

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS



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Foreword

For many people, the act of recreational gambling can be a source of hours of harmless entertainment. Unfortunately, some people become too attached to the thrill that comes from gambling and a monster begins to develop inside of them. This is the monster of addiction and it can be very detrimental to a person's life and can rule all aspects of it.

A person who is addicted to gambling will lose control over their life. It may begin as a slow process but eventually it will be a full blown addiction. Gambling addiction is no different than any other addiction. Fair enough, it may not be physically addictive such as heroin is but it is still mentally addictive. It can get to a point where all a person can think about is gambling. People who are addicted to gambling will begin trying to make bets on everything they can, even small pointless things.

Gambling addiction is the same as any other addiction in the sense that it pulls the wool over people's eyes and makes them lie to their selves about how bad their problem has become. If you or somebody you know has a gambling addiction it is extremely important that it gets taken care of and addressed before it completely takes over.

Gamblers Anonymous

Chapter 1:

Gambling Addiction Basics

Synopsis

As mentioned before, gambling addiction is no different than any other addiction. There may be differences in other addictions such as physical side effects but the bottom line is the same, it can rule a person's life. Since gambling addiction is the same as other addictions, it is important that it be addressed the same way others would be.

Many people are not sure if they are a gambling addict or if they just enjoy gambling. There is honestly quite a fine line between the two. That is why it is so important to participate in activities such as gambling in moderation. For example, a person can drink a beer without becoming an alcoholic. However, if a person drinks beer all day every day they will likely become an alcoholic. The same goes for gambling. Keep in mind; some people are more prone to addiction than others. So while it may take one person a very long time to become addicted to gambling another person may become addicted quite quickly.

You may be asking yourself, am I a gambling addict? If you are asking this question there should already be some red flags raised. The following chapter will go over the basics of gambling addiction and will provide you with information to help you determine if your gambling has spun out of control.

The Basics

Some people do not know the warning signs of a gambling addiction. This may lead to people becoming addicted to gambling because they are unaware of what to watch out for in themselves while gambling.

It is important for all people who gamble recreationally are aware of the warning signs of addiction. More and more people are becoming addicted to gambling. In fact, it has been reported that an estimated one percent or two million people have an addiction to gambling the United States. That's quite a lot of people, isn't it? It is very likely that they all said the same thing, "It will not happen to me" or "I'm too strong to get addicted". If you are like these people you need to stop making these statements. Addiction is very powerful and no matter how strong you think you are, it will win in the end.

The following are some warning signs of gambling addiction to watch out for. If you have any of these problems it is best that you begin treating your addiction immediately:

Are You Unable To Quit?

The most obvious warning sign of gambling addiction is probably not being able to quit. If your entire life is consumed by gambling and you know it is not doing any good for you but still cannot stop, you likely have a gambling addiction. People who are not addicted to gambling know when to stop or fold their hand. Those who are addicted will keep trying to ride the hand, even if they know it is a terrible one. As mentioned before, everything in life

will be about gambling. Gambling addicts will often times try to bet on the silliest things just for the sake of gambling.

Do You Gamble With Money You Cannot Spare?

Some people can set money aside and go out for a night at the casino and not touch any other money but what was set aside. Others however will gamble everything they have, even if they cannot afford to lose it. These people are gambling addicts. If you notice yourself doing this you almost surely have a gambling addiction and should seek help. Gambling addiction can ruin a person's life very rapidly, especially when they are losing money that they cannot afford to lose. In some cases, gambling addicts will begin stealing from their loved ones in order to gamble on something. Sometimes they even steal from their children. That is how bad gambling addiction can become, it truly can change a person and make them sick.

Do You Gamble To Mask Other Feelings?

Just like with drug addicts, gambling addicts may gamble to try to cover up other things going on in their life. Recreational gamblers will gamble just for the entertainment it provides. However, gambling addicts will often times use gambling as an escape from reality. The rush they get from putting their money on the line can make them forget about all their problems, for a short period of time. This euphoria ends quickly as the addict digs themselves a deeper hole and causes even more anxiety for their self.

Do You Bet More To Try To Get Back What You Have Lost?

One very common characteristic amongst gambling addicts is the fact that they will tend to try to get back what they have already lost by betting more money. This rarely works out in the addicts favor and they end up losing more money. However, they will keep going and going until they have nothing to bet and then will still sometimes find a way to continue gambling. The big difference between a gambling addict and a recreation gambler is the fact that a recreation gambler can cut their losses and walk away while an addict will literally break themselves.

Have You Begun Spending More And More?

A common sign of gambling addiction is that a person will begin to spend more and more on gambling as their addiction progresses. They will start to take money from other important things in life. This is how many gambling addicts become homeless. To them, the only thing in life worth doing is gambling. It was more important for them to gamble then pay the rent of the electric bill because they just knew that they were going to hit it big. Usually the only thing that gets hit is rock bottom.

Do You Go To Desperate Measures To Get Gambling Money?

Recreation gamblers realize that if they do not have the money set aside to gamble with that it is not a good idea to do so. Addicts will spend up all of their money and then search for other ways to get more. They will often get loans and put leans on things they own. The problem is that they keep losing money so they never have the money to pay back the leans or loans. Their things eventually get taken and the government will freeze their

assets. Stop yourself from slipping down this slippery slope and get a hold on your addiction immediately.

Do You Neglect More Important Things For Gambling?

Neglecting more important events in life for the sake of gambling is a common warning sign of gambling. Gambling addicts will find that they are eventually unable to do anything but gamble. They will find that they are missing important events such as dinner reservations or nights out with their friends. In some situations it gets bad enough that people neglect their children and do not care if they have their basic needs. Do not feel as if this cannot happen to you because it can happen to anyone. Addiction is very powerful and is more than capable of taking over a person's life.

Does Your Gambling Habit Cause You To Feel Negative Emotions?

Recreational gamblers participate in the act of gambling for the excitement and thrill of it. When it gets to the point that you are anxious over your gambling or are constantly frustrated about it, it is time to change. If you no longer experience joy while doing something is there really a point in even doing it anymore?

If you experience any of the above issues you likely have a gambling addiction and you should begin addressing it right away before it spirals out of control.

Chapter 2:

Make the Decision Daily Not To Gamble

Synopsis

If you made the discovery while reading the previous chapter, or already are aware the fact that you have a problem, it is time that you begin to address your gambling addiction. The hardest part of beating an addiction is coming to terms with the fact that you have an addiction.

Most addicts will go through a long phase of denial, no matter what they are addicted to. It is not until they get through this stage that they will be able to move on and begin their recovery. Sadly, this point is not usually reached until the person who is addicted hits rock bottom or reaches a new low in their life.

Once you as an addict have accepted that you need to change one of the first things and most important things you will need to do is make the decision every day not to gamble. This is understandably easier said than done. It will be difficult it is possible.

The following chapter will give you some helpful hints to help you make the daily decision to not return to gambling.

Every Day Is another Day Closer

When you have made the decision that gambling is no longer for you it is time you begin your recovery process. Just like other addicts, gambling addicts need to take things one day at a time.

The thought of never gambling again can be absolutely terrifying for a person when they are a gambling addict. It would be like me telling you that you could never sleep again or have another cup of coffee in your entire lifetime. The thought of that would be outrageous to you right? Well to gambling addicts, this is basically exactly what you are asking them to do.

You need to recognize that every day that you do not gamble is a huge accomplishment. You need to give yourself a pat on the back for your accomplishments and make sure to praise yourself. It is important that others in your life support you in the same way.

You will have to make the choice every day of your life not to gamble if you want to avoid going back to your old ways. It is crucial that you only think about one day at a time. Tell yourself, "I will not gamble today". You must mean it from the inside when you say it and it must be said with confidence. This process will work much better if this affirmation is actually spoken out loud and not just thought of in your mind.

You will be surprised by how much easier it becomes to avoid your gambling addiction the more you refrain from giving in to it. It may take a while but you will eventually get to a point where you do not even think about gambling anymore. You will probably look back on all of this one day and think to yourself, how did gambling ever even have such a hold on me?

Just remember that you are the only who can stop your addiction and you are going to have to take it day by day. It will be a long journey buy you will be triumphant is you remain strong. Win your battle against your gambling addiction and say no to gambling!

Chapter 3:

Examine the Benefits of Quitting

Synopsis

If you are a gambling addict, you are probably well aware of all the negative impacts that it has made on your life. You probably have gone through some losses regarding your personal relationships. You have probably lost friends and may have even lost your job or home.

If you are aware of these negative impacts on your life it would be a good decision to make a change, right? If you answered yes you are ready to begin recovery. On the other hand, if you were unsure when it comes if you want to stop or not, you still have work to do.

Stopping the vicious cycle of your gambling addiction will not be easy but there are some things that can make it easier. You need to think about all of the things in your life that would get better if you stopped gambling and quit feeding in to your addiction.

The following chapter will provide you will some valuable information that will make it easier for you to quit as well as some ideas about the things that will get better in your life.

The Positives of Quitting

If you are a gambling addict it is probably pretty safe to say that many things in your life have been destroyed. Some people may suffer from more losses than others due to the extent of the severity of their addiction. If this is the case it is time that you start to better your life.

It will make it much easier for you to kick your gambling addiction to the curb if you make a list of all the positive outcomes will have on your life and your current situation.

The reason that it is advised that you make a list is because if you just try to keep it in your head or say it out loud you will likely forget the benefits quite quickly. This is especially true when your addiction tries to take over and manipulate your mind into forgetting about the positives of quitting.

This is because your addiction has you right where it wants you and does not want you to break free. After you have made your list you should put it somewhere that you will see it on a regular basis. This will keep your addiction from swaying you from your efforts and will serve as a constant motivator to keep you on track.

If you are too lost in your gambling addiction and cannot think of what the positives of quitting would be the following are some examples:

Better Personal Relationships:

Gambling can impact a person's relationships in a very negative way, especially when the person has a gambling addiction. Understandably, other people can get tired of all the money being spent around the house and constantly having to worry about the bills because they are not helping.

Once you kick your gambling addiction to the curb this will no longer be a problem for you. Your relationships will get much better and people will begin to be able to trust you again. This will also make you feel better about yourself which will in turn continue to motivate you to stay on the track of recovery from your addiction.

You Will Find That You Have Ample Potential:

Many gambling addicts think that they do not have potential and gambling is what they were destined to do. This is why no matter how bad things get they still continue to gamble.

Once you quit gambling you will find that you have a great deal of potential that can be applied to more healthy things in life. Realizing that you can be successful and that you are full of potential will surely help you on your journey to recovery.

You Will Be Able To Help Others:

One of the best satisfactions that you will receive from breaking free from your addiction is the fact that you will be put into a position where you can

help other gambling addicts. This will make you feel great about yourself and it will also help others greatly.

In most cases, people will ignore someone's advice if they do not feel as if that person has lived through that experience. That is why advice coming from you would be so valuable. Another gambling addict will likely listen to you over someone who has never suffered from the addiction.

Better Spiritual Connections:

You will also find that your spiritual connections will become much deeper. This will add meaning and value to your life. It will also help you along your journey and make sure that you remain strong and win your battle against your gambling addiction. You will begin to develop better moral values through this and learn to be a good person. You will be rewarded for your actions; it is just a matter of time.

There are many other things that will surely get better in your life once you stop gambling, these were just a few examples.

Chapter 4:

Change Your Surroundings

Synopsis

Many gambling addicts will have to change their surroundings if they want to be able to stay on the path of recovery. It may be hard to believe but something as small as something you visualize can spark an intense craving to gamble. There is likely many things that you are going to have to change in your surroundings. Some may be easier to let go of than others but all of them are just as equally dangerous for your recovery.

You may not know what you need to change or even where to begin. That is alright, after all that is what this book is for. The following chapter will shed some light on the importance of changing your surroundings and the positive benefits it can have on your life.

Time for Change

Whether you are fresh to recovery or have been in recovery from gambling addiction for quite some time, change is very important. The way things in your life were obviously did not work out for you. After all, you did have a problem with gambling. In order for you to remain on the road to success and to kick your addiction to the curb you will need to change your surroundings. This does not only include items, it includes the people in your life, the things you do, and the places you go on a daily basis.

The following are some examples of things that you may need to change in your surroundings:

Friends:

Some friends in your life may be very supportive and serve as a great source of help and aid when it comes to your recovery. They will wish the best for you and try to keep you from doing anything that is bad for yourself. On the other hand you have those “friends” who are really nothing more than gambling buddies. It is important that you separate yourself from your old gambling buddies. They may pretend as if they are understanding of your recovery and that they respect the fact that you do not want to gamble anymore. Sooner or later they will be calling you up and trying to get you to come out for a night out on the town gambling. It will be very difficult for you to resist the urge to go out with them, especially when you think of all the exciting nights you had together. It will be even more difficult for you if

you are fresh to recovery. It is best to avoid all of this and just cut ties with these people.

Things around Your House

There are many gambling addicts who collect novelty items such as slot machines and casino memorabilia. It is important that you steer clear of these types of items because they will surely make you want to gamble. If you are around these items constantly, the urge to gamble will eventually become so great that you will not be able to continue your efforts and you will give in to your addiction.

You need to get rid of these items. You do not have to throw it away. Why don't you try donating it or selling it at a yard sale? You can help yourself and make a buck in the process.

The Places You Go:

You have to be careful where you go when you are trying to stay away from gambling. An obvious place that you need to stay away from is any casinos. There are less obvious places that a person would think about though. For example, when going grocery shopping, you may want to check out at a register that will not make you walk right next to the lottery machine on the way out. While at convenience stores it is important to divert your attention from the scratchers. Also, certain bars participate in off-track betting so it is probably a wise idea to stay away from them. There are also other places that hold poker tournaments and other related betting type competitions

and these should be avoided. Basically, you need to stay away from anything that might remind you of gambling.

The Things You Do:

It is probably not a good idea for you to play certain card games or other games which can make you think of gambling. All of these games can be triggers that will make you want to gamble so it is best to avoid them entirely, at least for a while.

Chapter 5:

Stay Busy

Synopsis

It is extremely important that while you are trying to beat your gambling addiction that you stay busy at all times. Idle time can and will surely lead to the desire to gamble. You need to find better things to do with your time other than gambling.

There are many different things you can do to stay busy. Every person's interests are different from the rest so there is no exact right answer for what you could do. Instead you are going to have to figure out what you can do to occupy your time. Think about your likes and dislikes and a hobby that matches up with them.

The following chapter will discuss the importance of staying busy and will provide you with some ideas about how to do so.

No Idle Time!

As the saying goes, idle hands are the tools of the devil. This basically means that if you sit around with nothing to occupy your time, something bad will eventually occupy it for you. This is especially true when you are battling any type of addiction, including a gambling addiction. You need to find things that you are interested in to fill up your free time.

If you are not sure of what you can do, the following ideas should be quite useful for you:

Start Exercising:

Exercising is a great way to occupy your time and it is also great for your health. Your body will begin to look fit and you will build a higher sense of self-confidence. As well, exercising releases endorphins in your brain which can give you a “high” like feeling. You can actually get the same thrill from exercising as you can from gambling, without breaking your bank.

Find A Hobby:

You may want to consider finding a new hobby to occupy your time. The possibilities are endless with this. There is sure to be something that will interest you. You may want to start building model cars or airplanes or maybe even begin quilting. Maybe you could begin wood working or begin painting. No matter what your interests are in life, there is a hobby for you.

Volunteer:

Volunteer work is a great way to fill up your idle time. Not only will it help you, it will also help your community. This will give you a high sense of pride and self-worth. You will feel great that you are giving back and excellent that you are sticking to your recovery.

Keep in mind, too much idle time can be bad but some time for relaxation is still essential!

Chapter 6:

Seek Help

Synopsis

Many gambling addicts will not be able to stop gambling on their own. If you feel as if you will not be able to do it on your own do not be embarrassed, everyone needs help at one point in their life.

It is important that you do not feel weak for asking for help. You should rather feel proud and strong since you are able to admit when you need help. It takes much more strength to admit you are overwhelmed and need help than to try to do it alone and almost surely fail.

The following chapter will give you an idea of what type of help you may need to seek:

Get Some Help

As stated before, many gambling addicts will need help in their efforts to kick their gambling ways to the curb. Some may need more help than others and some may need more intense therapy than others. It really depends on the extent of the severity of the addiction as well as the willingness of a person to change their ways.

The following are some examples of different types of ways you can get help with your battle against addiction:

Family:

For those who do not want to go to therapy, family is a great source of support. You may want to ask your family for help. Explain to them that you want to change. Tell them that you feel as if your chances of successfully beating your addiction will be much better with their help. Let them know that you understand that it is a lot to take on and that you understand if they do not want to help you. They will rarely refuse to help you but there are situations where it happens so be prepared. You may also want to mention to them that you are sorry for your past ways. Let them know that you are not looking for a babysitter but rather a person to help keep you on track.

Therapy:

Most gambling addicts will have to exercise some form of therapy before they will be able to stop gambling. Not all addicts, but most. If you need

therapy do not be embarrassed. Therapists serve as nothing more than a neutral form of a way to vent your inner emotions and thoughts. They can be very helpful because they are not judgmental and do not choose sides. They listen to you and help you answer you own questions about your life. They offer feedback but let you know that you do not have to follow their advice.

Therapists can also be very beneficial because they know certain techniques that can help an addict understand what their underlying issue for their problem is. It is important that whatever caused the addiction be fixed as well or else the person will surely fall back into a relapse and gamble again.

In-Patient Treatment

For some gambling addicts, their addiction might be so bad that they have no other choice than in-patient treatment if they ever want any hope of quitting. If you are one of these people, do not be afraid. Gambling rehabilitation centers are not bad places and you should not be ashamed if you have to go to one. Instead you should keep in mind that you are at least trying to change you ways and you are doing everything possible to try to make sure you change. Some of these rehabs even allow home visits. It may be hard to go to one but it will pay off in the long run.

You need to ask yourself what type of treatment you need. Be honest with yourself because lying to yourself will just make your road to recovery longer and even bumpier.

Wrapping Up

I hope that after reading this book you have learned and retained some valuable information. You need to always keep in mind that recovery is possible and you can get a hold on your gambling addiction. Your life may be spiraling out of control right now but the more you work towards not gambling the better your life will get.

One thing you must never forget is that you have a gambling addiction. Some people make the mistake of thinking that they are cured from their addiction and think that they can go back to it and not have problems with it anymore. This is a terrible mistake and time after time again these people end up right back at square one. The problem with this is the more times you have to start over the more discouraged you will become. It will surely get to a point that you lose all motivation and no longer make any effort to change your ways. You can avoid this entirely by realizing that you are an addict and always will be, you will just be a recovering addict who no longer indulges in the destructive behavior that was destroying their life.

Remember, it may be hard but you can do it. I hope this book has helped you and I wish you the best of luck!