Gambling is NOT the Solution to Financial Woes: Understanding the Stress of Problem/Disordered Gamblers During the Holidays and in the New Year

Presented By:
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Mission Statement
The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling promotes healthy and informed choices regarding gambling and problem gambling through various key initiatives and partnerships.

Help Line: 1 800 GAMBLER
Research
Public Policy
Free Clinical Training
Network of Providers that offer No Cost Treatment
Prevention
Peer Support
Public Awareness
Learning Objectives

Attendees should be able to:

• Identify tools and strategies to assist in assessing and intervening with clients in financial distress.

• Understand through personal stories how problem gambling and gambling disorder can heighten stress during the holiday and in the New Year.

• Learn the tools and resources offered by the Center, including Peer Support.
“Gambling ruins another Holiday.”

Personal Story from a Peer in Recovery

Working with Problem Gamblers in the Central Region:
Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford and Howard Counties

Kenneth (Ken) Wolfson, CPRS, CRC, RPS
kwolfson@som.umaryland.edu
Mobile: 443-690-9811
“Gambling addiction added a ton of stress to my family during the holidays and my mom is still gambling.”

Personal Story from a Peer in Recovery
Working with Problem Gamblers in the Eastern Shore: Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties

Kenneth (Kenny) Crawford, CPRS, CRC
Kenneth.Crawford@som.umaryland.edu
Mobile: 443-717-1137
“You would think the holidays would be a wake-up call; for me it just led to more denial and deception.”

Personal Story from a Peer in Recovery
Working with Problem Gamblers in Baltimore City

James (Jim) Nowlin
jnowlin@som.umaryland.edu
Mobile: 410-299-1791
“The first few holidays in recovery from my gambling addiction were challenging.”

Personal Story from a Peer in Recovery
Working with Problem Gamblers in the Southern Region:
Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George’s and St. Mary’s Counties

William (Will) Hinman, CPRS, CRC
whinman@som.umaryland.edu
Mobile: 443-717-2439
ADDRESSING FINANCES

• Beliefs about money
• Control of money
• Emotional attachment to money
• Concepts of credit
• Monitoring of spending
• Juggling of money
• Doing a budget
ADDRESSING FINANCES

• Contacting creditors
• Spouse monitoring mail and refusing to cosign
• Checkbook control
• Direct deposit
• Directing towards GA Pressure Relief Group
GA PRESSURE RELIEF

• Request moratorium from creditors for 60 -90 days
• Discuss debts with family and significant others
• Financial restitution as an integral part of recovery
• Listing all debts, all monthly expenses and all assets
• Create a repayment plan
GA PRESSURE RELIEF

- Creditors respond to honesty, sincerity and courage
- Resolve financial concerns so to focus on behavioral change
- Bankruptcy seen as bailout - not recommended
- Longer repayment plan preferred - each payment reminder of gambling impact
What Makes a Good Financial Plan?

- All parts of the financial planning process covered
- Gambler and family committed to using it
- All involved understand roles and responsibilities
- Realistic and supports recovery goals
- No bailouts - Support only with accountability
- It is clear and committed to writing
- Importance of contingency planning/mitigating risk
FAMILY TREATMENT: FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR RECOVERY

Credit Counseling Six Stage Model
(ala GA Budget and Pressure Relief)

• Clarify Debt/Current Financial Situation
• Identify/Predict Income
• Identify Expenses
• Create Budget/Make Adjustments
• Debt Repayment Plan
• Money Protection Plan
MONEY PROTECTION PLAN

$ How will I safeguard my money from my gambling?

$ Who can help me?

$ To whom will I be accountable?
• Connections can be found between one's financial well-being and overall psychosocial well-being

• A range of problems may contribute to financial & emotional distress/devastation (life-threatening illness, unforeseen loss, interpersonal violence, foreclosure, predatory lenders)

• Address problems in a comprehensive, holistic way

• Identify helping professionals skilled in/comfortable with these areas with assessment and intervention
TALKING ABOUT MONEY: THINGS TO CONSIDER

• Why is it so hard to talk to clients about money & why is important to do it?
• Are there cultural aspects to talking about money?
• How do money, money problems, and money management fit into therapy?
• How far should a therapist go in making suggestions about money issues to their clients?
• How does talk about money issues fit into crisis management and ongoing counseling?
ADDRESSING FINANCES IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

What to consider:

• Does monthly income cover ongoing expenses?
• Is income stable every 2 weeks or month?
• Are they receiving any public benefits?
• Are they eligible for any public benefits that they are not receiving?
EXPERIENCES WITH MONEY

• What was your first experience with money?
• What are your earliest memories of money in your family?
• What is your best and worst memory regarding money?
• What feelings do these memories generate?
• Was money viewed as good, bad, scary, dirty, or neutral for you as a child?
• Did anyone help you to understand these feelings as a child?
• Were there any family stories about money?
MARYLAND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

• CASH Campaign of Maryland
  • www.cashmd.org

• Maryland Legal Aid
  • https://www.mdlab.org/

• Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Maryland
  • www.cccsmd.org
OTHER FINANCIAL RESOURCES

• Unemployment:
  • https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus/unemployment-insurance

• IRS:

• Consumer Financial Protection Bureau:
  • https://www.consumerfinance.gov/

• Prosperity Now:
  • https://prosperitynow.org/resources/covid-19-resources
MARYLAND GAMBLING RESOURCES

Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-800-GAMBLER

Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling:
- https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/
- https://helpmygamblingproblem.org/
- https://asiangamblingsos.org/
- https://militarygamblesafe.org/

Maryland Coalition of Families:
- https://www.mdcoalition.org/who-we-help/problem-gambling/

Maryland 211
- press 1 for Crisis Hotline
OTHER GAMBLING RESOURCES

Gamblers Anonymous
https://www.gamblersanonymous.org/ga/locations

Gam-Anon
https://gam-anon.org/

National Council on Problem Gambling
https://www.ncpgambling.org/

Gam-Ban
https://gamban.com/
Questions & Thank You!

1-800-GAMBLER