

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS HELPS THE COMPULSIVE GAMBLER IN FIVE SIGNIFICANT WAYS THAT PROFESSIONALS ARE NOT ABLE TO

IDENTIFICATION

A new member will identify with another compulsive gambler in the many similar experiences they have had due to their gambling and behavior attributable to gambling. It is not uncommon to hear a new member state “I thought I was the only one that gambled and did things like this, until I heard others just like me.” The Gamblers Anonymous Fellowship offers new members a mirror image of themselves through other members sharing “Therapy” (case history of their gambling).

ACCEPTANCE

New members most times are very lonely and isolated people. Upon attending Gamblers Anonymous they are welcomed warmly. New members have stated “It’s the first time others are not judging me.” Gamblers Anonymous starts to break the isolation process and allows the new member to feel he/she is not alone with this problem.

PRESSURE-RELIEF GROUP MEETING

Gamblers Anonymous helps the new member with releasing the pressures they have created by their gambling. There is usually pressure in four areas of their life, namely financial, marital/family, job areas and sometimes-legal pressures. These areas must be addressed if the new member is to start a lasting recovery.

An important part of this is the Pressure Relief Meeting. The meeting is conducted by recovering Gamblers Anonymous members who will suggest approaches to take care of household expenses and set up a repayment program for all his/her creditors. Suggestions regarding turning the control of finances over to the spouse and other pertinent issues such as: should the Gamblers Anonymous member have a checking account, credit cards, bank account, etc., are resolved at this meeting. The Pressure Group Committee may also suggest additional part-time work as a solution to having more available income. The Committee encourages the member to contact all creditors and arrange for reduced payments. The Pressure Relief Committee formulates these revised amounts. It is important that the new member take responsibility to deal with these debts and not avoid them with bailouts from other sources like he/she has done in the past.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF RECOVERY

These are the basis for the entire Gamblers Anonymous Program and following these steps in their daily affairs are encouraged by Gamblers Anonymous. These steps were designed to help the Gamblers Anonymous member make personal changes, which can aid in their recovery.

Some of these twelve steps have to do with admission of powerlessness and unmanageability in their life. Others have to do with steps of action, where members are encouraged to make changes in their character. There is also steps of a spiritual nature which encourages spiritual growth as a vital part of recovery. These steps are ongoing and although it is a lifetime program, the emphasis is on utilizing these steps **one day at a time**.

PEER SUPPORT

Gamblers Anonymous offers peer support. The group meetings are important and members can find others like themselves at any Gamblers Anonymous group meeting. This support is given by members through many areas. Sponsorship is another member taking an interest in working with the new member. Telephone contacts between meetings by a member are another important peer support that is available to the new member. Group meetings are available every day throughout the metropolitan area, U.S.A. and several foreign countries. A member can feel “at home” in any Gamblers Anonymous meeting. Peer support is the single most important tool in enabling a new member to feel the spirit of the Gamblers Anonymous Fellowship.

Professionals who work with compulsive gamblers understand the importance of encouraging their patient/client to join Gamblers Anonymous. Professional treatment, most times, is short term while Gamblers Anonymous offers a lifetime support group for the recovering gambler.