



WELLNESS WORKSHEET 48

Gambling Self-Assessment

Answer the following questions to help determine if gambling is affecting your life in a negative way.

Do You Need or Want to Change?

Yes No

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| ___ | ___ | 1. Have you often gambled longer than you had planned? |
| ___ | ___ | 2. Have you often gambled until your last dollar was gone? |
| ___ | ___ | 3. Have thoughts of gambling caused you to lose sleep? |
| ___ | ___ | 4. Have you used your income or savings to gamble while letting bills go unpaid? |
| ___ | ___ | 5. Have you made repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 6. Have you broken the law or considered breaking the law to pay for your gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 7. Have you borrowed money to pay for your gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 8. Have you felt depressed or suicidal because of your gambling losses? |
| ___ | ___ | 9. Have you been remorseful after gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 10. Have you ever gambled to get money to meet your financial obligations? |

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you may want to consider making a change.

Should You Examine Your Gambling Patterns More Closely?

Yes No

- | | | |
|-----|-----|--|
| ___ | ___ | 1. Have you ever tried to cut down on your gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 2. Are others annoyed by your gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 3. Do you ever gamble alone? |
| ___ | ___ | 4. Do you ever feel guilty about your gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 5. Do you ever gamble to feel better? |

If you answered “yes” to one or more questions, then you may want to consider looking at your gambling more closely.

Is Gambling Affecting Your Life?

Many people are not aware of all the ways that gambling can affect their lives. Answering these questions can alert you to problems that you might not have thought about before.

Yes No

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| ___ | ___ | 1. Have you spent a great deal of your time during the past 12 months thinking of ways to get money for gambling? |
| ___ | ___ | 2. During the past 12 months, have you placed bigger and bigger bets to experience excitement? |
| ___ | ___ | 3. Did you find during the past 12 months that smaller bets are less exciting to you than before? |

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Yes No

- ___ ___ 4. Has stopping gambling or cutting down how much you gambled made you feel restless or irritable during the past 12 months?
- ___ ___ 5. Have you gambled during the past 12 months to make the uncomfortable feelings that come from stopping or reducing gambling go away?
- ___ ___ 6. Have you gambled to forget about stress during the past 12 months?
- ___ ___ 7. After losing money gambling, have you gambled to try to win back your lost money?
- ___ ___ 8. Have you lied to family members or others about how much you gambled during the past 12 months?
- ___ ___ 9. Have you done anything illegal during the past 12 months to get money to gamble?
- ___ ___ 10. During the past 12 months, have you lost or almost lost a significant relationship, job, or an educational or career opportunity because of your gambling?
- ___ ___ 11. Have you relied on others (e.g., family, friends, or work) to provide you with money to cover your gambling debts?
- ___ ___ 12. During the past 12 months have you tried to quit or limit your gambling, but couldn't?

These questions point out different problems you might have had because of gambling. Each question identifies a very serious problem. If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, you might want to think about reducing or stopping gambling.

Is Gambling Causing Money Problems?

Another way to understand your gambling is to consider the financial impact it has on you. Many problem gamblers experience various kinds of money problems. Answer the following questions to see if you have found yourself in some of the same money situations as problem gamblers:

Yes No

- ___ ___ 1. Have you ever been denied credit?
- ___ ___ 2. Have you ever taken money out of savings, investments, or retirement accounts to gamble?
- ___ ___ 3. Do you find yourself frequently bothered by bill collectors?
- ___ ___ 4. Have you ever used grocery money or other money for necessities to gamble?
- ___ ___ 5. Have you ever delayed paying household bills in order to get more money for gambling?
- ___ ___ 6. Have you ever taken cash advances from credit cards to use for gambling?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, it may be a sign that your gambling has affected your financial situation. Money problems, such as these, are usually symptoms, not the causes, of problem gambling.

What Next?

If your answers to the questions above indicate that you may have a problem with gambling, take steps to change your behavior. Try applying the behavior change concepts presented in Chapter 1, including examining the pros and cons of change, setting goals, and signing a contract. You may also consider professional counseling. The following Web sites have additional resources:

Gamblers Anonymous: <http://www.gamblersanonymous.org>

National Council on Problem Gambling: <http://www.ncpgambling.org>

Responsible Gambling Council: <http://www.responsiblegambling.org>

Your First Step to Change: (http://www.mass.gov/dph/bsas/gambling/selfassess_eng.htm)

SOURCE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS: Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Department of Public Health. 2002. Gambling Self-Assessment (http://www.mass.gov/dph/bsas/gambling/selfassess_eng.htm; retrieved March 24, 2005).