A Family Album:
At Home with the Compulsive Gambler

Gambling Recovery Ministries
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A Family Album

including “snapshots” of …

LESSONS LEARNED for every day at

- Home
- Work
- Play
Where gambling has become addictive, the Church will encourage such individuals to receive therapeutic assistance so that the individual’s energies may be redirected into positive and constructive ends…”
A Family Album

Lessons learned ...

AT HOME
Phases of Gambling: Financial Impact of Each Stage

- Social *(Winning)*
- Preoccupied *(Losing)*
- Desperation
- Hopelessness
Steps to Take to Protect Assets

- Issues of “denial” & dishonesty !
- Therefore …
- Remove name from joint accounts
- Open new account
- Separate safety deposit box
- Warn family & friends
- Never co-sign to cover gambling debts
Money Management

Steps to take when the gambler ADMITS the gambling problem and is willing to SEEK HELP:

- Construct a household budget together with the gambler
- Household bills come first
- Very small amounts of cash for gambler’s daily needs
Knowledge & Understanding of Disordered Gambling

As one’s knowledge about gambling addiction increases, one’s responses become based on knowledge – not emotions.
Effective Communication

with the gambler

- Work very hard at being **constructive** in communicating

- Dictating, demanding, and controlling are **counter productive**.
Goal Setting with the gambler

- Establish spending goals (HHbills #1)
- Encourage gambler to stay within the new budget and allowance
- Work together on a savings plan
- Reward yourselves on occasion
- Continue encouragement!
Cooperation & Consequences

- Gambler turns over paycheck and all credit cards
- Gambler agrees to an allowance
- Honesty on gambler’s part = critical
- Loved ones need to be very patient since lying is a major part of the problem of gambling
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Lessons learned …

AT WORK
Work Indicators *(Warning Signs)*

- Long Lunches … Projects’ Timing
- … Borrowing … Phone Usage …
- Computer Use … Stealing
- Credit Card Cash Advances …
- Asking for Salary Advances …
- Embezzling Suspected
Pressures at Work
to gamble

- Fantasy Football ... computers...
- Internet access on cell phones
- Sports pools ... lottery pools ...
- Raffles (charity, etc.) ...
- Work schedules may be too open and flexible (e.g. sales)
Positive Feedback about Work to the recovering gambler

- Complimenting his/her work ethic
- Noting progress made in getting out of debt
- Recognizing success achieved at work
Positive Feedback Continued …

- Low self esteem & shame issues
- Issues of suicide
- Keep up the praise, no matter how small the accomplishment
- Let the gambler know he/she is loved
Important Perspective for Family Members to Remember

- The gambling addiction has nothing to do with whether or not the gambler loves the family.
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Lessons learned …

AT PLAY
Leisure Time & Recovery

- **Caregivers**: vulnerable to “escaping”
- Too Much *or* Too Little Free Time:
- **the roles of** BOREDOM & STRESS
The Need for Change

- Lifestyle Change
- Changing Friends
- Helpful vs Harmful Activities
- Triggers
- New Hobbies
The Role of Spirituality in recovery

- Twelve Step Program (Steps 1, 2, 3)
- (GA & Gam-Anon)
- Concept of God and Luck
- Forgiveness Issues
- Shame & Guilt
- Sense of Isolation
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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