the habitual cycles of compulsive internet or gaming use. Studies suggest that mindfulness can reduce impulsivity, improve emotional resilience, and enhance overall psychological well-being among individuals struggling with behavioral addictions. Nevertheless, mindfulness interventions may require sustained practice and motivation, which can be challenging for individuals with severe addictive behaviors or comorbid psychiatric conditions. Digital detox programs—structured periods of abstinence or limited digital use—have been promoted as practical strategies for

reestablishing healthy technology boundaries. While digital detoxing can provide immediate relief from excessive internet or gaming exposure, it often lacks the therapeutic depth necessary for addressing the psychological drivers of addiction. Without accompanying cognitive or emotional interventions, relapse rates following detox alone are notably high. Emerging therapies, including motivational interviewing (MI) and family-based interventions, show promise, particularly among adolescents and young adults. MI focuses on enhancing an individual's intrinsic motivation to change problematic behaviors, while family-based approaches address environmental and relational factors contributing to addictive patterns. Integrating these modalities into treatment plans can provide more holistic and sustainable recovery pathways. Despite progress, several challenges persist. Stigma around behavioral addictions remains prevalent, often leading to underdiagnosis and under-treatment. Moreover, the rapid evolution of digital technologies and gaming platforms complicates the therapeutic landscape, requiring interventions that are adaptable and continually updated to remain relevant.

Future directions for treatment should emphasize personalized care models that consider the individual's specific needs, comorbidities, and digital environment. There is also a need for more rigorous, longitudinal research to determine the long-term efficacy of various modalities and to develop standardized treatment protocols for behavioral addictions. In sum, while therapeutic options for internet and gaming addiction are expanding, a multimodal, individualized, and adaptive approach appears most promising for supporting lasting recovery.

### Conclusion

As internet and gaming addiction continue to rise alongside technological advancement, the need for effective, evidence-based therapeutic interventions becomes increasingly urgent. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy remains the most supported and effective treatment modality, but integrating mindfulness-based interventions, motivational interviewing, family-based therapies, and digital detox strategies can enhance recovery outcomes. A singular approach is often insufficient; instead, a personalized, multimodal strategy tailored to individual needs offers the best chance for sustainable behavioral change. Future efforts must prioritize developing standardized

**\*Corresponding author:** A.T.L. Andrade, Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Centro de Biologia da Reproducao, Caixa Postal 328, Brazil. E-mail: andrade1243@gmail.com

**Received:** 03-Mar-2025, Manuscript No: jart-25-165042, **Editor Assigned:** 06-Mar-2025, Pre QC No: jart-25-165042 (PQ), **Reviewed:** 17-Mar-2025, QC No: jart-25-165042, **Revised:** 24-Mar-2025, Manuscript No: jart-25-165042 (R), **Published:** 31-Mar-2025, DOI: 10.4172/2155-6105.1000760

**Citation:** Andrade ATL (2025) Beyond Substances: Evaluating Therapeutic Modalities for Internet and Gaming Addiction Recovery. J Addict Res Ther 16: 760.

**Copyright:** © 2025 Andrade ATL. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

protocols, reducing stigma, and adapting interventions to keep pace with evolving digital landscapes. By refining therapeutic approaches and promoting holistic recovery pathways, clinicians can better support individuals in overcoming behavioral addictions and achieving long-term digital well-being.

## References

1. Lambdin BH, Zibbel J, Wheeler E, Kral AH (2008) Identifying gaps in the implementation of naloxone programs for laypersons in the United States. *Int J Drug Policy* 52:52-55.
2. Gunn AH, Smothers ZP, Schramm-Sapota N, Freiermuth CE, MacEachern M, et al. (2018) The emergency department as an opportunity for naloxone distribution: A systematic review. *West J Emerg Med* 19:1036-1042.
3. Coffin PO, Sullivan SD (2013) Cost effectiveness of distributing naloxone to heroin users for lay overdose in Russian cities. *J Med Econ* 16: 1051-1060.
4. Papastergiou J, Folkins C, Li W, Zervas J (2014) Community Pharmacist-Administered Influenza Immunization Improves Patient Access to Vaccination. *Can Pharm J (Ott)* 147: 359-365.
5. Willis E, Rivers P, Gray LJ, Davies M, Khunh K (2014) The Effectiveness of Screening for Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors in A Community Pharmacy Setting. *PLoS One* 9: e91157.
6. Lindsey L, Husband A, Nazar H, Todd A (2015) Promoting the Early Detection of Cancer: A Systematic Review of Community Pharmacy-Based Education and Screening Interventions. *Cancer Epidemiol* 39: 673-681.
7. Bleake BE, Dillman NO, Corneliu D, Ward JK, Burson SC, et al. (2014) Heart Failure Assessment At The Community Pharmacy Level, A Feasibility Pilot Study. *J Am Pharm Assoc* 54: 634-641.
8. Taitel M, Cohen E, Duncan I, Pegus C (2011) Pharmacist as Providers: Targeting Pneumococcal Vaccinations to High Risk Populations. *Vaccine* 29: 8071-8076.
9. Anderson C, Blenkinsopp A, Armstrong M (2004) Feedback from Community Users on the Contribution of Community Pharmacy to Improving the Public's Health: A Systematic Review of the Peer Reviewed and Non-Peer Reviewed Literature 1990-2002. *Health Expect* 7: 191-202.
10. Ayorinda AA, Porteous T, Sharma P (2013) Screening for Major Diseases in Community Pharmacies: A Systematic Review. *Int J Pharm Pract* 21: 349-361.