

GAMBLING EDUCATION GROUP

Workbook

ADDICTIVE DISORDERS TREATMENT PROGRAM

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Jackson, MS

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations for deciding to learn more about gambling and gambling problems! This workbook has a lot of information in it. We believe the information will help you understand your gambling better.

Understanding is not enough, though. The next step is to **DECIDE IF YOU ARE READY** to change your gambling. If you decide that your life can be better without gambling, this workbook give you some ideas about **HOW TO GO ABOUT CHANGING IT**.

First, in Session #1 we will talk about **gambling** itself:

1. What is gambling?
2. What is chance?
3. What affects the odds (and what doesn't)?
4. Why do people gamble?

Next, in Session #2 we will talk about **problem gambling**:

1. What is Pathological Gambling?
2. How is Pathological Gambling similar to alcoholism or drug addiction?
3. How is Pathological Gambling different from chemical dependence?

During Sessions #3 and #4 we talk about **Gambler's Anonymous**

1. What is Gamblers Anonymous and how does it compare to Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous?
2. What are the first three steps of Gambler's Anonymous?
3. Where can I find a Gamblers Anonymous meeting or a contact?

In the Fifth session, you will learn about some special ways problem gamblers **think about gambling**:

1. What common thinking mistakes do gamblers make?
2. What is the “gambler’s fallacy”?
3. How do you “fix” thinking mistakes?

In Sessions #6 & #7, you will learn some skills and tools you can use to help **change your gambling**.

1. What are “gambling cues”?
2. How can I deal with urges to gamble?
3. What is S-O-B-E-R Problem-Solving?
4. How can problem-solving help with gambling?

Last but not least, in the **8th** and final session you will learn about **motivation**, how to “grow” it, and how to take care of it.

1. What is “motivation”?
2. How do I increase my motivation to stop gambling?

Before each section we will have a review of what’s already been covered. At the end of the last section you will have a chance to work out what you are going to do next.

SESSION 1

TM GAMBLING, CHANCE, & ODDS

What is “gambling”?

Webster’s Dictionary says:

***Gambling - “To play games of chance for money
or some other stake”***

OK, so far, so good. But what is “chance”?

This time Webster says:

***Chance – “An unpredictable event
or accidental happening”***

So, if we’ve got this right, gambling has two parts:

- 1. An unpredictable event***
- 2. An attempt to make money on the event.***

Here us a list of “events” in the real world. Put an “X” next to each one that you think is an “**unpredictable**”:

- _____ The next full moon
- _____ A flip of a coin
- _____ The next town in the US to have a tornado go through it
- _____ The 5th playing card I pull out of a full deck
- _____ Your age 7 years from now
- _____ Who will win the next Super Bowl
- _____ The date of the next Super Bowl
- _____ The winner of the next Kentucky Derby
- _____ The date on the next coin I get from the cashier

How did you decide which were “chance”?

Now that we know what “chance” is, it’s time to talk about “probability”. Probability is what “odds” are based on and “odds” are what bets are based on!

First, we don’t even need to think about probability unless we don’t know the outcome ahead of time; odds are based on chance.

What is the probability that when I flip a penny, it will land with tails up?

You can answer this one fast because we flip coins all the time. A penny can’t land on its edge, so there are only two things that can happen: it will either land with tails up or with heads up.

The probability of tails is ____ %

The probability of heads is ____ %

The odds are ____ to ____ .

OK, now I leave that penny where it is and pull out *another* penny to flip. For *THIS* penny:

The probability of tails is ____ %

The probability of heads is ____ %

The odds are ____ to ____ .

Let’s do it again with one of your pennies. When I flip YOUR penny:

The probability of tails is ____ %

The probability of heads is ____ %

The odds are ____ to ____ .

I have a pocket full of pennies, so I’ll keep doing it until they are all flipped. Each time I do it:

The probability of tails is ____ %

The probability of heads is ____ %

The odds are ____ to ____ .

You just hit on one of the most important points in the world of gambling:

INDEPENDENCE

The outcome of each flip is independent of the one before it or the one after it. The flip lives in its own world; it doesn't know or care what happened to any of the other pennies.

Carrying around a pocket full of pennies is a drag; let's say that instead of flipping 5 different pennies once each, I flip the same penny 5 times. What happens to probability and odds then?

Flip #1: The probability of tails is ____ %
 The probability of heads is ____ %
 The odds are ____ to ____ .

Flip #2: The probability of tails is ____ %
 The probability of heads is ____ %
 The odds are ____ to ____ .

Flip #3: The probability of tails is ____ %
 The probability of heads is ____ %
 The odds are ____ to ____ .

Flip #4: The probability of tails is ____ %
 The probability of heads is ____ %
 The odds are ____ to ____ .

Flip #5: The probability of tails is ____ %
 The probability of heads is ____ %
 The odds are ____ to ____ .

What is this called?

INDEPENDENCE

Fact: *The outcome of each flip is independent of the one before it or the one after it. The flip does not have a memory! It doesn't know or care what happened to the other flips.*

Do you believe it? If you don't, you're not alone. Think about this some more. We will talk about it a lot more in the 5th session, where we discuss thinking errors that people make when they are gambling.

SESSION 2

- ™ Pathological Gambling
- ™ Similarities to Chemical Dependence
- ™ Differences from Chemical Dependence

In this session we are going to talk about:

- What Pathological Gambling is
- How Pathological Gambling is like alcoholism and drug addictions

Let's start by finding out what Pathological Gambling means.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, Pathological Gambling is a disorder of **impulse control**.

The main symptom of Pathological Gambling is "***persistent and maladaptive gambling behavior that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits***".

Let's break those sentences down.

The first part of the definition says that Pathological Gambling is a *disorder of impulse control*. In other words, people who have problems with Pathological Gambling lose control when they gamble. They **cannot stop** playing even though they **want to stop or need to stop**.

The second part says that Pathological Gambling is *persistent* and *maladaptive* gambling behavior. **The *persistent* part means that you keep gambling**. You go back to the casino even though you tell yourself that you need to stop.

The *maladaptive* part means that the way you gamble hurts you and other people. One example of this is spending your whole paycheck at the casino and then not having money to pay bills or buy food.

Finally, Pathological Gambling ***disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits***. Simply put, gambling has caused you problems with your job, your family, and your life.

So to sum up, people who have problems with Pathological Gambling:

- **Lose control when they gamble**
- **Keep on gambling even though they want to stop**
- **Gamble in a way that hurts them**
- **Have family, legal, and job-related problems because of their gambling**

Pathological Gambling is very different from Social Gambling. **Social gamblers:**

- **Set aside a certain amount of money for gambling (entertainment money) and when it is gone, they stop.**
- **Only gamble once in a while and for a set period of time**
- **Do not have any problems because of their gambling**

Pathological Gambling is a lot like other addictions. However, you might notice how they are different in some ways:

- You don't **have to** smoke or drink anything when you gamble;
- Gambling does not **automatically** alter a person's mind like alcohol or drugs can
- A person cannot die from an overdose of gambling;
- Unlike drugs, Gambling is legal in many places;
- A person **might** win a lot of money gambling

To help you better understand how Pathological Gambling is like other addictions let's take a closer look at some things they have in common.

A list of these is on the next page.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN CHEMICAL DEPENDENCE AND PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING

People who have problems with Chemical Dependency:

- have an **obsession** with taking or getting drugs or alcohol.
- drink or **use more**, and for a **longer period of time**, than they planned.
- **need to increase** the amount of alcohol and drugs they take to feel drunk or high. This is called TOLERANCE.
- often have **characteristic withdrawal symptoms** when they stop drinking or using.
- often drinks or **uses to avoid withdrawal symptoms**.
- **keep trying to cut down** on their drinking or drug use (i.e., 3 or more times).
- **give up friends, work, and hobbies to drink or use**.
- **continue to drink or use** even though they know that it is causing problems with their families, jobs, health, and the law.

People who have problems with Pathological Gambling:

- have a preoccupation or **obsession** with obtaining money to gamble.
- gamble with **larger amounts** of money, and for a **longer period of time**, than they planned.
- **need to increase** the size and how often they bet to get the same level of excitement. This is called TOLERANCE.
- often have **characteristic withdrawal symptoms** when they stop gambling.
- often return to gambling to **try and win back lost bets**.
- **keep trying to cut down** on gambling (i.e., 3 or more times).
- **give up friends, work, and hobbies to gamble**.
- **continue to gamble** even though they cannot pay their debts.

When we look at the table, it becomes clear that Pathological

Gambling has a lot in common with other addictions.

To get an idea of how a person who has a gambling problem might act, let's take a look at a brief video.

In what ways did the person in the video seem like he might have a problem with Pathological Gambling?

Which of the symptoms did he show?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____

So to sum up, Pathological Gambling is a lot like alcoholism or drug addiction.

One of the biggest symptoms is that the person **CANNOT STOP GAMBLING even though THEY WANT TO OR NEED TO.**

Now we've talked about what gambling is (Session #1) and what the difference is between a social gambler and someone with a gambling problem (Session #2). We are ready to start talking about things people with gambling problems can do to solve those problems. The next session (#3) will talk about Gamblers Anonymous.

SESSION 3

™ Introduction to Gamblers Anonymous

Now that we have a better idea of what Pathological Gambling is, let's find out what **Gamblers Anonymous (GA)** is about. GA says that:

GA is a fellowship of people who share their **experience, strength and hope** with each other. They do this to solve their common gambling problem and help others to recover from problem gambling.

So, like AA and NA, **GA is a fellowship** that helps people to recover from Pathological Gambling. GA is also like AA and NA in other ways. All three programs:

- **Are anonymous;**
- **Have regular meetings in groups;**
- **Are open to anyone who wants help; and**
- **Use 12-steps to help people recover.**

As an example, we are going to compare the 12 Steps of the AA program to the 12 Steps of GA. This list starts right below and continues on the next page.

Alcoholics Anonymous	Gamblers Anonymous
1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol —that our lives had become unmanageable.	1. We admitted we were powerless over gambling —that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.	2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to a normal way of thinking and living.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.	3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of this Power of our own understanding.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.	4. Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves.

Alcoholics Anonymous

5. **Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being** the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to **have God remove all these defects of character.**
7. Humbly **asked Him** to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact **with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**
12. **Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps,** we tried to carry this message to **alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

Gamblers Anonymous

5. **Admitted to ourselves, and to another human being** the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to **have these defects of character removed.**
7. Humbly **asked God (of our understanding)** to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact **only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**
12. **Having made an effort to practice these principles in all our affairs,** we tried to carry this message to **other compulsive gamblers.**

You can see that GA is a lot like AA. However, there are a couple of big differences between these groups. Compared to both AA and NA, GA:

- **Does not** stress God and Spirituality in the same way as AA
- Emphasizes making a **financial inventory** in addition to a moral one.
- Talks about returning to a **normal way of thinking and living** instead of being restored to sanity

One important part of these differences is that even though GA has a similar way of helping people to work on their recovery, it is separate from AA and NA. The biggest part of GA has to do with **helping people work on the problems that have been caused by their Pathological Gambling.**

How do you know if GA could help you? How do you know if you have a gambling problem?

One way to answer these questions would be to talk about your gambling with someone like your case manager, treatment coordinator or one of the group leaders. They will listen to any concerns you might have about gambling and ask you questions about how, when, and where you gamble. They might also ask you to fill out some questionnaires about gambling. In fact, many of you have already done this!

At this point some of you might be concerned about your gambling, but are not sure if you should talk to a professional about it. GA has 20-questions you can ask yourself to help make this decision. These questions cannot give you an “official” diagnosis, but they can help you decide if you should go to talk with someone about your gambling. Let’s take a few minutes now to go over those questions. The group leader will read each question aloud and you should check either “**Yes**” or “**No**” in your workbook.

You do not have to show your answers to anyone else so try to be as honest as you can. After you have answered all of the questions, count the number of questions that got a YES and write that number in the space at the bottom of the page.

Turn to the next page in the workbook and lets get started.

THE TWENTY QUESTIONS OF GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS

	Yes	No
1. In the past year, have you ever lost time from work due to gambling?		
2. In the past year, has gambling made your home life unhappy?		
3. Has your gambling affected your reputation in the past year?		
4. In the past year, have you felt sorry after gambling?		
5. In the past year, have you gambled to get money with which to pay debts or otherwise solve financial difficulties?		
6. In the past year, has gambling caused your motivation to go down?		
7. After losing did you feel you must return as soon as possible and win back your losses?		
8. After a win did you have a strong urge to return and win more?		
9. In the past year, did you ever gamble until your last dollar was gone?		
10. Have you borrowed money to finance your gambling in the past year?		
11. Have you sold anything to get money for gambling in the past year?		
12. Did you try not to use "gambling money" for normal bills?		
13. In the past year, has gambling made you not take good care of yourself and your family?		
14. In the past year, did you gamble longer than you had planned?		
15. In the past year, have you gambled to "get away" from your problems?		
16. Have you done or thought about doing something illegal to get money for gambling?		
17. Has gambling caused you to have sleep problems in the past year?		
18. In the past year, have you wanted to gamble after you got some bad news or got mad or had a fight with someone?		
19. In the past year, have you wanted to gamble after you got some good news?		
20. In the past year, have you thought about hurting or killing yourself because of gambling?		

I answered "Yes" to _____ questions.

Now, turn to the next page.

If you answered “**YES**” to any of these questions it is possible that gambling is causing some problems in your life. This is **NOT** the same thing as being a Pathological Gambler, but ***it might mean you should think about making some changes in your gambling habits.*** Also, your gambling activities might put you at risk for having other problems, such as with alcohol, drugs, or depression.

It might help to show your “Twenty Questions of Gamblers Anonymous” questionnaire to your case manager, treatment coordinator, group leader, or other treatment professional. They will be happy to meet with you one-on-one to talk about your gambling. They can give you some good ideas about what you can do to learn more or get help with a gambling problem.

SESSION 4

- ™ Step 1 of Gamblers Anonymous
- ™ Step 2 of Gamblers Anonymous
- ™ Step 3 of Gamblers Anonymous

Working through steps 1, 2, and 3 of Gamblers Anonymous

So far we've talked about chance and odds. We talked about the difference between gambling and Pathological Gambling. And last time we talked about Gamblers Anonymous and how it is like 12 Step Groups such as AA and NA. We also talked about some ways that GA is different from these other 12 Step Groups. We talked about how GA can be a part of recovery program for people with gambling problems. The last thing we did was to review GA's 20-questions. That should have helped you to figure out if you are having some problems with gambling.

Today we are going to take a closer look at GA. We are going to go over the first three steps of GA and talk about what they mean. We are going to tell you about GA meetings and where to find them if you are interested in going to one.

How does someone stop gambling through the Gamblers Anonymous self-help program?

Just like treatment programs, self help programs like GA require that participants have a basic level of **HONESTY, OPENMINDEDNESS, AND WILLINGNESS**. These are key words in recovery.

GA, just like treatment programs for pathological gamblers, is based on **ABSTINENCE** from gambling. This means trying to stop gambling completely. This is based on the best advice of professionals and the experience of individuals in GA who are now recovering from gambling problems.

Like both AA and NA, **GA uses its 12 Steps to help bring about a step-by-step character change within oneself**. GA teaches that there are no short cuts. Abstinence will only be possible through behavior change, and long-lasting behavior change will only happen through character change. Like everything worthwhile, this requires hard work over a long period of time.

Okay let's turn the page and start with step one.

Step 1

**WE ADMITTED THAT WE WERE POWERLESS OVER GAMBLING –
THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE**

The first step of GA is very similar to that of AA and NA. Before we can start to work on our recovery, we need to openly and honestly admit that we are **powerless** over our gambling. We have to take a look at ourselves and see that our gambling is out of control. Even when we think about how many problems gambling has caused and we want to stop gambling we keep going back.

Step one provides you with a very difficult choice that ONLY YOU can make. You can either:

CONTINUE TO GAMBLE

OR

**ABSTAIN AND BEGIN TO THE PROCESS OF
RECOVERY**

One way to help you make this choice is to look closely at problems in your life that are:

Caused by gambling
or
Caused by something else, but made worse by gambling

For your own sake, it is important to do this as honestly as possible. Include problems that other people think are due to your gambling, even if you don't. Put a "*" next to them to keep them separate. You can write your thoughts on the lines below:

Problems Caused by Gambling

Problems Made Worse by Gambling

Just like with drinking and drugging, problems are one of the best signs that it might be time to make a change. People *usually* stop doing things that cause them problems. **If you keep gambling even though it has caused you problems, it means you have lost some of your "Power" or control over gambling behavior.**

The second part of GA's Step One talks about Unmanageability.

According to the dictionary, when something is *unmanageable* it is reckless and out of control.

For people who have difficulties with Pathological Gambling,

unmanageability means that gambling is running their lives. The need to gamble takes over and everything else, like food, family, and health take a back seat. Problems build up faster and faster and pretty soon they're so big and there are so many of them that it's hard to see any way out. In short, gambling has made life unmanageable.

Now, go back a page to your list and put a "U" after each problem that you think is a sign that your gambling is unmanageable.

The last part of Step One asks people to **ADMIT** that they are powerless over gambling and that their lives have become unmanageable. ***For many people who have problems with Pathological Gambling, this is the hardest step.*** The good news though, is that if they can take that step they can start to get help from others and stop suffering alone.

Now we'll move on to Step Two of Gamblers Anonymous.

Step 2

CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO A NORMAL WAY OF THINKING AND LIVING

The second step in GA talks about coming to believe in a power greater than ourselves or a higher power. For many people who are new to GA this can be a very hard thing to swallow. After all, when we gamble we usually think we have a lot of control over whether we win or lose. We might say that “lady luck” is on our side or we are on a “hot streak,” but deep down we think that we won because of something we did.

- Do you hold the dice a certain way when you play craps? _____
- Do you have a sure-fire strategy when you play blackjack or poker? _____
- Do you carry a lucky charm or wear a lucky hat when you gamble? _____

In our minds we think that we are the ones that control the outcome. We think that it is what we do that determines if we win or lose.

The problem is that thinking that we are in control is what causes us to keep gambling even after we lose everything. The **TRUTH** about gambling is:

- You are more likely to lose than to win
- Whether you win or lose is decided by **chance** and **chance alone**.
- No lucky charms, magic words, or betting strategies will ever beat **chance**.

Chance is something that is outside of you. No matter what you think, say, or do chance is always beyond your control and it is the only thing that determines whether you win or lose.

Look at this quote from the October, 2000 issue of **Casino Player** magazine, "***Of course, the casinos themselves don't believe in luck and they certainly don't rely on luck to win magical amounts of money from us. The casinos believe in math...***" (p. 77).

Since you can't control chance, the only things you can control is how much money you will spend gambling and when you will stop. People who have problems with Pathological Gambling, however, **can't** control how much is spent and when to stop. **When they gamble they lose control.** So for a person who has problems with Pathological Gambling:

- **Chance** controls whether he or she wins or loses. This is **always true** and **nothing can change that fact.**
- He or she has lost control over how much is lost and when to quit.
- Once the money is gone the he or she is alone and must deal with the problems gambling has caused.

When you look at gambling this way, you might start to see that the life of a person who has difficulties with pathological gambling is both very lonely and full of problems.

People with gambling problems often have a false sense of control over what happens when they gamble. This false sense of control also causes a problem gambler to feel that he or she alone must solve the problems that gambling has caused. **Not asking for help can make a person who has problems with Pathological Gambling feel very isolated and alone.** He or she might see gambling as the only solution and will desperately try to find a way to keep making bets. Unfortunately, chance is usually not on his or her side and so the losses and the problems caused by gambling continue to get worse

Now let's look at the other side of Step 2.

As we have said, chance is something that is outside of ourselves and is the only thing that decides whether we win or lose when gambling. Given this situation, it is only fair that there also be something outside of ourselves that will help us recover. In Gambler's anonymous that something is called a power greater than ourselves, or a higher power.

Now before we talk about what it means to believe in a power greater than ourselves, let's spend a couple of minutes talking about what it doesn't mean. Believing in a power greater than ourselves **DOES NOT** mean that:

- we are weak;
- we have to become religious;
- we have to believe in God;
- we have given up all responsibility for our lives.

Okay, that said, we can now take a look at what believing in a higher power does mean, and how it can help people who have difficulties with Pathological Gambling.

In Gambler's Anonymous, working on Step 2 means that we begin to understand that it is chance and not us that controls whether we win or lose bets and that most of the time we will lose. From this understanding, we also begin to see that gambling is actually a bad way to try and solve our problems.

So if we don't gamble as a way out of our problems, then what do we do? Step 2 begins to answer that question by showing us that:

- we do not have to face our problems alone and that it is okay to ask for help;
- recovery will take a lot of work, but that with help we can recover and experience the benefits of our efforts.

Another part of Step 2 deals with spirituality. Now many people think that spirituality is the same as believing in God and being religious. According to the dictionary, however, spirituality has more to do with being in touch with ourselves and nature than it does with God and religion.

Gambler's Anonymous also says that you do not have to believe in God to be spiritual. For GA members, the spirituality part of Step 2 is where you start to learn to accept who and what you are. You might have done things in the past that you feel were bad or wrong, but you as an individual are still a good person who deserves a chance at recovery.

Step 2 helps us to start to understand that it is not money or having lots of material things that makes us happy. The spiritual side of Step 2 says that real happiness comes from how we feel about ourselves and how we lead our lives.

Let's take a couple of minutes now to look at our spirituality. Try to think of some things that do not cost money but can make you feel good about yourself. Write your answers in the spaces below. To help get you started, we have included a couple of examples.

The things that make me really happy are:

Example: Keeping a promise that I made.

Example: Being able to look in the mirror and smile at what I see.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

The last part of Step 2 is putting our higher power and our spirituality together. One way to do this is to start to figure out what higher power we are going to believe in. Ask yourself these three questions:

- 1. What are some things or places that are bigger or stronger than me?*
- 2. What is one place or thing that every time I think about it I smile or feel happy?*
- 3. What is a place or thing that no matter how bad things are, it lets me know that there is at least a little bit of good in the world?*

Now that you have answered those questions, take a couple of minutes to decide on one or two places or things that could serve as your higher power. Remember, these are places or things that are more powerful than you and that you believe can help you in your recovery. Write your answers in the spaces below.

1. _____
2. _____

Now it's time to talk about Step Three of Gamblers Anonymous.

Step 3

MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF THIS POWER OF OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING

Step 2 of GA asks us to believe in a power greater than ourselves. Step 3 asks you to take it one step further and turn your will and your life over to the care of your higher power.

Before we take a closer look at Step 3, we want to remind you that turning your will and life over to a power greater than yourself is not a sign of weakness and does not mean that you are trying to take the easy way out of your problems.

The key point in Step 3 is that you are asking for help and are stating that you are willing to go to any lengths to recover from your gambling problem. Turning over your will and life to a power greater than yourself will still leave you with a lot of work to do. However, you will not have to do the work alone and you can get support from a power that you feel is strong enough to help you stay on the road to recovery.

Another part of Step 3 is that by turning ourselves over to our higher power we can stop feeling desperate and hopeless about our situation. Once the feeling of desperation stops, we can start to feel like our problems will be solved and that we can resume a more balanced and happy way of life.

Finally, by turning ourselves over to a higher power, we can begin to work on our spirituality. In Step 2 we learned that spirituality has to do with feeling good about ourselves and what we do.

Our higher power helps build our spirituality by:

- Accepting us for who we are and not what we do;
- Letting us see that although we may have done bad things in the past, we are still good people;
- Showing us that no matter how hard our recovery becomes, there are at least a few good things in the world that make it worth the effort.

As a way to work on Step 3, write your higher power in the space below. Then list the ways that your higher power can help you to feel good about yourself and your recovery. In other words, list out the good things about yourself and the good things that recovery can bring you but that money cannot buy.

My higher power is: _____

The good things about me and my recovery are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Well, that ends the part of our program that looks at Gambler's Anonymous and how GA can help some people who have difficulties with Pathological Gambling. If you would like more information about GA please ask one of your group leaders. **A list of GA meetings is included in the back of this workbook on pages 81 to 84.** The meetings are open to anyone and it can give you a first hand look at how the GA program helps people recover from Pathological Gambling.

SESSION 5

™ Thinking Errors

™ Thinking Tools

Here is what we've covered so far:

- Chance, odds, and gambling
- Pathological gambling
- Gambler's Anonymous
- Steps 1, 2, & 3 of Gambler's Anonymous

Now it is time to look at the thinking (cognitive) styles people use when they gamble. **The bottom line is that thinking styles that work just fine in day to day life can get us into big trouble if when we use them to make decisions about gambling.** In this session we will teach you a little about these styles. If you understand them and correct your thinking, it will be easier to stay away from gambling.

For most day-to-day decisions, we can use a shortcut like a "rule of thumb" or an "educated guess" and most of the time things will work out okay. In other words, the decisions we make may not be perfect, but they will get the job done most of the time. Can you think of a "rule of thumb" that works well for you as you go about your daily business? Can you think of an example of the last time you used an "educated guess".

In gambling, rules of thumb and educated guesses steer us wrong. Why? **The answer is that odds of winning and losing are only true when they are based on thousands and thousands of bets.** In the short run they don't work. And when people bet, they only look at the short run. Gamblers TRY to develop rules of thumb that work in the short run - we call these "superstitions"! Superstitions don't work in either the short run or the long run!

In this section we will take a look at three rules of thumb that people often use when they gamble. We will also take a look at the problems they might have and some ways to avoid them.

RULE OF THUMB #1

Try this:

You're going to toss a coin six times. Which outcome is more likely? Circle your answer.

- a. ***Heads, Heads, Heads, Tails, Tails, Tails***
- b. ***Heads, Heads, Tails, Heads, Tails, Heads***

How did you choose your answer? People know that a coin toss is random. They think "b" looks more random than "a", so they choose "b". Did you?

The truth is that this is a trick question: each one of these outcomes is just as likely to happen as the other one. The odds are 1 to 1.

This is the first thinking mistake that gamblers make. People take the general rule of thumb "**A coin is toss is random, so if I flip a bunch of times the outcome will be a mix of heads and tails**" and they tried to apply it to specific situation with a small number of tosses. **Each coin toss is independent, so a mix of heads and tails is just as likely as all heads and then all tails.** We covered this in the first session, so if you need to refresh your memory about independence, you can go back and look at that section of your handbook.

What about winning streaks and losing streaks? Well, pure and simple, they are examples of us not being able to recognize randomness in the short run. Remember the "a" and "b" above are both random, even though "a" looks like a short streak of heads followed by a short streak of tails. **Streaks are in your head! They are random! There is nothing going on!**

The same rules of independence also apply to slot machines that advertise a 98% pay out. Over the **very long run**, a slot machine that advertises a 98% pay out *will* pay out 98 cents for every dollar that is put into them. BUT, that average pay out is based on the millions and millions of pulls that happen every day of every year. It DOES NOT mean that if you play \$100 you will win \$98. In the short run you might lose everything or might win big. However, the more plays you make, the closer your results will be to the true (mathematical) odds. In other words, the more you gamble, the more of a guarantee there is that you will lose. The odds are **ALWAYS** in favor of the house.

RULE OF THUMB #1: *"I KNOW RANDOM WHEN I SEE IT"*

CORRECT THINKING: *"RANDOM RESULTS CAN LOOK PRETTY STRANGE AND IN THE SHORT RUN I CAN'T TELL BY LOOKING"*

RULE OF THUMB #2

Now try this one:

Imagine that you just flipped a coin six times and got this result:

Heads, Heads, Heads, Heads, Heads, Heads.

Now, if you were going to bet \$10 on the next flip which bet would you make:

- a. Heads
- b. Tails

Did you put your money on tails? If you did, then you have just committed the *gambler's fallacy*. **The gambler's fallacy is the belief that in games of chance (flip of a coin, pull of a slot machine, or roll of dice) the next outcome is affected by the outcome we got before.** So, the truth is that after getting six heads in a row, the 7th flip is just as likely to be heads as it is to be tails. You'd have to flip a coin to see which way to bet! Strange, but true!

Remember that in games of chance, each event is INDEPENDENT of the one before. Coins, cards, and dice do not have memories. *People* have memories. In games of chance each event is brand new! Our rule of thumb is that things will "even out". It is *true* that our results will get closer and closer to the true mathematical odds if we have thousands and thousands of plays, but **the mathematical odds are always against the gambler.**

Look at this quote from the October, 2000 issue of Casino Player magazine, "***Of course, the casinos themselves don't believe in luck and they certainly don't rely on luck to win magical amounts of money from us. The casinos believe in math...They believe in the power of percentages and short pays...***" (p. 77).

So, we can see that the hundreds of pulls we might make on a 98% pay out slot machine is very few compared to the millions of pulls that occur every day. So even if we spend a hundred dollars, there is no guarantee that we will win 98 of it back. In fact, because each pull is independent and the outcome is random, even if we have lost 99 times in a row the chances of losing on the 100th pull would be exactly the same as it was on the very first pull.

The key thing to remember is that every pull of the slot machine, every roll of the dice, and every flip of a coin is independent. What happened in the past does NOT affect the chance of winning in the future. There is only one guarantee in gambling: the more you play, the closer your results will be to the true odds. Put another way, the more you play, the better the guarantee that you'll be an overall loser. That's built into the gambling business!

RULE OF THUMB #2: *"THE NEXT RESULT IS EFFECTED BY THE PREVIOUS RESULTS"*

CORRECT THINKING: *"INDEPENDENCE RULES. EACH CHANCE I TAKE IS BRAND NEW."*

RULE OF THUMB #3

Now, let's shift gears a little. Please write your answer to this question in the box below.

"I think that percent of adults (men and women) in the United States drink more than 7 drinks a week."

After you have written down your answer turn to the next page.

The fact is that only 20% of adults drink more than seven drinks a week. Was your answer higher than 20 percent? If so, how did you figure out your answer? Did you try to think of all the adults you know and how much each of them drinks? Did some of the people in your treatment group or AA meeting come to mind right away? If so you used a very common strategy with a fancy name: "The availability heuristic."

What we do is this: when we are trying to figure out how often something happens we use our memories. **If we can remember or think of something very easily, we say it happens a lot. If it is very hard for us to think of or remember something we say that it does NOT happen very often.** Most of the time, this rule of thumb gives us a pretty good idea of how often something happens. If something happens a lot, we will see it or hear about it a lot and that will make it easier to remember. On the other hand, if we hardly ever see or hear about something, then there is a pretty good chance that it does not happen all that much.

Sometimes this rule of thumb can get us in trouble. For example, if you thought about the people in your treatment group or AA when figuring out how many people drink more than seven drinks a week then your answer would be pretty high. This is because it is very easy to see, hear, and remember all the people around you right now. However, there are a lot of people who are not in treatment and who do not drink and for you it may be harder to think of or remember those people because you do not see them very often. The problem is that when you forget about all those other people, you over estimate how much most adults actually drink. If there was anything riding on the answer you arrived at this way, you'd be in trouble.

The same thing happens when we gamble. In a casino, you are surrounded by flashing lights, bells going off, and coins dropping. This makes it very easy to see, hear, and remember that people who are winning. In fact, you can't escape it! You know that someone is ALWAYS winning! At the same time it also makes it very hard to see, hear, and remember that there are a lot of other people who are losing and that most people lose when they go to a casino. If the lights and sounds came when people LOST, it would be so bright and loud in the casino that you'd need to wear earplugs and sunglasses!

So, casinos are set up so that information about winning is VERY AVAILABLE and information about losing is UNAVAILABLE. When you put these two things together, you will make the mistake of over estimating how often people win when they gamble. As a result, you are likely to gamble longer than you planned to and spend more money than you wanted to because you believe that if all those other people are winning you will too.

The truth is that every machine and every pull, roll, and bet is independent. So, if you are playing slots and the people on each side of you win, your chances of winning are no better than if the people on each side of you lost.

RULE OF THUMB #3: "THINGS I SEE A LOT ARE COMMON AND THINGS I DON'T SEE VERY MUCH ARE RARE"

CORRECT THINKING: "THINGS THAT ARE EASY TO SEE ARE NOT NECESSARILY COMMON AND THINGS THAT ARE HARD TO SEE ARE NOT NECESSARILY RARE"

In this session we have talked a lot about the types of thinking errors that can happen when we gamble. The real question is what do we do about them. In other words, how do we change our thinking?

Well the good news is that by keeping three things in mind when you gamble, you will be less likely to make these thinking errors.

Three Things to Remember:

1. Don't be fooled into believing that you can recognize what is random just by looking at the results. **Remember odds refer to what happens in the very long run. In the short run things can happen quite different.** People get trapped when they believe that something that is really random is a "streak"!
2. Most important! You must avoid the gambler's fallacy! **Always, always, always remember that every pull of a slot machine, roll of a dice, and spin or a roulette wheel is INDEPENDENT.** So even if you have lost 100 items in a row, the chance that you will lose on the next bet, pull, roll, or spin is just as big as the first bet, pull, or roll.
3. Remember that all the bells and flashing lights that you hear and see in a casino are designed to make you think that people are winning all the time and that there is a good chance it will happen to you too. **Just because certain information is EASILY AVAILABLE, does not mean that it is true!** The truth is that most people lose money when the gamble and that every game is **independent**. So no matter what is happening around you, your chances of winning stay the same: your chances of losing are always better than your chances of winning.

If you have any questions about the thinking errors that we have talked about today, please come and talk with one of the group leaders.

SESSION 6

TM Recovery Tools: Dealing With Cues & Triggers

Now it is time to look at some other recovery tools. The words we use to describe these tools is a little different from the words Gamblers Anonymous uses, but the two ways of looking at gambling problems fit together very well. The person who uses both sets of tools can make important long-lasting changes in gambling. So...let's start!

What is a cue or a trigger?

Well, a "cue" or a "trigger" is a reminder or something that "sets you off". It is something that has a strong relationship with something else. The relationship can be so strong that it seems to actually take control of you.

Let's look at an example:

First: Make a rating on a 1 to 10 scale of how much you feel like gambling RIGHT NOW. "1" means you don't feel like gambling at all. "10" means you have a powerful urge to gamble. "5" is in between.

RATING: _____

Now, close your eyes and listen for a couple of minutes.

OK, it's time to make another rating on the same scale. How much do you feel like gambling RIGHT NOW?

RATING: _____

Did your rating change? If it did, why did it?

This shows a very important point: **Cues Lead To Urges.** There are drinking cues that lead to urges to drink. There are sex cues that lead to sexual desire. There are gambling cues that lead to urges to gamble.

A GAMBLING CUE IS ANYTHING THAT GIVES YOU AN URGE TO GAMBLE.

Cues are not magic. They come from experience.

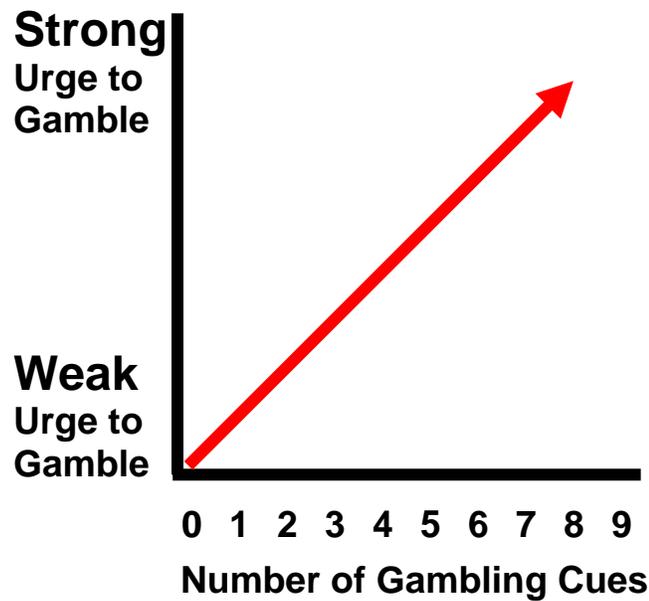
Gambling cues give urges to gamble because they have been associated with gambling many times.

Take a couple of minutes and make a list of things that are cues for gambling for you.

My Gambling Cues

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now, take a look at this graph:



What the graph shows is that gambling cues and urges to gamble work together. So if you come in contact with a lot of gambling cues, such as hearing the bells, seeing the craps tables, and watching people gamble, your urge to gamble will be a lot stronger than if you avoided those cues.

We'll talk about these as a group. **If other group members mention things that are gambling cues for you but you forgot to put them on your list, take a minute to add them.** If someone mentions a cue that is not one of your cues, don't put it on your list.

Cues can be outside of us. An example is the sound of coins falling out of a slot machine. We call these **OUTSIDE WORLD CUES**. Outside world cues can be particular people. They can be particular places. Or they can be events, times or day, or dates on the calendar. *Go back to your list for a minute and put an "O" next to each of your gambling cues that is an outside world cue.*

Cues can be inside of us. An example is a sad or depressed mood. We call these **INSIDE WORLD CUES**. Inside world cues can be particular moods or emotions. They can be particular thoughts. Or they can be particular physical sensations. Now, go back to your list for a minute and put a "I" next to each of your gambling cues that is an inside world cue.

You might wonder why we spend so much time talking about cues and triggers. The reason is that if you can learn to recognize your gambling cues you can begin to manage your urges to gamble.

THE MORE CUES YOU HAVE AROUND YOU, THE GREATER YOUR URGE TO GAMBLE WILL BE.

In the last part of this session we are going to talk about ways to manage urges to gamble by dealing with gambling cues and triggers.

There are three ways to deal with cues and triggers:

AVOID

COPE

ESCAPE

We'll take them one at a time.

AVOID - This means to go out of your way to stay away from the cue. You don't go around it. If the cue is a person, you do what you can to keep him or her from coming around you. Avoiding cues takes planning. It takes willingness to go out of your way. Avoidance can be the best plan for Outside World cues, but it doesn't work for Inside World cues.

COPE - This means to use skills to deal with the cue or trigger while it is with you. We cope with cues that we can't stay away from. There are some Outside World cues that we just have to live with. A casino billboard is an example. Also, coping is really the only healthy way to deal with Inside World cues. When we cope with something we are able to manage it without doing anything that is harmful to ourselves or someone else.

ESCAPE - We all know what escape means: get the heck out of there! We are sometimes exposed to cues that we never could have thought about ahead of time. We can get "ambushed". Escape is the best way to deal with unexpected Outside World gambling cues.

Now it's time to go back to your own list of gambling cues and triggers. *Next to each one make a mark to show whether the best way to deal with that cue is to Avoid, Cope, or Escape. Use an "A" for Avoid, a "C" for Cope, and an "E" for escape.*

Remember, that for each Inside World cue, there should be a "C" for Cope. For each Outside World cue that you can plan around, there should be an "A" for Avoid and maybe an "E" for Escape in case you come across it by surprise. Finally, for each Outside World Cue that you have no good way of avoiding, there should be a "C" for Cope.

Congratulations! You've come a long way in a short session! You are about ready to move on to the next session, where we will talk about Problem Solving and how to use it to deal with gambling cues and triggers. Before we end the session, let's do a quick review of what we covered in this session.

We learned:

- *What cues and triggers are*
- *Where cues and triggers come from*
- *What cues and triggers do to our urges to gamble*
- *Strategies for dealing with gambling cues and triggers*

SESSION 7

TM Recovery Tools: Problem Solving

We all have problems, but people with gambling problems have more problems than most people. The purpose of this session is to teach a way to go about solving problems in life. It can be useful for big problems and for little problems too.

Like any skill, problem solving skills get stronger and stronger the more you practice. When you first learn how to do it, problem solving can seem like more of a chore than it's worth. But the more you practice the more benefit you will get from it.

The problem solving method we use is called **S-O-B-E-R PROBLEM SOLVING**.

In this session we will go over each of the five steps and then do work on a real gambling-related problem volunteered by a member of the group.

Let's get started!

S ***Stands for STOP!*** You are not going to be able to solve your problem unless you stop what you are doing and take some time to look over the situation. Sit down, pull over, take the afternoon off - whatever. **Stop!** Another important part of this step is that you need to **Define The Problem**. If you misunderstand the problem you are not going to solve it! Say that you have financial problems and you blame them on your girlfriend's appetite for clothes instead of on your gambling debts. Sometimes we call this denial! You can avoid this mistake. **Talk About The Problem With Someone You Trust**. See how they define the problem.

O ***Stands for ORGANIZE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS!*** We sometimes call this **Brainstorming**. When we brainstorm **We Want As Many Ideas As Possible**. We don't worry yet whether they are good ideas or bad ideas. That trusted friend can be a big help in coming up with possible solutions to your problem. In fact, it can be a good idea to ask several different people for ideas. No one person is going to be able to think of all the good ideas. When you are done with this step you should have a pretty long list. Some things on the list might seem ridiculous and some might seem to have a good chance of making the problem better.

B Stands for BE AWARE OF CONSEQUENCES!

What are consequences? **Consequences Are What Happens If We Do Something. Everything we do has consequences.** It is important to know there are different kinds of consequences:

Short-Term Positive	Short-Term Negative
Long-Term Positive	Long-Term Negative

What do we mean by *that*?

"**Short-Term**" means a consequence that happens pretty soon. The pain from stubbing your toe is a short-term consequence. It hurts RIGHT NOW.

"**Long-Term**" means the consequence happens later; it comes "down the road". Getting a better job because of a college degree is a long-term consequence. It feels good LATER.

"**Positive**" means that we like the consequence. Eating a nice meal when we're hungry is an example of something we like at the time we're doing it and that is also healthy for us! When we are doing SOBER Problem Solving, we look for solutions that have positive consequences.

"**Negative**" means that we do not like the consequence. Think about the last time you had an extra piece of pie even though you were already full. It tastes good at the moment, but that bellyache comes right after. When we are doing SOBER Problem Solving, we try to avoid solutions that have negative consequences.

To Become Aware Of Consequences, We Go Through The Possible Solutions We Listed On Step 2. We go one by one and for each solution we think about what would happen if we used it. Would it help solve the problem? If so, would it help in the short-term or the long-term? Would it make the problem worse? If so, would it make things worse in the short-term or the long-term?

E Stands for ELIMINATE BAD SOLUTIONS! It's time

to trim your list down. You do not need to trim the list down to one possible solution, but you should cross everything off the list that won't work. Keep in mind that something might not work because it's the wrong kind of solution for that kind of problem. For example, getting a new credit card is not a solution to financial problems. That should be crossed off the list right way! Something also might not work because you don't personally have access to the solution. For example, becoming a professional baseball player **WOULD** solve your financial problems. However, you need to cross it off your list because chances are that if you were good enough to play professional baseball, you'd already be playing. You don't have access to professional baseball as a possible solution.

R *Stands for REACH A CONCLUSION!* Now that you've come this far you should be left with a list of a few options that will actually help you solve your problem and that you are actually able to use. Your conclusion might include some options that will help in the short term and some options that will work in the long run. These are good kinds of solutions to use together. Please keep in mind that it is usually not possible to completely eliminate a problem. A better goal is to gradually make the problem less of a problem. Eventually it might be no problem at all.

So there it is: **S-O-B-E-R**

Now it is time to practice. We are going to take a few minutes to work as a group on a problem using this model. You have extra worksheets at the end of this workbook so you can do more on you own later. Turn the page and let's get started!

SOBER Problem Solving Worksheet

STOP!! -- *What is the Problem?*

ORGANIZE -- *What are possible solutions to this problem?*

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |

BE AWARE -- *What are the consequences to each of my solutions?*

IDEA #	POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES	NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____
7	_____	_____
8	_____	_____

ELIMINATE!! -- *Which solutions are bad? (Cross them off the list above.)*

REACH -- *Which remaining solutions are the best?*

- Keepers: 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Once you have gone through the SOBER Problem Solving process, the next step is to actually put it into action. You should plan on making a "To Do" list and **Making Some Deadlines** for yourself. Start with some things you can do right away.

Plan #1: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

Plan #2: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

Plan #3: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

Plan #4: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

**THE MORE SPECIFIC YOU ARE ABOUT: YOUR PROBLEM
YOUR SOLUTIONS &
YOUR "TO DO" PLANS**

THE BETTER CHANCE YOU HAVE OF SOLVING YOUR PROBLEMS.

Go to page 73 to find some extra S-O-B-E-R worksheets.

SESSION 8

™ Motivation and How to Take Care of It

WHAT IS MOTIVATION?

Motivation is *inside* us; no one knows anything about your motivation until you **DO** or **SAY** something. Making decisions about someone's motivation based on what they say is not very reliable: people often “talk the talk” without “walking the walk”. Words can be very cheap. So, what you **DO** is the best way we have to show others (and ourselves!) what your inside motivation really is.

There are a few very important things to remember about motivation:

1. Motivation is not a feeling or emotion

Motivation *can* have a positive feeling or emotion with it, but not always. There are lots of things we do that we do not have positive or excited feelings about. Think about your motivation to brush your teeth, to go to bed, to use the restroom, to go to group, or to mow the grass. We DO these things, but we don't usually get excited about them or have happy emotions about them.

2. Motivations compete against each other

Think what happens when your alarm clock rings early in the morning. You *want* to keep on sleeping but you feel you *have to* get up and go to work. The motivation to keep sleeping fights against the motivation to keep your job. We sometimes want two different things at the same time. So, the motivation to drink fights against the motivation not to drink. The motivation to gamble fights against the motivation not to gamble.

3. Motivation changes. Sometimes it changes fast.

Do you hate anyone you used to love? Once you finish a big meal, how does your motivation to eat compare to what it was before the meal? How strong is your motivation to gamble while you are sitting in church? How about when you are in the parking lot of the casino? What happens to your motivation to breathe when you hold your breath? Motivations can sometimes change in a “bat of an eye.”

4. People, places, or things that change our motivation to do something are called “motivators”.

We are surrounded by motivators. The smell of bacon frying in the morning can be a motivator to eat. The sight of a police car can be a motivator drive slower. The sound of dominoes, a slot machine, or a roulette wheel can be a motivator to gamble. There are “cues” inside of us and outside of us that make our motivations stronger or weaker.

DECISION SCALE

We use what we call a “decision scale” to help figure out what our motivation is and how to change it. We will use gambling as an example.

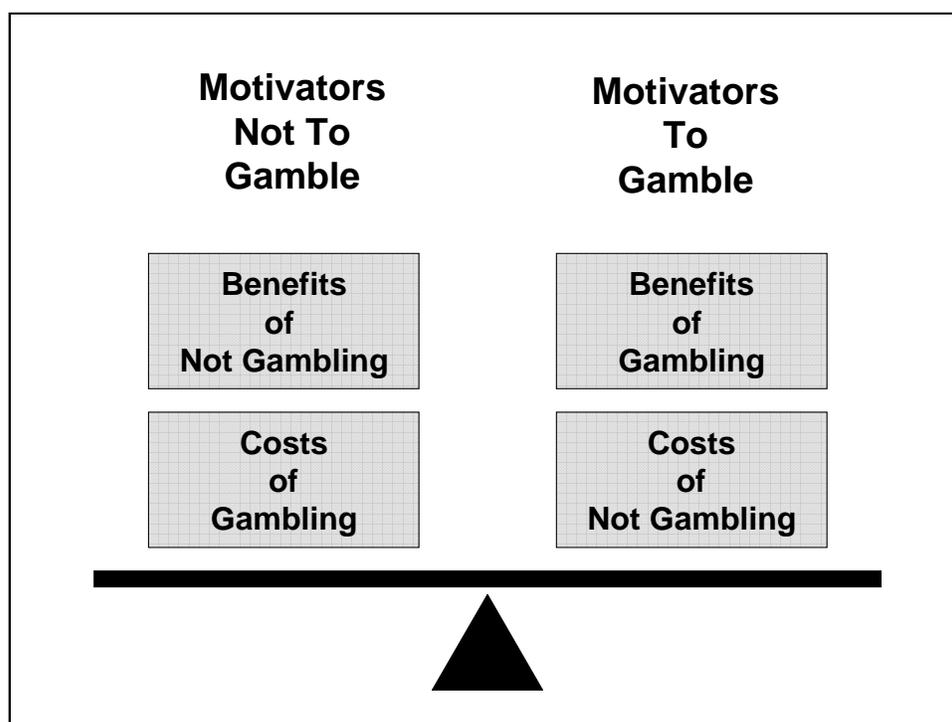
The scale has two sides:

Motivators to Gamble and
Motivators Not to Gamble.

Each side has two “weights”:

Costs and **Benefits.**

It looks like this:

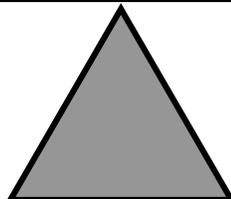


Here is a worksheet for you to fill out:

**MOTIVATORS
NOT TO
GAMBLE**

**MOTIVATORS
TO
GAMBLE**

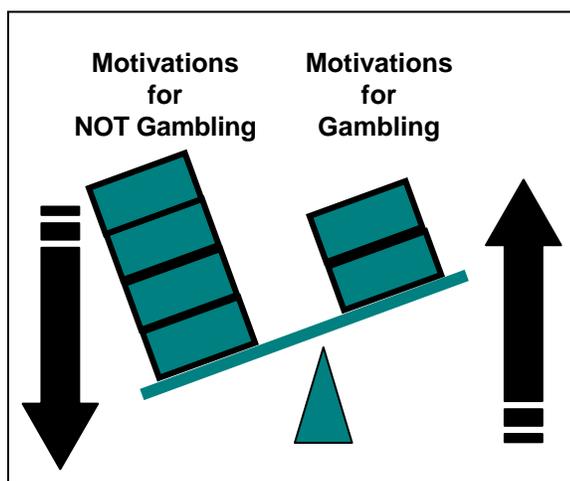
<u>Benefits of Not Gambling</u>	<u>Benefits of Gambling</u>
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
6. _____	6. _____
7. _____	7. _____
8. _____	8. _____
<u>Costs of Gambling</u>	<u>Costs of Not Gambling</u>
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
6. _____	6. _____
7. _____	7. _____
8. _____	8. _____



Good news! Instead of *just hoping* that your **Motivators Not To Gamble** will outweigh your **Motivators to Gamble**, we can help the **Decision Scale** lean to the side of NOT gambling.

"TIPPING THE SCALE" IN FAVOR OF NOT GAMBLING

Increase the *NUMBER* of items on the NOT TO GAMBLE side by asking others to help you come up with more of them.



Here's how:

- A.** Ask your spouse, children and parents what MOTIVATORS NOT TO GAMBLE they have.

(You will become more motivated when you learn what your recovery will mean to them.)

- B.** Ask your program peers, AA/NA peers, or GA peers what MOTIVATORS NOT TO GAMBLE they have.

(When you hear them describe their MOTIVATORS you will realize you missed some important ones that also apply to you.)

- C.** Ask your counselor, group leader, or case manager to help you add to your list.

(They have seen what MOTIVATORS NOT TO GAMBLE have worked for previous patients who are successfully recovering.)

The more MOTIVATORS NOT TO GAMBLE you have, the greater your chance of getting and staying free of gambling.

The exercise on the next page will help you add more to your list.

You will be surprised to discover how many more MOTIVATORS are out there! As you think of them, write down new MOTIVATORS NOT TO GAMBLE to your list:

Now, turn to the next page for **Step 2**.

Step 2: Now, however you can, add at least 6 more MOTIVATORS to your list. Ask your peers what their MOTIVATORS are. Ask your counselor. Call your family and ask them. You will learn some new ones that apply to you.

FAMILY

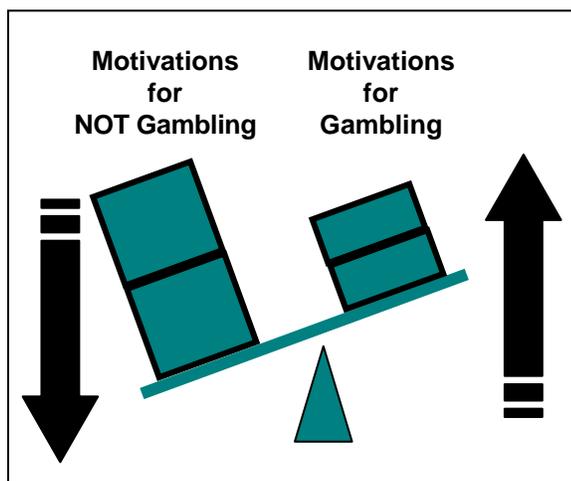
PEERS

COUNSELORS

AA / NA SPONSOR

Increase the WEIGHT of items on the Motivations for NOT Gambling side by:

Giving them more personal meaning: make them important parts of your life and feel good about yourself when you do.



Here's how . . .

Step 1: Look at your list of BENEFITS OF NOT GAMBLING and write down your most important one.

Step 2: Imagine a non-gambling man or woman successfully living out this BENEFIT. Write down 7 or more SPECIFIC things that show you that BENEFIT is part of his/her life. Here is an example:

BENEFIT: Become a better spouse.

Specifics: (*What a good spouse does and looks like*)

1. Takes out the garbage without being asked.
2. Expresses love.
3. Is faithful.
4. Brings home ALL of his paycheck.
5. Shares the TV remote control
6. Sometimes makes supper for the family and lets spouse relax.
7. Looks for kind things to say

(Of course, there are MANY others, but you get the idea.)

Step 3: Pick one of the "specifics" and DO IT NOW!

Step 4: After you've done it, congratulate yourself for starting to become (as in the example) -- a better husband -- for that is what you've done. Notice how you feel about yourself for actually starting to live out your BENEFIT OF NOT GAMBLING.

WORKSHEET

"BEEFING UP" MY BENEFITS OF NOT GAMBLING

Step 1: BENEFIT _____

Step 2: SPECIFICS (things that are proof that the BENEFIT is there in my life.)

- _____ 1: _____
- _____ 2: _____
- _____ 3: _____
- _____ 4: _____
- _____ 5: _____
- _____ 6: _____
- _____ 7: _____
- _____ 8: _____
- _____ 9: _____
- _____ 10: _____

Step 3: Pick one of the "specifics" and DO IT! Then pick another one and do it too. In fact, mark every one that you can do in the next week and make a commitment to do them.

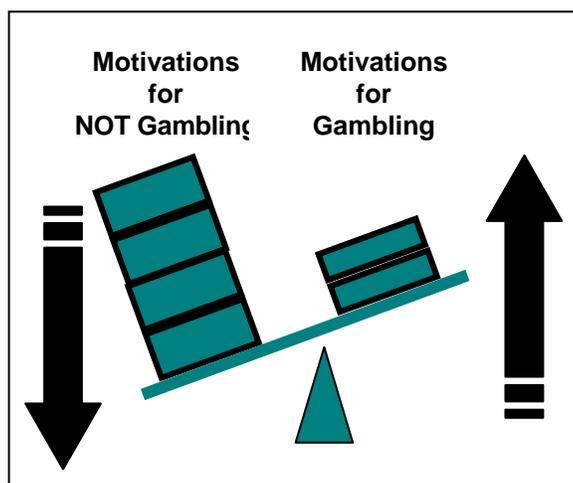
Step 4: Place a "4" in front of each one after you have completed it. Then, find a way to reward yourself for your hard work and progress: see a movie, have a meal out, buy yourself a treat, or something like that. You can be proud and thankful that this BENEFIT has started becoming a real part of your life.

Decrease the *WEIGHT* of items on the Motivations for Gambling side by:

Challenging them with statements against them

and

Replacing them with healthy alternatives.



First, here's how to reduce the weight of the BENEFITS OF GAMBLING. . .

STEP ← --Write down your strongest BENEFIT OF GAMBLING.

STEP ↑ -- Write a list of problems or costs you pay for this BENEFIT OF GAMBLING.

STEP → -- Write down a POSITIVE non-gambling ALTERNATIVE.

STEP ↓ .. Write a list of reasons why the POSITIVE ALTERNATIVE is better

Here is an example:

← **BENEFIT OF GAMBLING:**

Feeling that rush

↑ **“Yeah, but . . .”**

(List problems with it)

→ **HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE:**

Jogging

↓ **“Better, because . . .”**

(List advantages of it)

- Ruins my finances
- Guilt and shame
- Fights with spouse
- Feel worse afterwards
- Bad example to my children

- Actually can be healthy
- This is free
- Spouse will be proud
- Feel GREAT afterwards
- My children can jog with me

Now it's your turn:

← **BENEFIT OF GAMBLING:**

↑ **“Yeah, but . . .”**

(List problems with it)

→ **HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE:**

↓ **“Better, because . . .”**

(List advantages of it)

Of course, in this example jogging isn't the only healthy alternative to gambling for experiencing a rush. There are **MANY** others.

Repeat **STEPS** ← to ↓ as often as you need to. We suggest at least twice a week for starters. The goal is to come up with a whole bunch of healthy alternatives to get that benefit. Once you have a list of healthy alternatives, the FINAL step is to PICK ONE AND START DOING IT!

TIP: You can use the tools found in the PROBLEM SOLVING section of the workbook on pages 50 - 55 to help you start turning these alternatives into actual practice. Don't be afraid to ask your Treatment Coordinator or group leader to help you get started. To help you practice, there are some extra worksheets on the next two pages.

← **BENEFIT OF GAMBLING:**

↑ **“Yeah, but . . .”**
(List problems with it)

→ **HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE:**

↓ **“Better, because . . .”**
(List advantages of it)

← **BENEFIT OF GAMBLING:**

↑ **“Yeah, but . . .”**
(List problems with it)

→ **HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE:**

↓ **“Better, because . . .”**
(List advantages of it)

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↑ **“Yeah, but . . .”**
(List problems with it)

→ HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE:

↓ **“Better, because . . .”**
(List advantages of it)

← BENEFIT OF GAMBLING:

↑ **“Yeah, but . . .”**
(List problems with it)

→ HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE:

↓ **“Better, because . . .”**
(List advantages of it)

CONCLUSIONS

CONGRATULATIONS! You completed our Gambling Education Group! Hopefully you understand a lot more about gambling than you did before. We hope you have a better idea about whether or not you have a gambling problem.

If you do have a problem, we are here to help you! We have spent some time explaining how changes in thinking, learning new skills, and using Gambler's Anonymous can help you make important changes. We have also taught you about your motivation and how to take care of it.

What is your next step? Well, that is up to you. If you would like to talk more about this, please let us know. We have both individual and group sessions available for gambling problems. We want to help you eliminate destructive behaviors and learn new, healthy, behaviors. We want you to learn behaviors that are consistent with your own values and that help you have a safe and secure life. You can contact us at 601-364-1254. If you are out of the area, you can call toll-free at 1-800-949-1009 x1254. The last page of this workbook has a list of some gambling-related resources you might want to think about taking advantage of.

Thank you for participating in this session with us!

SOBER Problem Solving Worksheet

STOP!! -- *What is the Problem?*

ORGANIZE -- *What are possible solutions to this problem?*

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |

BE AWARE -- *What are the consequences to each of my solutions?*

IDEA #	POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES	NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____
7	_____	_____
8	_____	_____

ELIMINATE!! -- *Which solutions are bad? (Cross them off the list above.)*

REACH -- *Which remaining solutions are the best?*

- Keepers: 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Once you have gone through the SOBER Problem Solving process, the next step is to actually put it into action. You should plan on making a "To Do" list and **Making Some Deadlines** for yourself. Start with some things you can do right away.

Plan #1: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

Plan #2: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

Plan #3: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

Plan #4: I will _____
I want to have it done by _____

**THE MORE SPECIFIC YOU ARE ABOUT: YOUR PROBLEM
YOUR SOLUTIONS &
YOUR "TO DO" PLANS**

THE BETTER CHANCE YOU HAVE OF SOLVING YOUR PROBLEMS.

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SOBER Problem Solving Worksheet

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YOUR SOLUTIONS &
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ARKANSAS

<i>MONDAY</i>	Little Rock G.A. 7:00 PM 2 nd Presbyterian Church I-430 & Cantrell Rd. Little Rock, AR	
<i>TUESDAY</i>	Crossett G.A. 6:30 PM Harmony Health Food (next to Tobacco Mart) 617 West 1 st Street Crossett, AR	Helena G.A. 7:30 PM St. John Episcopal Church Perry & Pecan Street Helena, AR
<i>WEDNESDAY</i>		
<i>THURSDAY</i>	Hot Springs G.A. 7:00 PM Alano Club 118 Plateau Hot Springs, AR	Helena G.A. 7:30 PM St. John Episcopal Church Perry & Pecan Street Helena, AR
<i>FRIDAY</i>		
<i>SATURDAY</i>	West Memphis G.A. 7:00 PM Bethel AME Church 2403 East Barton West Memphis, AR	
<i>SUNDAY</i>		

LOUISIANA

New Orleans Hotline Number: (504) 431-7867
Lafayette/Opelousas Hotline Number: (318) 234-5001
Baton Rouge Hotline Number: (800) 203-8785

<i>MONDAY</i>	Fresh Start G.A. 6:30 - 7:30 PM 1500 Palvest Street Sulphur, LA	Baton Rouge G.A. 12:00 Noon Sherwood Baptist Church 1180 S. Flannery Road Baton Rouge, LA	Baton Rouge G.A. 7:00 - 8:00 PM The Bridgeway Center 9637 Jefferson Highway Baton Rouge, LA	Metairie Young Adults G.A. 7:30 PM John Calvin School Room #3 4201 Transcontinental Drive Metairie, LA
	Metairie G.A. 7:00 PM John Calvin School Room #1 4201 Transcontinental Drive Metairie, LA	Shreveport G.A. 7:00 PM CORE Recovery Center 635 Stoner Avenue Shreveport, LA	Monroe G.A. 6:30 PM Travel Lodge Office #714 2102 Louisville Avenue Monroe, LA	Mandeville G.A. 7:30 PM 506 Mariner Square Mandeville, LA
<i>TUESDAY</i>	Tuesday Night Saints G.A. 7:00 PM West Jefferson Medical Center Behavioral Medical Unit 229 Bellemeade Blvd. Gretna, LA	Alexandria G.A. 7:00 PM Alexandria Christian Church 4210 Coliseum Blvd Alexandria, LA	Baton Rouge G.A. 7:00 - 8:00 PM Sherwood Baptist Church 1180 S. Flannery Road Baton Rouge, LA	Lafayette G.A. 7:15 PM Asbury Methodist Church Room 3 101 Live Oak Blvd. Lafayette, LA
	Shreveport G.A. 9:00 AM Charter - Brentwood 1006 Highland Avenue Shreveport, LA	Shreveport G.A. 7:00 PM CORE Recovery Center 635 Stoner Avenue Shreveport, LA	St. Francisville G.A. 6:30 - 7:30 PM St. Francisville Methodist Church Fidelity Street St. Francisville, LA	Metairie Noon G.A. 12:00 Noon John Calvin School Room #1 4201 Transcontinental Drive Metairie, LA
	Winner's Circle G.A. 8:00 PM North Shore Treatment Center 104 Medical Center Drive Slidell, LA	Bayou Vista G.A. 6:30 PM Fairview Drug & Alcohol Center 1101 South East Blvd #B Bayou Vista, LA		

WEDNESDAY	Baton Rouge G.A. 7:00 PM St. Thomas Moore Sherbrook Baton Rouge, LA	Baton Rouge G.A. 5:00 - 6:00 PM The Bridgeway Center 9637 Jefferson Highway Baton Rouge, LA	Covington G.A. 8:00 PM Greenbriar Hospital 201 Greenbriar Boulevard Covington, LA	Lafayette G.A 7:00 PM Asbury Methodist Church Room 1 101 Live Oak Blvd. Lafayette, LA
	Metairie G.A. 7:30 PM John Calvin Church Room #4 4201 Transcontinental Metairie, LA	Morgan City Freedom G.A. 6:00 PM 613 First Street Morgan City, LA	New Orleans G.A. 7:30 - 9:00 PM Church of the Holy Comforter 2140 Mirabeau Avenue New Orleans, LA	Shreveport G.A. 7:30 PM Charter Brentwood 1006 Highland Avenue Shreveport, LA
	Vernon Parish G.A. 6:30 PM Vernon Parish Library 1401 Nolan Trace Road (across from Baptist church) Leesville, LA			
THURSDAY	New Orleans Noon G.A. 12:00 Noon United Methodist Church 1130 Nashville Ave. New Orleans, LA	Baton Rouge G.A. 7:00 PM St. George's Catholic Church 7880 Seigen Lane at I-10 Baton Rouge, LA	Shreveport G.A. 7:30 PM CORE Recovery Center 635 Stoner Avenue Shreveport, LA	Metairie G.A. 8:00 PM John Calvin School Rm #1 & #3 4201 Transcontinental Drive Metairie, LA
	Lafayette G.A. 7:00 PM Asbury Methodist Church Room 4 101 Live Oak Blvd. Lafayette, LA	Leesville G.A. 7:00 PM Council on Aging Bldg. (Old Ford Bldg.) Lee & 3rd Streets Leesville, LA	Houma G.A. 7:15 PM ADAC 521 Legion Avenue Houma, LA	West Monroe G.A. 6:30 PM Agape Church 405 Pine Street West Monroe, LA
	Alexandria G.A. 7:00 PM Alexandria Christian Church 4210 Coliseum Blvd Alexandria, LA	Journey to Freedom G.A. 8:00 PM St. Bernard Substance Abuse Clinic 2712 Palmisano Bldg A Chalmette, LA	Lake Charles G.A. 7:00 - 8:00 PM Lake Charles Alcohol & Drug Abuse Clinic 3505 5 th Avenue Lake Charles, LA	Minden G.A. 6:30 PM 809 Madison Minden, LA

<i>FRIDAY</i>	Baker G.A. 7:00 PM St. Paul's Methodist Church 11248 Plank Road Baker, LA	Baton Rouge G.A. 12:00 - 1:00 PM Sherwood Baptist Church 1180 S. Flannery Road Baton Rouge, LA	Hammond G.A. 6:00 - 7:00 PM Holy Ghost Family Rec Center 601 Oak Street Hammond, LA	Starting Line G.A. 7:00 PM West Jefferson Medical Center Behavioral Medical Unit 229 Bellemeade Blvd. Gretna, LA
	Shreveport G.A. 7:00 PM Charter Brentwood 1006 Highland Avenue Shreveport, LA	Payday G.A. 8:00 PM Methodist Psychiatric Pavillion 5610 Read Blvd. New Orleans, LA	Opelousas G.A. 7:00 PM Episcopal Church - Hall 1103 South Union @ Willow Opelousas, LA	
<i>SATURDAY</i>	H.O.W. Women's G.A. 12:00 Noon Jefferson Parish Mental Health 3101 W Nepolean Avenue #2000 Metairie, LA	Courage To Change G.A. 4:00 PM Grace Restoration Church 1116 Florida Ave Denham Springs, LA	Shreveport G.A. 9:00 AM CORE Recovery Center 635 Stoner Avenue Shreveport, LA	New Orleans G.A. 11:00 AM Church of the Holy Comforter 2140 Mirabeau New Orleans, LA
	Metairie Candlelight G.A. 10:00 PM John Calvin Presbyterian Church 4201 Transcontinental Drive Metairie, LA			
<i>SUNDAY</i>	Kick Off G.A. 12:00 Noon Methodist Pavillion 5610 Read Blvd. New Orleans, LA	Recovery Unlimited G.A. 4:00 PM 3730 Mac Arthur Blvd New Orleans, LA	There Is Hope G.A. 4:00 PM Tau Center Conference Room 1 8080 Margaret Ann Drive Baton Rouge, LA	Sunday Kickoff G.A. 3:00 PM Cypress Hospital 302 Dulles Road Lafayette, LA
	Bossier City G.A. 2:00 PM Koala Club 4809 Shed Road Bossier City, LA	St. Charles Hospital G.A. 7:00 PM St. Charles Parish Hospital 1057 Paul Mallard Road Luling, LA	Gonzales G.A. 7:00 PM Stepping Stones Club House 1027 N Burnside Gonzales, LA	Over the Rainbow G.A. 8:30 PM Lambda Center 2106 Decatur New Orleans, LA

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Hotline Number: (228) 864-0442

Vicksburg Hotline Number: (601) 638-4600

<i>MONDAY</i>	Biloxi Monday G.A. 7:00 PM Gulf Oaks Hospital Cafeteria 180 DeBuys Road Biloxi, MS	Pinebelt G.A. 6:30 PM Pine Grove Recovery Center 2255 Broadway Drive Hattiesburg, MS	Jackson G.A. 7:00 - 9:00 PM Ridgeland 1 st United Methodist Church 234 W. Jackson St. Ridgeland, MS	Ocean Springs G.A. 7:00 PM St. John's Episcopal Church Porter Avenue at Rayburn Ave Ocean Springs, MS	Vicksburg G.A. 6:00 PM Grace Christian Counseling Center 1408 Cherry Street Vicksburg, MS
<i>TUESDAY</i>	Gulfport G.A. 8:00 PM St. Mark's Episcopal Church 123 Church Ave., On Hwy. 90 next to Shoney's Gulfport, MS				
<i>WEDNESDAY</i>	Gulfport G.A. 7:00 PM Memorial Behavioral Health Center 11150 Highway 49 North (Board Room) Gulfport, MS				
<i>THURSDAY</i>	Gulfport G.A. 6:00 PM Memorial Behavioral Health Center 11150 Highway 49 North (Board Room) Gulfport, MS	Meridian G.A. 6:30 PM St. Paul's Episcopal Church - Upstairs 1116 23 rd Avenue Meridian, MS	Jackson G.A. 7:00 PM Highlands Presbyterian Church 1160 Highland Colony Pkwy Ridgeland, MS	Vicksburg G.A. 6:30 PM Grace Christian Counseling Center 1408 Cherry Street Vicksburg, MS	Ocean Springs G.A. 7:00 PM Christus Victor Lutheran Church 2755 Bienville Blvd Ocean Springs, MS
<i>FRIDAY</i>	Long Beach G.A. 8:00 PM Oasis Church 601 North Island View Long Beach, MS	Jackson G.A. 7:00 PM 1 st United Methodist Church 100 Mt. Salus Drive Clinton, MS		Gulfport G.A. 12:00 Noon St. Marks Episcopal Church 123 Church Ave at Hwy 90 Next to Shoneys Gulfport, MS	
<i>SATURDAY</i>	Biloxi G.A. 7:00 PM Gulf Coast Family Church 14700 Big Ridge Road North Biloxi, MS		Long Beach G.A. 10:00 AM Oasis Church 601 North Island View Long Beach, MS		
<i>SUNDAY</i>	Gulfport G.A. 6:00 PM Memorial Hospital at Gulfport 4500 13 th Street Gulfport, MS				

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City Hotline Number: (405) 525-2026

<i>MONDAY</i>		
<i>TUESDAY</i>	Tulsa G.A. 6:00 PM Skelly Drive Baptist Church 8405 East Skelly Drive Tulsa, OK	
<i>WEDNESDAY</i>	Oklahoma City G.A. 6:00 PM 135 N.E. 38th Oklahoma City, OK Closed Meeting	
<i>THURSDAY</i>		
<i>FRIDAY</i>		
<i>SATURDAY</i>	Tulsa G.A. 9:15 AM Skelly Drive Baptist Church 8405 East Skelly Drive Tulsa, OK	Saturday Morning G.A. 9:00 - 11:00 AM 2312 Youngs Oklahoma City, OK Open Meeting
<i>SUNDAY</i>		

TEXAS

Dallas Hotline Number: (214) 890-0005

Houston Hotline Number: (713) 684-6654

<i>MONDAY</i>	Abilene G.A. 7:00 PM 1 st Christian Church Annex-2 nd Floor Abilene, TX	Houston G.A. 7:00 PM St. Martins Church 717 Sage Road @ Woodway Fire Side Room Houston, TX	Midland G.A. 7:30 PM 5244 West Loop 250 Apt. 514 Call first: 915-570-0679	El Paso G.A. 7:00 PM Westside Church of Christ 100 Crestmont Drive El Paso, TX	Texarkana G.A. 7:00 PM 721 Olive Street Texarkana, TX
<i>TUESDAY</i>	Waco G.A. 7:30 PM Freeman Center 326 North 14th Waco, TX	Austin G.A. 7:30 PM St. Johns Newman Church (Corner Westlake & Bee Cave Rd) Austin, TX	Dallas G.A. 7:00 PM Ridgeview Presbyterian Church 12717 Marsh Lane Dallas, TX	Houston G.A. 6:30 PM Holy Name Retreat Center 430 Bunker Hill Road S of Katy Freeway/N of Memorial Dr Houston, TX	
<i>WEDNESDAY</i>	Bear Creek Area G.A. 7:30 PM Bear Creek Community Center Off Hwy 6 - Bear Creek @ Patterson Roads Bear Creek, TX	El Paso G.A. 8:00 PM Bethany Christian Church 10453 Springwood (Off Yarborough) El Paso, TX	Golden Triangle G.A. 7:00 PM The Patch 1225 Dallas (off Hwy 365 Nall Street) Port Neeches, TX	Longview G.A. 8:30 PM Meadow Pines 22 Bermuda Lane Longview, TX	Longview G.A. 8:00 PM 1 st Baptist Church Annex 106 Cotton Street Longview, TX
<i>THURSDAY</i>	Richland Hills G.A. 7:00 PM 1st Church of Christ 820 Loop between Rufe Snow & Meadow Lakes Drive Richland Hills, TX	Marshall G.A. 7:30 PM Groves Center 401 North Grove Marshall, TX	San Antonio G.A. 6:30 PM Laurel Heights 227 West Woodlawn San Antonio, TX	Houston G.A. 7:00 PM St. Michaels Church Parish Activities Bldg Room 23 1801 Sage Road Houston, TX	
<i>FRIDAY</i>	Houston G.A. 7:30 PM Bittmore Business Park 1155 Brittmore Houston, TX	Flower Mound G.A. 7:30 PM Trietseh Methodist Church 6101 Morriss Road Flower Mound, TX			
<i>SATURDAY</i>	North Dallas G.A. 11:00 AM Ridgeview Presbyterian Church 12717 Marsh Lane Dallas, TX	Houston G.A. 12:30 PM The Grace Episcopal Church 200 W Long Street In the "Parlor" Alvin, TX			
<i>SUNDAY</i>	Longview G.A. 8:00 PM 1 st Baptist Church Annex 106 Cotton Street Longview, TX	Kingwood G.A. 6:00 PM Forest Grove Baptist Church 22770 Highway 59 N Kingwood, TX			

