

Definition

What is problem gambling?

Problem gambling is gambling behavior which causes disruptions in any major area of life: psychological, physical, social or vocational. The term "Problem Gambling" includes, but is not limited to, the condition known as "Pathological", or "Compulsive" Gambling, a progressive addiction characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop, "chasing" losses, and loss of control manifested by continuation of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting, serious, negative consequences.

"Who's a gambler anyway?"

So many of us think of the gambling addict at the track or at the casino spending days on end chasing the elusive big win. And of course that is part of the picture. But the addict we are talking about here probably looks a lot like the person next door, or just like you.

Different Types of Gambling

- Lotto Pools at work: baseball, football, basketball
- Stock Market
- Lotteries (traditional), bingo - soft gambling
- Destination resort casinos
- Urban or suburban casinos
- Convenient Gambling: gaming devices in bars, slot machines
- Ultra-Convenient Gambling: interactive television, mobile phone, or internet gambling

Frequently Asked Questions

Isn't problem gambling just a financial problem? No. Problem gambling is an emotional problem that has financial consequences. If you pay all of a problem gambler's debts, the person will still be a problem gambler. The real problem is that they have an uncontrollable obsession with gambling.

Isn't problem gambling really the result of irresponsible or weak-willed people? No. Many people who develop problems have been viewed as responsible and strong by those who care about them. Precipitating factors often lead to a change in behavior, such as retirement or job related stress.

What kind of people become problem gamblers? Anyone who gambles can develop problems if they are not aware of the risks and do not gamble responsibly. When gambling behavior interferes with finances, relationships and the workplace, a serious problem already exists.

Do casinos, lotteries and other types of gambling "cause" problem gambling? The cause of a gambling problem is the individual's inability to control the gambling. This may be due in part to a person's genetic tendency to develop addiction, their ability to cope with normal life stress and even their social upbringing and moral attitudes about gambling. The casino or lottery provides the opportunity for the person to gamble. It does not, in and of itself, create the problem any more than a liquor store would create an alcoholic.

Can you be a problem gambler if you don't gamble every day? The frequency of a person's gambling does not determine whether or not they have a gambling problem. Even though the problem gambler may only go on periodic gambling binges, the emotional and financial consequences will still be evident in the gambler's life, including the effects on the family.

How much money do you have to lose before gambling becomes a problem? The amount of money lost or won does not determine when gambling becomes a problem. Gambling becomes a problem when it causes a negative impact on any area of the individual's life.

How can a person be addicted to something that isn't a substance?

Although no substance is ingested, the problem gambler gets the same effect from gambling as someone else might get from taking a tranquilizer or having a drink. The gambling alters the person's mood and the gambler keeps repeating the behavior attempting to achieve that same effect. But just as tolerance develops to drugs or alcohol, the gambler finds that it takes more and more of the gambling experience to achieve the same emotional effect as before. This creates an increased craving for the activity and the gambler finds they have less and less ability to resist as the craving grows in intensity and frequency.

Are problem gamblers usually addicted to other things too? It is generally accepted that people with one addiction are more at risk to develop another. Some problem gamblers also find they have a problem with alcohol or drugs. This does not, however, mean that if you have a gambling problem you are guaranteed to become addicted to other things. Some problem gamblers never experience any other addiction because no other substance or activity gives them the same feeling as the gambling does. There also appears to be evidence of family patterns regarding dependency as many problem gamblers report one or both parents had a drinking and or gambling problem.

CELEBRATE
RECOVERY

Small Group Guidelines

1. Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes.
2. There will be NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation, excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.
3. We are here to support one another, not “fix” one another.
4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.
5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.

*Please be advised if anyone threatens to hurt themselves or others, their small group leader has the responsibility to report it to the Celebrate Recovery Ministry Leader.

Accountability Team Phone Numbers

Sponsor:

Accountability Partners:

GAMBLING ADDICTION

Definition and Frequently Asked Questions



WE MEET EVERY MONDAY NIGHT

Cross Roads Diner and Fellowship	6-7pm
Large Group	7-8pm
Share Groups	8-9pm
Connection Café	9-9:30pm

VICTORY WORLD CHURCH

5985 Financial Drive (V2)
Norcross, GA 30071
(770) 849-9400

Website: www.victoryatl.com/p/12511
Email: cr@victorywc.org