

grm RESOURCE CENTER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

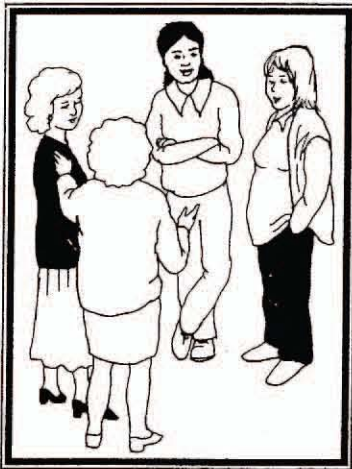
SEPTEMBER 2008

gambling recovery ministries
life saving outreach
to problem gamblers and their loved ones

P.O. Box 218
Dillsboro, IN 47018
812.926.1052
www.grmumc.org

This issue:
SPECIAL FOCUS MATERIALS!!

Women and Problem Gambling



THE FEMINIZATION OF GAMBLING ?

Several years ago, I attended a fascinating workshop about the *dream world* of women gamblers. Motivation for increased gambling activity was identified with escape from stress, as well as, isolating oneself from multiple responsibilities. Then too, relief from boredom was cited; and even feelings of independent empowerment were included by some clients in counseling for problem gambling. Primarily, the onset of gambling addiction by these escape gamblers occurred later in life — and at a more rapid rate of progression.

Interestingly, other observations and reports at the same conference related experiences of both younger and older women, within certain isolated communities, whose lifestyles had become increasingly affected by problem gambling. While these presentations, generally, identified bingo and electronic gaming devices as favored venues for women gamblers, recent newspaper articles have made mention of the increasing popularity of poker and Texas Hold'em among college age females. I am grateful to Joanna Franklin and Marilyn Lancelot for sharing their insights, in this edition, concerning the shame and pain that women experience in the quest for recovery and healing from compulsive gambling. Thankfully, awareness continues to grow about hope and help for problem gamblers — men *and* women!

Blessings!

Janet

Reverend Janet Jacobs, Director

UM GENERAL CONFERENCE EXPANDS MINISTRY TO GAMBLERS

By UM 2008 General Conference action, the United Methodist Social Principles wording calls for expanded outreach to those affected by problem gambling. In addition to other expressed gambling issues, the following is now included: *The General Board of Church and Society shall provide materials to local churches and annual conferences for study and action to combat gambling and to aid persons addicted to gambling.* Please pray for the UM Church's newly expanded commitment to reach out to problem gamblers!

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GRM is an Advance Special of the South Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church.

GRM PowerPoint Series: NOTES!
Spiritual Issues in Recovery

The Concepts of Hope and New Life

- When a gambler finally reaches the *hopeless phase*, **the concept of "hope" is not real anymore.**
That is why Step 1 is number 1 in the 12 Step recovery process: *We admitted we were powerless over gambling - that our lives had become unmanageable.*
- Step 2 is quite a big step to take for a person in the hopeless phase. **Somewhere between Step 1 and Step 2, the ability to trust - even feebly - enters the recovery process:** *Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to a normal way of thinking and living.*
- **Step 3 evolves from a conviction that Step 2 has validity for him/her:** *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of the Power of our own understanding.*
- **Remember to consider personal influences!**
 1. Spiritual background/upbringing: how does one perceive gambling: as morally wrong (sin)? as a natural activity?
 2. The gambler and others may perceive problem gambling behavior *only* as a sign of moral weakness and, therefore, the necessity for treatment and/or support groups might be deemed an invalid approach to recovery.

Therefore, the recognition and resolution of spiritual issues contribute significantly to the recovery process!

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR WOMEN!

Women Helping Women Newsletter:
www.femalegamblers.org
Resource Book: www.grippedbygambling.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

*Action Gambler ... Escape Gambler:
What is the difference?*

Basically, in terms of attraction to gambling, the following mark those described as *action gamblers*: action games of chance (poker, craps, horse racing, and sports betting), risk-taking, a sense of thrill, and self-identity as a skilled competitor with high paying wins. Often, an early *big win* and childhood experiences in gambling are cited. The *escape gambler* finds a sense of independent stress relief and even empowerment through the repetitive patterns of venues as slots and bingo. Progression to addiction is shorter in length; gambling becomes solitary and hypnotic; and a high sense of shame can develop.

HELPLINES AND WEBSITES

State of Indiana Problem Gambling Referral Line

Provides information on Indiana (state-endorsed) problem gambling treatment centers and GA and Gam-Anon meetings (800) 994-8448

Regional GA and Gam-Anon Hot Lines

Provides meeting dates and times for GA and Gam-Anon Meetings

Indianapolis (all of Indiana).... (866) 442-8621
Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky (888) 746-4942
Dayton..... (937) 449-9911
Louisville (888) 442-0628
Chicago (866) 442-8620

Websites and Phone Numbers

- **National Council on Problem Gambling Helpline**
(800) 522-4700 www.ncpgambling.org
- **Indiana Council on Problem Gambling**
(800) 699-4274 www.indianaproblemgambling.org
- **Indiana Problem Gambling Awareness Program**
(812) 855-1237
- **Indiana Problem Gambling Treatment Providers**
www.ipgap.indiana.edu/providers.html

WOMEN AND PROBLEM GAMBLING

Many years ago people thought there were no female alcoholics: well, they were rare; well, they just nipped at the cooking sherry too much; well, turns out female alcoholics were...just as severely affected as male alcoholics - just less obvious. Women for a variety of reasons have learned to hide their "weaknesses". This would hopefully prevent loss of a job, a home, a marriage, custody of children, etc. It isn't the lack of treatment or social services that keeps women from getting the care they need. It is the shame attached to addiction, gambling problems, and other mental health issues that is the largest barrier to care that we have.

In states with legalized gambling machines, slots, VLT's, etc., women are about half of those calling the gambling helplines looking for aide. Women tell us something about their needs in surveys. Clearly they do not want to be told, simply, to "never gamble again"; however, they do appreciate support, understanding and fellowship as they find their own way to recovery. Gamblers Anonymous offers fellowship and understanding but not all chapters have female members. Women are encouraged to reach out to each other (www.womenhelpingwomen.org is a great resource), to use the Gambling Helpline (1-800-522-4700 nationally), and to be assertive - not ashamed - about seeking care for their gambling problems. To compulsive gamblers, it is important to remember: We are not to blame for having a problem - we are just responsible for finding the help that works best for each individual woman. Make the call and talk to someone who understands.

Joanna Franklin, MS, NCGC II

Joanna serves as President of the Maryland Council on Compulsive Gambling and has worked in the counseling field for more than thirty years. She instructs the 30 and 60 hour training courses for Indiana Gambling Counselor Certification.

TESTIMONY TO RECOVERY: *The Little Girl Within*

My struggles with addictions spanned most of my adult life. Only when I finally surrendered to God, did my days become less stressful. Today I'm able to cope with life's challenges. When my husband died I pushed God out of my life and I asked, "How could you do this?" I stopped attending AA meetings and ceased praying. This led to another addiction, compulsive gambling. It took handcuffs and prison for me to find my God again. I have been possessed by alcohol, prescription drugs, overeating, and gambling. but I am no longer a slave to these addictions. I discovered one day that my way didn't work so I turned my life over to God. My 12-step programs taught me how to work on my character defects and make intelligent decisions.

My gambling addiction took away my home, my retirement funds, my relationships, and my freedom. But at the age of 61, I was able to begin a new life and now have a nice home in a beautiful community. I spend my days gardening, taking pictures, dancing, and enjoying dinners. I also have a part-time job. Today when I experience anger or stress, I kneel down and pray, using the tools I've been given by the 12-step programs. Doing this gives me a clearer understanding of myself and my problems, and I'm given ways to cope with each event.

The little girl within has evolved into a woman: prayer took away the pain, stresses became strengths, challenges are no longer crises, loneliness has been replaced with love, and forgiveness took the place of resentments. "God could and would if he were sought." When I meet newcomers [in GA], I share my recovery program with them and show them the steps that enabled me to find recovery from my addictions. I tell them, "I'll love you until you love yourself ... You'll never be alone again unless you choose to ... and ... The best is yet to come."

Submitted by Marilyn Lancelot, author of Gripped by Gambling

a year at a glance:

2008 ... so far

January

GRM Board 2008 Planning Retreat

February

Columbus District Missions Conference *Workshop: Recovery Issues*

March

Dearborn County IN Hospital Health Fair; Presentations: *Problem Gambling and Recovery*; Methodist Temple UMC, Evansville;

Rockport First UMC; University of Evansville

April

Indiana Statewide Suicide Prevention Conference, Indianapolis: *Workshop Teen Gambling*; Cleves OH Health Fair Franklin County IN Ministerial Association *Developing Outreach to Problem Gamblers*

May

Indiana Public Health Association State Conference, Purdue University: *Workshop Stages of Change: the Gambler & the Community*

June

SIC Annual Conference: *GRM Information Booth*; NCPG Annual Conference *First Annual Prevention Showcase* Long Beach CA

August

Trinity UMC, Madison IN

September

Sept 7 Mt. Tabor UMC; Dillsboro UMC Sept 22 Chapel Hill UMC Stephens Ministry; NCALG National Conference: *GRM: A Faith Based Approach; Teen Gambling* Washington, DC

October

US Census Bureau Health Fair, Jeffersonville, IN

November

Nov 19 Monroe Co Religious Leaders, Bloomington

Throughout the Year

praying for individuals & supportive consultation

more grm news!

MID-CENTRAL CONFERENCE ON PROBLEM GAMBLING & COUNSELING ISSUES

Completing the Cycle

September 17-19

Drawbridge Inn, Ft. Mitchell, KY (Greater Cincinnati)

An excellent continuing education conference presented by seven State Councils on Problem Gambling! Registration is \$90 (\$60: Council members); **13 CE units** from Certifying Agencies. Contact IN Council Director, Jerry Long, at (866)699-4274 or e-mail JLLongIndy@aol.com for more information. **Ten workshops!**

Keynotes: *Timothy Fong, MD; Carl Braunlich, PhD; James Whelan PhD; David Ledgerwood, PhD; Rob Hunter, PhD; Henry Lesieur, PhD*

Register at www.kycpg.org

2009 Indiana Problem Gambling Counselor Training Offered!

The **free trainings** are located at the Indiana Government Center (402 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis). Registration begins at 7:45 and the sessions begin at 8:30 and end at 5 pm. **Clergy are welcome and encouraged to register!**

Phase	Date
Phase 1 and 2	January 6 and 7, 2009
Phase 3 and 4	March 4 and 5, 2009
Phase 5 and 6	April 7 and 8, 2009
Phase 7 and 8	April 29 and 30, 2009

- **PHASE 1/2:** History and scope of gambling in US; Definitions, Screening and Assessment Tools; Typology; DSM-IV Criteria
 - **PHASE 3/4:** The meaning of money; treatment planning; co-occurring disorders; stages of change; harm reduction; self help groups; financial management issues; legal issues and gambling treatment.
 - **PHASE 5/6:** Biogenetics; Neurochemistry & Psychopharmacology & the Brain of the gamblers; Special Populations (teens, seniors, multi-cultural); Issues for Women
- PHASE 7/8:** Spirituality & Recovery; Treatment Design & Levels of Care; Relapse Prevention; Workplace & EAP Issues; Reimbursement Strategies; Transference & Counter-Transference Issues; Ethics Standards; Resources; Certification Standards
- This training is brought to you by the Indiana Prevention Resource Center, through a contract with the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration-Division of Mental Health and Addiction with funds from the Indiana Gambler's Assistance Fund. Contact: Jennifer Kelly at (812) 855-7831.**

INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE!! On the Shelves ...

grm resource materials on Women and Problem Gambling

If you wish to be removed from this newsletter mailing list, e-mail jjacobs@grmumc.org

SPECIAL FOCUS:

Women & Problem Gambling

on the shelves . . .

grm resource materials

Flyers:

- “Phases in a Typical Female (Escape / Relief) Gambler” (Senior Prevention Intervention Counseling Education, S.P.I.C.E. , Topeka, KS)
- “Phases in a Typical Male (Action) Gambler” (S.P.I.C.E., Topeka, KS)
- “Predisposing Factors Leading to Gambling Addiction” / “Female Gamblers” (Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling)
- “Women & Problem Gambling: Profile of a Female Gambler” (NCPG *Think Tank on Women and Problem Gambling*, Notes from National Council on Problem Gambling Annual Conference 2004)
- “Women, Gambling and Empowerment” (Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling)

Brochure:

- “Women Who Must Gamble” (Gambling Recovery Ministries)

Videos/DVD's (to be used for GRM outreach programming)

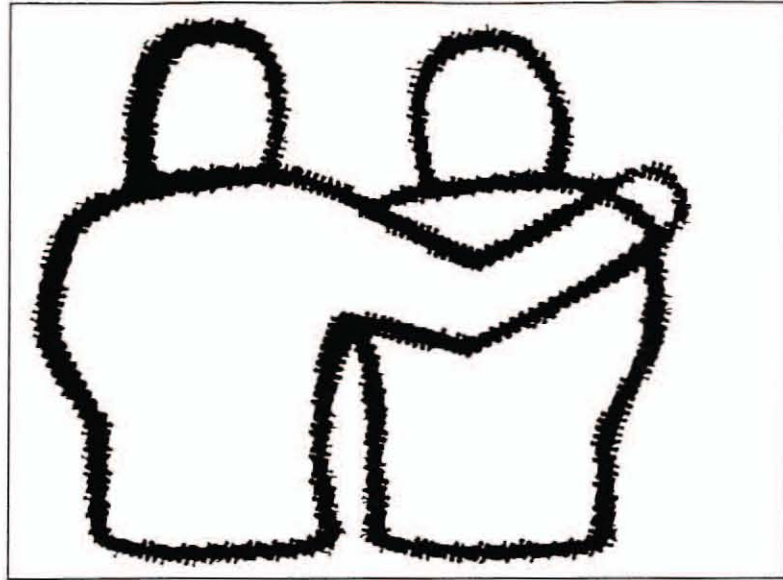
- “Compulsive Gambling & Recovery: *Signs and Symptoms*” (Michael Brubaker Counseling)
- “Compulsive Gambling & Recovery: *The Other Gamblers ... Women and Seniors*” (M. Brubaker)
- “Gambling Recovery” (Thelma Video Co.)
- “It’s Not about the Money” (Hazelden)
- “Love Is a Choice: Recovery for Codependent Relationships” (The Minirth & Meier Series)
- “What Should I Say? What Should I Do?” (Minnesota Council on Compulsive Gambling)

Resource Handbook

- “*FIRST AID* for Problem Gamblers” (Gambling Recovery Ministries, 2008 ed; includes statewide resources for Indiana) www.grumumc.org

EXTRA Resource: Available Online from Canada!

- Online booklet for treatment providers: “Towards a Better Understanding of Women Who Gamble” www.ProblemGambling.ca



Do not take revenge on others
or continue to hate them,
but love your neighbors as you love yourself.
Leviticus 19: 18 a

And now I give you a new commandment:
love one another. As I have loved you,
so you must love one another.
John 13: 34

My children, our love should not be
just words and talk;
it must be true love,
which shows itself in action.
1 John 3: 18

Typical Warning Signs

1. Gambling to escape worry, boredom or trouble.
2. Suffering from severe mood swings.
3. Believing that life without gambling is impossible.
4. Neglecting personal responsibilities to focus on gambling activities.
5. Fantasizing about "this week's win" to overcome "last week's losses", and dreaming of "the big win".
6. Scheming to borrow money from friends and family.
7. Considering illegal acts, such as prostitution, stealing and forgery, as a means of financing gambling.
8. Lying to conceal activity.
9. Jeopardizing employment or school work due to gambling.
10. Having self-destructive thoughts because of problems related to gambling.

If you identified with any of the above warning signs, you may have a problem with gambling. Call the Indiana Problem Gambling Referral Line for information on treatment centers and support services nearest you.

**24 - Hour Referral Line
1-800-994-8448**

HELPLINES AND WEBSITES

Regional GA and Gam-Anon Hot Lines

Provides meeting dates and times for GA and Gam-Anon Meetings

- Indianapolis (all of Indiana)(866) 442-8621
- Cincinnati & Northern KY.....(888) 746-4942
- Dayton.....(937) 449-9911
- Louisville(888) 442-0628
- Chicago(866) 442-8620

Websites and Phone Numbers

**National Council on Problem Gambling
Helpline..... (800) 522-4700
www.ncpgambling.org**

**National GA and Gam-Anon Web Site
www.gamblersanonymous.org**

**Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
Phone.....(317) 233-4454
www.in.gov/fssa/servicemental/gambling/index.html**

**Indiana Council on Problem Gambling
Phone.....(866) 699-4274
www.indianaproblemgambling.org**

**Gambling Recovery Ministries
Phone.....(812) 926-1052
www.grmumc.org**

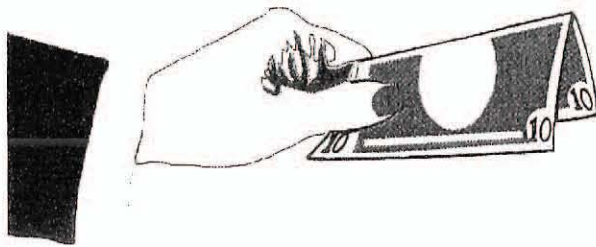


Women Who Must



Gamble

Women Gamblers



Historically, compulsive gamblers were men. However, with traditional role and, 'lifestyle changes over the past decade, women have the time, money and inclination to gamble. Gambling now holds the same attraction for women as for men and can be an equally powerful compulsion.

From July 1, 2005 to September 30, 2005, 52.6% of the callers to the Indiana Problem Gambling Referral Line were women.

Typically, women turn to gambling for one of two reasons: escape or excitement. Gambling provides a way to escape overwhelming problems, childhood disturbances, troubled relationships, loneliness and boredom. In addition, it creates an aroused state similar to a "high" produced by alcohol or other drugs. In this excited state, women are focused on the gambling activity and ignore all other concerns in their lives.

Women At Risk

At the same time that problem gambling is increasing among women, very few participate in self-help groups and treatment programs. Women are generally reluctant to seek help, tend to feel ashamed of their gambling and often create elaborate stories to conceal their gambling activities from loved ones.

The desire to keep the action going is so intense that many women will often go without sleep or food for several days and will literally not get up from a seat until there is a desperate need. While in action, these women are able to ignore other responsibilities.

Unless help is sought, women are at greater risk than men because they are more likely to lose their spouses, children, jobs and homes over a gambling problem.



Problem gambling is a progressive, hidden disorder, in which a person has an uncontrollable urge to gamble. It is an addiction that compromises, disrupts and damages family and personal responsibilities.

People Affected

For every problem gambler there are at least 12 other persons adversely affected by the gambler's activities. In addition to family members, problem gamblers affect close friends, employers, financial institutions, businesses and local communities.

Often, problem gamblers are unable to recognize they are experiencing a treatable disorder. In many instances, help or intervention is ultimately pursued by family members or friends.

Hope For You And Yours

Fortunately, compulsive gambling is treatable. Intervention can prevent the inevitable downward spiral of the disorder and return the individual and their families to healthy, happy and productive lives.

Treatment programs for the problem gambler and their families include the self-help groups Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon, local gambling treatment, education and referral providers, and mental health professionals.

For supportive intervention, information and services nearest you, **call the National Council on Problem Gambling 24 Hour Help Line 1-800-522-4700.**

Phases in a Typical Female (Escape/Relief) Gambler

CHARACTERISTICS	THE WINNING PHASE	THE LOSING PHASE	DESPERATE PHASE
Reason for Gambling	As recreation with friends and/or family	More need to escape, though believe it is to recoup losses	To escape totally
Gambling Attitude	Sets limits-both time and money	Sets limits-time & money. Doesn't follow plan	Still sets time & money limits. Never follows plan
Mood	Pain free while in action	Numbness - hypnotic like feeling	Stupor - refuses to stop gambling activity for eating, restroom, phone call, etc. until broke
Driving Force to Gamble	Escape other problems	Escape life problems	Escape life problems
Time Spent Gambling	Frequent	Increased, as often as possible	Whenever possible
Work Activity	Those who do work still maintain regular attendance	Begins making excuse to miss work, less productive	Misses work, makes excuses
Family Life	Less time with family	Rapid decrease in family involvement	Almost no family involvement
Source of Gambling Money	Extra or recreation funds	All available funds including: all bank accounts, pay checks, credit cards, loans from family & friends, etc.	Any & all means (legal and illegal)
Personal Habits	Very well groomed	Well groomed, false happiness, lying extensively	Deteriorated
Length of Phase	Less than one year	Less than one year	Less than one year
How Phase Ends	Big win for a few, most begin chasing lost money and experience the need for more escape from life's problems	Feeling of depression, anxious, strong urge to get away from predisposing and problems created by gambling. Gambling even knowing of the problems causing others	Caught in illegal action, family threats, divorce or abandonment, suicidal, extreme depression, realizes need for help

Phases in a Typical Male (Action) Gambler

CHARACTERISTICS	THE WINNING PHASE	THE LOSING PHASE	DESPERATE PHASE
Reason for Gambling	Gambling to win and have fun	Gambling to recoup losses; chasing to get even.	Gambling because he cannot keep from it.
Gambling Attitude	Plans carefully and bets cautiously	Bets are impulsive and rash.	Unreasonable: panicky; bets hunches; superstitious; takes long shots.
Mood	Eager - unreasonable optimism	Fearful and Depressed	Feels powerless; blames others; feels great remorse-panic; becomes a zombie.
Driving Force to Gamble	Euphoria of winning; consuming desire to perpetuate that high; fantasizes about winning.	Overwhelming need to quell depression over losing. Desperately trying to recapture the glow of the winning phase.	Continuing to juggle his dwindling resources; robbing Peter to pay Paul; seeking relief from the pain.
Time Spent Gambling	Part-time activity	Most of life devoted to chasing the losses.	Only thing in life.
Work Activity	Still works although he spends some of the work time planning the next wager.	Begins to miss work to go to the track or other gambling venue; conversely may have two jobs to pump money into bets.	Probably has been fired from employment; reputation ruined.
Family Life	Splits the time between gambling activities and family activities.	Pre-occupation with gambling; wife & children learn to stay out of the way; home life unhappy.	Life is out of control. Alienated from family and friends.
Source of Gambling Money	Winnings	Becomes a Con Man; starts to convert assets into cash; heavy borrowing; several loans; juggling begins.	Get money wherever they can; often resorts to criminal activity.
Personal Habits	Days of wine and roses; gifts for the spouse and children; in later stages begins to lie to cover up their activities.	Frequent absences from home; ignores spouse, children, commitments; lying becomes full-time job; personality changes occur; irritability, restlessness, withdrawn; unable to pay debts.	Everything they do is extremely out-of-character; unreasonable and desperate thinking; no consideration for personal appearance or hygiene.
Length of Phase	MALE: 1-3 Years FEMALE: Can be very short or non-existent	MALE: 5-15 Years FEMALE: 6 Months to several years	MALE: 1-5 Years FEMALE: 6 Months to 2 years
How Phase Ends	The Big Win	Bail Outs	Help: GA Treatment and other alternatives; homelessness, imprisonment, suicide or death.

WOMEN & PROBLEM GAMBLING:

PROFILE OF A FEMALE GAMBLER

- (1) 95% OF FEMALE GAMBLERS ARE ESCAPE GAMBLERS
 - a death of someone close (spouse, parent, or child)
 - caretaking responsibilities (child rearing or an aging parent)
 - job stress (need to relax OR have the right to relax)
- (2) THE MAJORITY OF FEMALE GAMBLERS ARE CLOSET GAMBLERS
 - hiding the extent of the gambling from family and friends
 - ease of hiding because of the control of family finances
- (3) THEY SUFFER FROM FEELINGS OF ISOLATION
 - they don't want the spouse to know for fear of their reaction, such as divorce, being belittled, loss of financial independence
 - they suffer from feelings of going crazy and no one else could possibly understand
 - they have no idea where to turn for help
 - they fear abandonment and loss of love from family and friends, especially their spouse
- (4) WOMEN SEEKING HELP
 - women seeking help for gambling problems start gambling later in life than men
 - women have more rapid progression into problem gambling than men (female escape gamblers: 6 – 24 months)
 - women seeking help are most likely to cite electronic gaming machines as their primary problem
 - like men, women seeking help often have comorbid problems with alcohol and substance abuse as well as depression
- (5) TREATING WOMEN PROBLEM GAMBLERS
 - deficits in self-confidence and problem-solving skills are common among male and female gamblers (Borsoi & Toneatto, 2003)
 - both male and female problem gamblers rely excessively on avoidant coping styles (Thomas & Moore, 2003): *not talking about their gambling problems*
 - Women do bring some gender-specific issues into treatment that must be addressed
 - ** experiences of abuse
 - ** care-giving demands
 - ** emotional issues with autonomy and rebellion

(6) FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- *What are the factors that keep women away from gambling up to a point?*
- *What are the factors that facilitate quicker, deeper involvement for women?*
- *How have social attitudes toward gambling changed for men and women?*
- *Do men and women begin gambling for different reasons?*
- *Do men and women continue gambling for different reasons?*
- *Are deficits in problem-solving skills and coping strategies a symptom or a precursor of gambling problems?*
- *Women represent a rapidly expanding segment of the online gambling population:
Online gambling is characterized by:*
 - ** *flexible hours*
 - ** *local availability*
 - ** *low price of participation*
 - ** *clean, attractive location*
 - ** *physical safety*
 - ** *availability of childcare*

ANOTHER CONCERN: elderly persons putting their money into the hands of adult child (who may have a gambling problem) in order to help the parent with his/her finances

PREDISPOSING FACTORS

LEADING TO GAMBLING ADDICTION

FOR ESCAPE GAMBLERS

Note: 95% of women and a number of men who call the Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling meet the Council's criteria for escape gambling. They gambled first as recreation then as "escape" from problems. All previous coping skills are abandoned for the anesthetizing quality the gambling has for them. It becomes their only coping mechanism.

EMOTIONAL ESCAPE FROM PREDISPOSING FACTORS

- **BOREDOM**
- **STRESS**
- GRIEF
- LOSS OF FINANCES/ HOME
- HEALTH PROBLEMS
- FEAR OF DEATH
- ISOLATION
- LACK OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES / HOBBIES
- CONTROLLING OR DOMINEERING SPOUSE
- LONELINESS
- CHRONIC PAIN
- LOSS OF YOUTH
- DEPRESSION
- *EMPTY NEST*
- IDENTITY ISSUES
- RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES
- ABUSE

ACCEPTABILITY + ACCESSIBILITY +

PREDISPOSING FACTORS = POSSIBLE ADDICTION

ACCEPTABILITY: It was once socially unacceptable for women to go to gambling establishments by themselves. In 1981 the Arizona Lottery introduced its first form of gambling: a single scratch ticket. Followed by the Pick and Lotto, by the time Indian Casinos were introduced, the climate of acceptability had been established ...

ACCESSIBILITY: Most escape gamblers will only gamble if legal gambling is easily accessible.

Add to acceptability and accessibility any one or a combination of the following and someone who previously gambled "normally", or not at all, may find gambling becoming a problem.

Source: *Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling*

FEMALE GAMBLERS

*by Paula Burns and DonHulen:
modified May 2008*

Of the women who call [the Arizona Council Helpline], 95% meet the criteria of ESCAPE GAMBLERS. They gamble at different games than ACTION GAMBLERS. They gamble for different reasons and their character profiles are almost opposite that of the Action Gambler. Remember that in the final stages of an Action Gambler disorder the gambler often gambles for escape. When the action gambler is in this phase, he/she may meet Action or Escape criteria and it may require further investigation to determine the type of gambler he/she is. The only purpose in making this determination is to allow the clinician to provide the best treatment plan for the gambler.

Because the majority of women are Escape gamblers, the woman who is an Action gambler may, without understanding of the differences in types of gamblers, feel uneasy about why she doesn't identify with the majority of other women in a program such as GA. Learning about the differences can set her mind at ease and help her accept herself. It may also help her better understand others in her program.

Until the early 1990's, very few women sought help of any kind for compulsive gambling. In Arizona, we have no record of any women obtaining a year of abstinence from gambling in any programs in the State prior to 1992. Today they make up an estimated 50% of the GA meetings in the greater Phoenix area. **Source:**

www.azccg.org/a_female/female.htm

WOMEN, GAMBLING AND EMPOWERMENT

The self-help programs tell women they must admit powerlessness over their compulsion to gamble. Ironically, feeling powerlessness over all of the problems in their lives may have been a major factor that led them to gamble in the first place.

What they may need is empowerment; that's what the machines gave them, a sense of having freedom from being powerless. They have just been asked to leave the one thing in life that gave them some sense of freedom, their machine. When they no longer have it, they may believe they have nothing.

They must be encouraged to replace that illusion of freedom which the machine provided with some other activities and coping skills. For those who seek it, the power of the 12 step program often fills the void.

....

Many escape gamblers identify codependency problems as some of the underlying issues they must deal with as part of their recovery. ... Codependency Anonymous is an organization that has helped countless address their Codependency issues.

Source: Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling
http://www.azccg.org/a_female/female.htm

For more information on Codependency Anonymous, contact:

CoDA, Fellowship Services Office
PO Box 33577
Phoenix AZ 85067-3577

Phone: (602) 277 – 7991 (answer service only)

about online poker ...

In a game
that traditionally
has been dominated by men,
women
have established themselves
as major players.

U.S. News from CBN

More than half
online casino players
are now women

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews?86618.aspx>

5%
U.S. general population
estimated
to be problem gamblers
one third
are
women

(Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling)

It is estimated that
70 million U.S. adults go online
on a given day ...
of those,
ratings show
24% visited porn sites
18% visited gambling sites

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/8661.aspx>

Generally,
women experience
more rapid progression
into gambling problems
as early as
6-24 months
for
female escape gamblers

(Think Tank notes NCPG 2004 Conference)

95%
female gamblers
are *escape* gamblers

(Think Tank notes NCPG 2004 Conference)

about online gambling ...

The anonymity
of the Internet
makes it even more
attractive
to women.

*You just get lost
in it ...*

you forget time

you forget to eat

you don't get tired

It's an escape mechanism
that begins
to consume
their whole lives.

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/86618.aspx>