



# What is Gambling?

Take a moment to write about what gambling is/means to you.

How would you define it?

What images and/or words does the term 'gambling' create in your mind?

Do you think gambling is good? Do you think gambling is bad?



## Self-Help Mutual Support Meeting

Find and attend a Gambler's Anonymous, or equivalent, meeting in your area.

If participating in person is not possible, attend a virtual/phone meeting.

If there are no options that you are able to join, view a meeting recording online, or listen to a podcast featuring discussion from folks in recovery.

Take a few minutes to write a summary of what your experience was like. What did you hear that stood out to you? What was the tone of the room like? What demographic was highly represented? What demographic was not? What did you see as possible benefits to participants and also, what did you see that might be interpreted as negatives.



# PA Gambling Expansion

Find and submit links to articles focusing on either the 2004 Race Horse Development and Gaming Act (Act 71) or the 2017 PA Gaming Act Amendment (Act 42)

Discuss one or two items that stood out to you, or that you found interesting. Identify how this may impact or change working with a client with gambling concerns. Does it change your approach? What do you feel you might need 'skill-wise' to adjust counseling as a result of the ways that gambling availability is expanding?



## Integrating Assessments

Based on our discussion of incorporating the topic of gambling into existing assessments at your agency/practice, how might you ask questions related to the following:

- Medical -
- Financial -
- Family History -
- Substance Use -
- Psychiatric -
- Recreation -





## Structure of Treatment Plan

For the case you have been assigned complete the following  
List potential areas (problems) to develop goals and action steps for the individual

How would you decide what area of need to focus on first?

Develop one long term and one short term goal and the action steps you would use to address the area of focus.

Long Term Goal:

Short Term Goal:

Action Steps:



## Distorted Perceptions

Knowing that those with gambling use disorders frequently develop irrational thinking patterns that present themselves during counseling sessions, how do you respond effectively in your practice? Would you respond to these distortions with gamblers differently? What are your thoughts regarding confrontation of irrational thoughts/cognitive distortions?

Think about the cases we have been working on and discuss how you might approach addressing this.



## Motivational Interviewing

Identify the change talk in the following statements, and then Utilize your OARS to form what you would say next.

I could stop gambling if my wife would just get off my back.

If I just had enough money my gambling would be able to be less.

I used to enjoy spending a lot of time outdoors before I found gambling.

Gambling is causing me problems with my family and my job. I wish I could find a way to stop.

I know gambling is causing me financial difficulties. I would probably be better off if I could reduce my gambling.





## Failures & Contingencies

Select one of the cases that we have been following and discuss how you might address the individuals struggle to follow through with action steps outlined in the treatment plan.

How would you address a recurrence of gambling use that falls outside of the limits/abstinence goals that were identified?

Write your view of recurrence (relapse) into gambling behaviors. Is it a 'failure'?

What needs to happen when gambling behaviors return.

How can a recurrence (relapse) lead to progress?



## Suicide Prevention Resources

Among those experiencing gambling related issues, research finds high rates of suicidal ideation and attempt. To better protect clients that you are working with, it is a good idea to be aware of what resources are available in your area, should a situation arise. If you are not already familiar, take a few minutes to find the local suicide prevention task force, and their crisis line/contact info.



## PA Youth Survey (PAYS)

Visit the PAYS website and access the state and county reports for 2023. Review the gambling results for each (page 35, in most cases) and report anything that you find significant. If your county is not listed, find the most recent report from your county, or the report from a neighboring county.

**State**

**County**



## Cultural Considerations in Treatment

Knowing what you know now about the impact of cultural aspects on gambling behavior (race/ethnicity, age, gender), how would you adjust the treatment plan you wrote for the individual assigned to you to include the strengths/abilities connected to culture?

And how would you include culture in counseling sessions?



## Financial Situations

One of your clients (you select) identifies the need for financial support as an aspect of their recovery. They ask you to help with a budget and establishing financial accountability.

What information do you need to know in order to assist them?

How would you approach developing a budget and financial accountability?

Refer to the book '**Problem Gamblers and Their Finances**' - How does what you read support or change how you would choose to approach the financial aspect?