

Responsible Gambling
Journal



Atlantic Lottery

KNOW YOUR LIMIT.
PLAY WITHIN IT.

AGE
19+

Table of Contents



Introduction	1
Let's Look at Your Gambling Behaviour	
Assess your gambling	3
Warning signs of problem gambling.....	4
Case Study.....	5
Myths & Facts.....	6
It's Time to Act!	
Goal Setting.....	8
Short Term Goals.....	9
Long Term Goals.....	13
Case Study cont'd.....	15
Tips to Keep Gambling fun!.....	16
Self Evaluation	
What Tempts You to Gamble.....	17
High Risk Situations.....	18
Keeping Track.....	21
Stress Management.....	22
A Word of Encouragement.....	23
Available Resources.....	24

We would like to thank the **Fondation Mise sur toi** for allowing us to use parts of their "Self Help Manual" when creating this journal.



une initiative de Loto-Québec



All forms of gambling are designed for entertainment. Sure, we all harbour the hope of the big win – but we know that in the long run, the house always comes out ahead. So, just like you don't expect to come out of a movie with more money than you went in with, you shouldn't expect to come away from gambling with more money than you started with. If you do come away with some winnings, consider it a bonus.

Responsible gambling is about playing in the spirit of fun and entertainment. It requires us to keep our gambling activities in check. The best way to keep gambling fun is to have the right information at hand, and to apply that information when playing games of chance.

The primary purpose of this Journal is to provide our players with tools and information to help them make healthy decisions when playing games of chance.

Let's Look at Your Gambling Behaviour



Assess your Gambling Behaviour

1. Have you bet more than you really could afford to lose?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
2. Have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
3. When you gambled, did you go back another day to try and win back the money you lost?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
4. Have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
5. Have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
6. Have people criticized your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
7. Have you ever felt guilty about the way you gamble, or what happens when you gamble?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
8. Has gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always
9. Has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household?
 Never Most of the time
 Sometimes Almost always

If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions we encourage you to seek professional help in order to develop ways to change your gambling behaviour.

Please refer to the support line numbers on page 24 if you think you have a gambling problem.

Warning Signs of Problem Gambling

Most people who participate in gambling do so responsibly and for entertainment. There is, however, a small percentage of the population (between 1% and 5%) whose gambling behaviours become damaging to themselves, their family or their workplace.

Gambling requires three resources: time, money and energy. It becomes a problem if these resources are spent at the expense of other areas, such as personal relationships, family, employment, academics or financial commitments.

Warning Signs that gambling is becoming a problem may include:

- Spending more time and money than intended
- Arguing about gambling with friends and family
- After losing, having the urge to return as soon as possible to win back losses
- Feeling guilt or remorse about gambling
- Considering illegal means of obtaining money to gamble
- Missing work in order to gamble
- Hiding the extent of gambling activity

Mrs. Jones, a 65 year-old widower with three grown children has been playing cards for years with her girlfriends and always enjoyed placing a small wager on the game.

Recently a friend invited Mrs. Jones to go to the casino with her and out of curiosity she decided to go along for some entertainment. On that first day Mrs. Jones won \$500, she could not believe her luck!

The next day Mrs. Jones called her friend to see if she wanted to go back to the casino again and when her friend declined Mrs. Jones decided that she would go on her own and try to win some more money.

Mrs. Jones soon fell into a regular routine of going to the casino everyday. She was not keeping track of the amount that she was spending but she was sure that it was not that much since she was only spending about three hours a day at the casino. She would get annoyed when she was losing and try to win back what she had lost.

Mrs. Jones got a call from her landlord telling her that her rent cheque did not go through and he was wondering if she would be able to give him the money soon. When Mrs. Jones called her bank she soon realized that she had been spending much more than she thought she was. With no other solution in sight she called her oldest son and asked him if he could pay her rent that month, not knowing that she was spending her money at the casino, he agreed. The next month Mrs. Jones called her other son and asked him to do the same and the following month she asked her daughter to pay her rent. All the while Mrs. Jones was keeping her new gambling habit a secret from her children.

Myths and Facts about Gambling

There are many myths about the play of video lottery terminals; here are the facts about many of these common misconceptions.

- Myth:** There are “hot machines.”
- Fact:** Slots don’t keep track of play results. Each play result is drawn from all possible combinations and is totally independent from previous plays. In other words, Slot spins are random from one another just like all LOTTO 6/49 draws are random from one another. This means that there is no such thing as a “hot machine.”
- Myth:** Some Slots are “due” to pay.
- Fact:** Slots are designed to pay out randomly. They follow no set pattern and there is no way to predict the outcome of a game.
- Myth:** Players can control the outcome of a game.
- Fact:** It is impossible for players to control the outcome of a game. Hitting the stop button will not impact the outcome of play in any way. In fact, the outcome of each spin is determined as soon as players hit the play button.
- Myth:** Slot payouts are adjusted by ALC.
- Fact:** While Slots and ALC’s central computer system communicate daily by telephone for daily polls, ALC’s central computer can’t make changes to the way specific Slot games play, nor can it make any changes to payout rates. A computer chip located within each Slot controls all information specific to the games, including their payout rates and their randomness. The computer chips run independently from the central computer system.
- Myth:** It is possible for me to “chase” and recoup my losses.
- Fact:** Slots are programmed to pay out less than they take in over time, and the longer you play a Slot, the more likely you are to lose money. Gambling should be considered as a form of entertainment, not as a way to invest or make money.

It's Time To Act!



Now that you are committed to changing your gambling behaviours, let's proceed step by step.

What are the goals you want to achieve?

There are short-term goals (immediate actions to take) and long-term goals (goals that take two to three years to attain). For example, reducing your debt is a short term goal, while eliminating your debt completely is an objective for the long-term.



First of all, let's start with the short-term goals that you want to achieve immediately. These could relate to different aspects of your life such as finances, work, family or your emotional and physical health. Write down at least one goal for each of these aspects of your life.

Examples:

Short-Term Goals	Action	Support
Decrease your debt	1. Stop borrowing from others	1. Spouse and family members
	2. Actively look for work	2. Employment counselor

When you are ready to change your gambling behaviours, the assistance of a professional counselor, another person close to you, or a loved one is indispensable. They can help you in identifying problems, setting goals and establishing your strategies. In addition, they can encourage you throughout the entire process. Remember, you don't need to deal with this alone. Let others help you help yourself!

Short-Term Goals	Action	Support
Improve financial stability	1. 2.	1. 2.
Improve physical and emotional health	1. 2.	1. 2.
Improve family relationships	1. 2.	1. 2.
Improve employment/education	1. 2.	1. 2.

Short-Term Goals

Short-Term Goals	Action	Support
Reduce gambling behaviour	1. 2.	1. 2.

How are you doing?

Once you have begun to work on attaining your short-term goals, it is helpful to check your progress regularly, about every two weeks. For each action you decide to take, record your progress to date and the name of the person who has helped you along the way.

Short-Term Goal: Improve financial stability		
Actions	Progress	Helpers
1.		
2.		



Short-Term Goal: Improve physical and emotional health		
Actions	Progress	Helpers
1.		
2.		

Short-Term Goal: Improve Family Relationships		
Actions	Progress	Helpers
1.		
2.		



Short-Term Goal: Improve employment/education		
Actions	Progress	Helpers
1.		
2.		



Short-Term Goal: Reduce gambling behaviour		
Actions	Progress	Helpers
1.		
2.		

Short-Term Goals

Write down what else you must do to improve your progress with respect to each of the short-term goals listed in the left-hand column below.

Short-Term Goal	Remaining actions to take	Helpers
1. Financial		
2. Physical and emotional health		
3. Family		
4. Employment/ education		
5. Reduction of gambling behaviour		

Once you see signs of significant and consistent progress in achieving your **SHORT-TERM** goals, you should carefully plan your **LONG-TERM** goals.

Let's now establish your long-term goals. Perhaps the easiest way to identify your long-term goals is to ask yourself where you would like to be two or three years from now. Discuss this with your counselor/helper, and list your long-term goals in the following chart.

Long-Term Goal:	Improve financial stability
Helpers:	1. 2.
Long-Term Goal:	Improve physical and emotional health
Helpers:	1. 2.
Long-Term Goal:	Improve family relationships
Helpers:	1. 2.
Long-Term Goal:	Improve employment/ education
Helpers:	1. 2.

Long-Term Goals




Long-Term Goal:	Reduce gambling behaviour
Helpers:	1. 2.
Long-Term Goal:	Others
Helpers:	1. 2.



Eventually Mrs. Jones started having trouble paying other bills because of the money she was spending gambling and she had to confide in her children about her gambling habits. Her children were shocked and were very upset with their mother. They told her that they could not continue to help her until she was ready to stop gambling and get some help.

Mrs. Jones agreed to this and started to attend a self-help group. During her recovery Mrs. Jones realized her gambling habit was caused by loneliness and that she had to find other hobbies that would allow her to interact with others.

It did not take too long before Mrs. Jones started to regain control of her life. She started to really enjoy her new hobbies and after some credit counseling began to see some progress with her financial situation.



Keeping the Fun in our Games

- Treat gambling as entertainment, not as a way to make money.
- The odds of any gambling product are such that over a period of time, the player will not come out ahead.
- Set a budget and stick to it.
- Research has shown that people who set a budgetary limit before they begin playing are much more likely to stop once they've spent the budgeted amount.
- Accept losses as the cost of entertainment, don't 'chase' them.
- All gaming products are based on odds and the outcome of the game can't be controlled.
- Use only money from your entertainment budget to play.
- Do not use money intended for everyday expenses or borrow money to play games of chance.
- Balance gambling with other activities.
- The act of gambling shouldn't be all-encompassing and should be balanced with other activities of general interest.



What tempts you to gamble?

The following situations are considered to be high-risk triggers for gambling. Check off those that apply to your particular case.

Either: Choose a minimum of 5 or see below

- I am home alone
- I am depressed
- My wallet is full of money
- I want to reward myself
- I have just argued with my spouse
- I was passing by a gambling facility
- My boss and/or co-worker(s) are going to gamble
- I am feeling bored and restless
- I have some spare time
- I have consumed alcohol/drugs
- I am not getting along well with others
- I want to test my discipline and willpower
- Someone encourages me to gamble
- I am in a social situation and other people are gambling
- I have a feeling that luck is with me
- Other: _____

Now go back over the list and circle the five situations that put you at the highest risk of gambling.

If you have not circled five situations, use all situations you indicated when considering strategies to deal with risk situations.

Dealing with high risk situations

For each of the high risk situations you have just identified, list some strategies that would help you to resist gambling. It would also be useful to list the people who can help you in these situations (i.e. spouse, friends, etc.).

Example 1:

High-Risk Situation:

- Being home alone

Preventive Actions:

- Avoid being home alone
- Ask a friend to go out somewhere
- Ask a family member to stay home with me

Support(s):

- Spouse, family members, friends, counselor, etc.

Example 2:

- High-Risk Situation:
- Having a wallet full of money

Preventive Actions:

- Only keep the basic amount of money necessary for daily use in my wallet
- Deposit my entire paycheck in the bank right after payday
- When I have a large sum of money on hand, give it to someone I trust to keep it safe

Support(s):

- Spouse, family members, friends, counselor, etc.

Dealing with high risk situations

Identify each of your high-risk situations, immediate preventive strategies to take, and people to provide you with support:

High-Risk Situation:

Immediate Preventive Strategies:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Support:

- _____

High-Risk Situation:

Immediate Preventive Strategies:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Support:

- _____

High-Risk Situation:

Immediate Preventive Strategies:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Support:

- _____

Dealing with high risk situations

High-Risk Situation:

Immediate Preventive Strategies:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Support:

- _____

High-Risk Situation:

Immediate Preventive Strategies:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Support:

- _____

Identify each of your high-risk situations, immediate preventive strategies to take, and people to provide you with support:

Day & time	How did you feel before gambling	Type of gambling & where	Source of gambling funds	How did you feel after gambling	Daily total lost/won
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

The process of giving up gambling creates a lot of stress. You may encounter difficulties in trying to attain your goals. You may also be disappointed with your behaviour.

That's why stress management is very important. In order to maintain control, here are some tips to release tension:

LEARN TO RELAX

- Do deep-breathing exercises.
- A few minutes of calm and silence every day can make a big difference.
- Try practicing a relaxation technique such as meditation or yoga.
- Take a leisurely walk.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

- Swim, walk, or cycle. Any of your favorite sports will help you let off steam and relieve stress.

TALK THINGS OUT

- Discuss your problems and frustrations with a good friend or a counselor.

BE REALISTIC

- Continue your efforts and never give up!
- Do not expect a quick fix.



**YOUR "PRESENT" IS THE RESULT OF YOUR "PAST".
YOUR "TOMORROW" DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU DO "TODAY".**

If you would like a happier future, don't miss any opportunity to change and improve yourself today. It is worthwhile to keep trying to change a habit that impacts negatively on your life. But remember, change is a long process. Along the journey towards change, you will encounter different obstacles and you may stumble. This is normal, so don't get discouraged or give up. Give yourself another chance and you will succeed. In addition, be sure to give yourself credit for each accomplishment you achieve, no matter how small it may seem.

Enjoy your journey towards change, and keep up the good work. But keep your vulnerability to games of chance in mind as well, and consult your Self-Help Manual as often as you need to.

Finally, be sure to keep track of your progress so that you will continue to improve. Remember, "Know Your Limit. Play Within It".

Provincial Support Lines:

1-888-299-8399 in Prince Edward Island

1-800-461-1234 in New Brunswick

1-888-899-HELP (4357) in Newfoundland & Labrador

1-888-347-8888 in Nova Scotia

- **Gamblers Anonymous**

www.gamblersanonymous.org

Gamblers Anonymous is a group of men and women who share their experiences, strength, and hope with each other to help themselves and others recover from gambling.

- **Gam-Anon**

www.gam-anon.org

Gam-Anon is a support group for spouses and other family members to help them deal with the consequences of their problem gambler's behaviour.

- **Responsible Gambling Council**

www.responsiblegambling.org

The Responsible Gambling Council works with individuals and communities to address gambling in a healthy and responsible way. The Council undertakes research and public awareness programs designed to prevent gambling-related problems.

- **Credit Counselling Canada**

www.creditcounsellingcanada.ca

Credit Counselling Canada is a national association of not-for-profit credit counselling agencies and Orderly Payment of Debt programs from all across Canada. This site can link you to an agency in your area that can help you deal with debt concerns and money management.

