

# **COMPULSIVE GAMBLING**

*In the world today compulsive gambling has become a problem of menacing proportions. Men and women who are in the grip of this compulsion know misery and despair. They seem powerless to escape, and often apparently do not want to escape. For those who would, the first step is an honest appraisal of areas in which gambling has become a problem. This pamphlet is intended as a guide in this appraisal.*

## **COMPULSIVE GAMBLING**

A compulsive gambler is a person whose gambling causes a continuing and growing problem in any department of his or her life. They become dominated by an irresistible obsessive urge to gamble. Often they appear bent upon their own destruction.

As they continue to gamble they lose three basic things. TIME, MONEY and a SENSE OF VALUES. The time and money are lost forever, but they can regain their sense of values. They can regain an evaluation of what is really necessary to bring about a good and useful life. The first step is the admission of powerlessness over gambling. Not making the first bet will become the key that will soon open the door to a new and wonderful life.

The following questions indicate areas in which most compulsive gamblers have been troubled. May we suggest you give these questions your consideration if gambling has, in any way, become a problem in your life.

# TWENTY QUESTIONS

- 1** Did you ever lose time from work or school due to gambling?
- 2** Has gambling ever made your home life unhappy?
- 3** Did gambling ever affect your reputation?
- 4** Have you ever felt remorse after gambling?
- 5** Did you ever gamble to get money with which to pay debts or otherwise solve financial difficulties?
- 6** Did gambling cause a decrease in your ambition or efficiency?
- 7** After losing did you feel you must return as soon as possible and win back your losses?
- 8** After a win did you have a strong urge to return and win more?
- 9** Did you often gamble until all your money was gone?
- 10** Did you ever borrow to finance your gambling?

- 11** Have you ever sold anything to finance gambling?
- 12** Were you reluctant to use “gambling money” for normal expenditures?
- 13** Did gambling make you careless of the welfare of yourself or your family?
- 14** Did you ever gamble longer than you had planned?
- 15** Have you ever gambled to escape worry, trouble, boredom or loneliness?
- 16** Have you ever committed, or considered committing, an illegal act to finance gambling?
- 17** Did gambling cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
- 18** Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to gamble?
- 19** Did you ever have an urge to celebrate any good fortune by a few hours of gambling?
- 20** Have you ever considered self destruction or suicide as a result of your gambling?

Most compulsive gamblers will answer yes to at least seven of these questions.

## COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

This pamphlet has been prepared by the Gamblers Anonymous Fellowship. We are men and women from all walks of life who have known humiliation and despair due to an insane urge to gamble.

Our recovery is based on a willingness to bring about certain personality changes within ourselves. We recognize that together we can bring about these changes. Separately we could not. This conclusion has resulted in our joining together in group meetings. We try to conduct these meetings in a manner that will enable us to have an orderly exchange of ideas, recognizing that the important thing is to share our experience and strength with each other. We learn the importance of honesty with ourselves and each other. We try to practice tolerance and open-mindedness, and we are always ready to carry the message to the compulsive gambler who still suffers.

Where any two or more problem gamblers join together to discuss their common problems we have a GA meeting. Our group meeting experience and procedure is available on request.

If you have a gambling problem our hearts and our hands go out to you. Our experience has shown us that together we can survive and find a good life. Divided we can hope for little. We hope you will join us.



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