Gambling is a popular form of entertainment in Minnesota. While many women enjoy gambling as a form of fun and recreation, for some, it can become a crippling addiction. Compulsive gambling typically leads to a life of chasing perpetual losses and personal devastation. It not only poses grave financial problems, it often shatters relationships, ending marriages, friendships and leaving the gambler isolated, with seemingly nowhere to turn.

DID YOU KNOW?

75% of US adults have gambled at least once in the last year, 15% at least weekly.

Women now outnumber men among compulsive gamblers age 45 to 64.

A major depressive disorder is likely to occur in 76 percent of compulsive gamblers.

One in five people with gambling problems attempts suicide – nearly twice the rate of any other addiction.

Women are generally more inclined to attempt suicide than men.

As access to money becomes more limited, compulsive gamblers often resort to crime in order to pay debts, appease bookies, maintain appearances and garner more money to gamble.

Children of compulsive gamblers have been shown to have higher levels of use for tobacco, alcohol, drug use, and overeating than do their classroom peers.

KEEPING IT RECREATIONAL

For women who choose to gamble recreationally, knowing some essential facts can help ensure gambling doesn’t lead to greater problems:

- Over time, nearly everyone who gambles loses. The benefit of gambling is almost always recreational and rarely offers a true financial gain.
- Most often, recreational gambling includes other social activities shared with family, friends or colleagues. Always gamble with others and not alone.
- Only reasonable amounts of time should be spent gambling for recreational purposes. Set limits on how often and how long you’ll gamble.
- Recreational gambling means setting pre-determined limits for acceptable losses. Stick to spending only those dollars set aside for entertainment.

Being mindful of these basic principals can substantially reduce your risk of developing a gambling problem.
AREAS OF RISK

While both men and women are attracted to gambling for its excitement, female gamblers differ significantly from male gamblers in several ways.

• The progression of a gambling problem is much faster in women than it is in men. In addition, women tend to start gambling significantly later in life.
• Men tend to gamble for excitement, the feeling of a rush and for the action, while women to escape and cope with stressful or unsatisfying lives.
• Women seeking to fill large spans of time could find themselves drawn to gambling as a social outlet.
• Some women may be tempted to view gambling as a quick way to gain extra money for their families.

SIGNS OF A POTENTIAL GAMBLING PROBLEM

• Frequent gambling
• Wagering increased amounts of money
• Spending longer periods of time gambling
• Gambling despite negative consequences, such as large losses, leaving children alone or other family problems
• Using gambling to cope with loneliness, anxiety or depression

TREATMENT

Seeking professional help can be highly effective in overcoming problem gambling, and often provides an immediate sense of relief to those who want to address their concerns. Treatment consists of either outpatient counseling sessions with a trained counselor, or receiving help in a residential treatment facility.

Do you have a gambling problem? The only person who can make that decision is you. But the following list of 20 questions may help you determine whether or not you have a problem.

☐ 1. Do you ever lose time from work due to gambling?
☐ 2. Does gambling ever make your home life unhappy?
☐ 3. Does gambling affect your reputation?
☐ 4. Do you ever feel remorse after gambling?
☐ 5. Do you ever gamble to get money with which to pay debts or otherwise solve financial difficulties?
☐ 6. Does gambling cause a decrease in your ambition or efficiency?
☐ 7. After losing do you feel you must return as soon as possible and win back your losses?
☐ 8. After a win do you have a strong urge to return and win more?
☐ 9. Do you often gamble until your last dollar is gone?
☐ 10. Do you ever borrow to finance gambling?
☐ 11. Do you ever sell anything to finance gambling?
☐ 12. Are you reluctant to use “gambling money” for normal expenditures?
☐ 13. Does you gambling make you careless of the welfare of yourself and your family?
☐ 14. Do you ever gamble longer than you have planned?
☐ 15. Do you gamble to escape worry or trouble?
☐ 16. Do you ever commit, or have you considered committing, an illegal act to finance gambling?
☐ 17. Does gambling cause you to have difficulty sleeping?
☐ 18. Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to gamble?
☐ 19. Do you ever have an urge to celebrate any good fortune by a few hours of gambling?
☐ 20. Do you consider self-destruction as a result of your gambling?

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Most with a gambling addiction will answer “yes” to at least seven of these questions. If you did, call the Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-333-HOPE, For help now, visit our website www.GetGamblingHelp.com. For more information, visit www.NoJudgment.com. You can get help in recovering a life of health and happiness. Resources are available so everyone can afford treatment.

FINDING HELP

If you, or someone you care about, is struggling with a gambling problem, help is available – at no cost for qualified individuals in Minnesota. Get confidential help now.

Visit GetGamblingHelp.com or call 1-800-333-HOPE