

From a client

I was in the grip of a gambling habit with poker machines. I don't gamble in any other way and I am addicted to one machine only—the same machine. I even use a special finger to push the button.

I am no longer ashamed of myself. In fact, I'm proud of myself for taking steps to safeguard myself from the machines by self-banning. I can now go out and look at people playing the pokies and think "what a waste of money, I'm glad I don't do that anymore".

I will not play the machines again ever; I am very determined on this point. Although I don't want to play, I still need the support of the counsellor and support group for now. Help is available to anyone—you only have to ask.

My personal information booklet





I will fill these pages with my thoughts, fears, plans, and dreams

Contact numbers

Problem Gambling Foundation Freephone

0800 664 262

Asian Services Hotline 0800 862 342

Gambling Helpline 0800 654 655

Maori Gambling Helpline 0800 654 656

Pasifika Gambling Helpline 0800 654 657

Youth Gambling Helpline 0800 654 659

Gambling Debt Line 0800 654 658

Text 4 help 8006

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Dear Reader,

Before you start we would like to congratulate you on having the courage to get to this point.

You may have been thinking about your gambling for a while or something may have occurred which spurred you to this point. You may be tired of the stress in your life and the impact on your family and friends. We recognise that it is not easy to ask for help, or even to know the sort of help you can get.

Because gambling is advertised as harmless fun, it can come as a surprise when it turns into a problem in your life and you are no longer able to control it.

We all have slightly different ways of dealing with our problems. What works for you may not work for someone else and so this route may not be for everyone. We suggest if you really feel you need face-to-face help or support with your gambling problem then take this step with us and with this booklet; and we will work together.

We have compiled this booklet to help you understand how gambling works and how it can hurt you. Then we will give you ideas on how best to rebuild yourself.

It will help you plan how to be safe, how to plan ahead with alternative activities which make you feel good, and ensure you have a list of support people close at hand.

GETTING STARTED

Organising my Support

I know I will need help from others, and it is even more important while I deal with issues surrounding my gambling problem.

It is often hard to sort things out in my head when an urge to gamble happens, so it's a good idea to have a list of people who are prepared to support me when this happens.

List of support people:

1. Problem Gambling Foundation Freephone 0800 664 262.
Ring them if you feel like you want to gamble and make a time to come and talk to a professional who can help.
2.
.....
3.
.....
4.
.....
5.
.....
6.
.....



"What has helped me the most was that I have self-excluded from all pubs in about a 50 km radius of my home, and from all the nearby clubs."



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Your reflection journal

A journal is different from a diary. Journals help you reflect on what's going on within you. Keeping a journal is like carrying on a continuing conversation with yourself. It may be in words or it may be in drawings.

Writing a journal can be a doorway to growth. Through the journal you can get more in touch with what you really believe and feel about what's happening around you. It can help you get to better know yourself, your world, and your values.

How do you start? Journaling involves just two simple steps. First, set aside a bit of time each day. Second, let what's in your head and heart flow. What you write doesn't need to be deep or profound or earth-shattering. It just needs to be you!

Write about your day's experiences and your reactions. Jot down the sights and sounds, tastes and smells, experiences and feelings that came your way today, and lingered on. Journals are a great place to pack away thoughts for later on.

If you think best in sentences and paragraphs, write that way. If key words and phrases work for you, do that. And, if your mind connects best with colour and lines, draw your way to a successful journal.

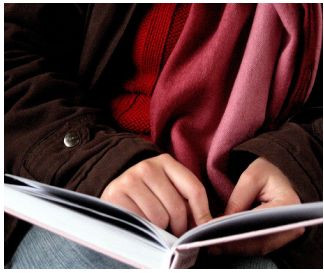
Things that will help me

- When I think back to before I gambled, what were the things which made me laugh?
.....
.....
- When I think back to my school days what made me happy?
.....
.....
- I must congratulate myself for the positive things I have done in my life such as.....
.....
.....
 - Keep things simple and enjoy one day at a time
 - Attend a support group
 - Contact my face-to-face counsellor
 - Work at improving my personal space
- Be willing to try new activities. I will try
- I must minimise my free time—fill it with activities and people. I will
- I will break the lying habit
- I will smile and laugh
- When I believe in myself, so do others
- I choose love, joy and freedom. Open my heart and allow wonderful things to flow into my life



"The secret for helping me was ... being honest with my family and my friends."

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Things that will help me

- I will self ban from venues and clubs
- I will go out for a walk or get some exercise, or

- I will identify things which make me gamble and steer clear of them, such as avoiding my gambling haunts or.....



- When I go out, I won't take any money or my credit cards or any other means of getting money to gamble. Instead I will

- I will praise myself when I do well

- I will make a list of things I would like to accomplish soon beginning with.....

- I will use my money to buy something nice for myself, or to.....

- I will let someone help me by taking control of my money, maybe my family or a friend, and I will get help from a budget advisor.....

- I will go for a bus ride and explore new places.....



- I will text a friend and

"I certainly feel rich, because I have a family who now like, love and respect me. I even like myself and have self respect. I can walk around with my head held high as I now have nothing to hide."

My reasons for stopping gambling Why I want to stop gambling.

1. I want my family to be proud of me again
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

Rewards and sacrifices that have happened because of my gambling

Rewards/Good things

.....

Sacrifices/Bad things

.....

"If you have a gambling problem there is plenty of help out there, you only have to ask".

Things that will keep me safe
Here are some things I will enjoy doing instead of gambling

Dreams/Goals

What would stop me from achieving my dream/goals?

What do I need to do to make sure that I don't get sidetracked?

- Going to the movies
- Reading a book
- Making a meal
- Keeping a diary
- Swimming
- Doing voluntary work
- Going to the zoo
- Joining the gym—and keep going
- Visiting a temple or church
- Signing up for a new course
- Having a massage
- Going out with a friend for coffee
- Growing some fresh vegetables
- Making a present for someone I love
- Trying a new sport
- Going shopping
- Playing golf
- Going to the beach
- Taking a ferry ride
- Feeding the birds
- Smiling at someone I don't know
- Doing a crossword
- Borrowing a friend's dog and take it for a walk
- Listening to the radio
- Eating my favourite ice cream
- Going window shopping
- Finding something funny to do—watch a funny DVD
- Writing a letter
- Holding my hands under warm water and feel the water flow over them
- Moisturising/massaging my face/feet/ hands
- Laughing out loud
- Dancing to some loud music
- Learning to weave, knot or sew

Dreams/goals

What would stop me from achieving my dream/goals?

What I need to do to make sure that I don't get sidetracked?

.....

.....

.....

.....

“So what keeps me on track - setting goals, keeping check on myself and being honest if I need help and make sure I get it. It is not easy but it is essential.”

Things that might make me want to gamble

- Watching races or gambling on TV
- Reading the racing papers
- Needing money
- When I am stressed or there is conflict
- When I am bored, or lonely or depressed and/or over-confident
- When I deny or forget just how bad things got when I gambled
- When I feel isolated from other people
- When I stop my new behaviours (exercise, healthy eating, budgeting, meetings etc)

Some answers for when I want to gamble

1. Needing money for bills.
Answer: Admit that playing the pokies creates more problems than it solves and will never earn me any money.
2. Being bored.
Answer: Contact friends, see a movie, read a book.
3. Going to a pub with friends.
Answer: Choose a pub which has no pokies or exclude myself from the gaming area.
4.
.....
5.
.....
.....

"I feel as if my head has cleared and I am able to see things in a different light."

What are my dreams and goals?

I AM READY AND WILLING TO MAKE A CHANGE, NOW

- To quit gambling
- To take control of my life and my money
- To make wise choices for me and my family
- To feel less guilt and anger
- To get healthier
- To feel joy in simple everyday things
- To enjoy and connect with the people around me
-
-
-
-
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"Now I can see such a difference in my life. I always have money in my purse. I don't have to worry about anyone coming to see me about bills not being paid."