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A Message From

THE COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania is a nonprofit organization affiliated with the National Council on Compulsive Gambling. Its purpose is to educate and disseminate information on compulsive gambling and to facilitate referrals.

The Pennsylvania Council provides speakers, workshops, seminars, and information on this public health problem to business, industry and labor groups, schools and colleges, health care and treatment facilities, and to community and religious organizations.

To find out more or to become a helping friend of the Pennsylvania council, call:

In Pennsylvania:
 1-800-848-1880 or 1-800-GAMBLER

Office: 1-215-389-4008



Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania

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A Message on COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

There's
HELP
 in Pennsylvania



Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania

A Message on Compulsive Gambling

What Compulsive Gambling Is . . .

Compulsive (or problem) gambling is a progressive behavior disorder in which an individual has a psychologically uncontrollable preoccupation and urge to gamble. This results in excessive gambling, the outcome of which is the loss of time and money. The gambling reaches the point at which it compromises, disrupts or destroys the gambler's personal life, family relationships or vocational pursuits. These problems in turn lead to intensification of the gambling behavior. The cardinal features are emotional dependence on gambling, loss of control and interference with normal functioning.

What Compulsive Gambling Does . . .

Compulsive (or problem) gambling is a chronic and habitual disorder which interferes with the individual's mental and physical health, spiritual growth, interpersonal relationships, and occupational functioning. Compulsive (or problem) gambling is a disorder characterized by a loss of integrity and self esteem for individuals as well as significant others. It affects people of all nationalities, religious affiliations and ethnic groups.

Compulsive (or problem) gamblers draw in and manipulate their spouses, significant others and family members. Estimates are that for every compulsive gambler there are ten to twelve others affected by this disorder.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania there are approximately 300,000 compulsive or

problem gamblers; nationwide, an estimated four to six million. These figures grow on a daily basis.

Recovery and help are possible for all people affected by this disorder. The main referral source for all with this problem is Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon. Inpatient and outpatient services are also offered in the Commonwealth.

Twenty Questions

Gamblers Anonymous uses the following to help individuals determine whether they have a gambling problem. A compulsive gambler will answer "yes" to at least seven of the questions:

1. Did you ever lose time from work due to gambling?
 2. Has gambling ever made your home life unhappy?
 3. Did gambling 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 that you had to 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 your last dollar was gone?
 10. Did you ever borrow to finance your gambling?
 11. Have you ever sold anything to finance your gambling?
 12. Were you reluctant to use "gambling money" for normal expenditures?
 13. Did gambling make you careless about the welfare of your family?
 14. Did you ever gamble longer than you had planned?
 15. Have you ever gambled to escape worry or trouble?
 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 as a result of your gambling?
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