

Coping with Your Spouse's Gambling Problem

Consequences of gambling:

Problematic gambling has consequences not only for the gambler, but also for the spouse and family.

- **Financial:** Time and again, spouses find out about their partner's problematic gambling when it creates financial problems. As a result, spouses may well end up dealing with creditors and the legal system. They frequently have lost or are forced to give up personal savings/earnings and may have to borrow money from others to pay for gambling debts or essentials such as rent and food. Families may even have to declare bankruptcy because of gambling.
- **Relationships**
 - **Marital:** Problem gamblers may resort to lying and deception to conceal their gambling problem. In some cases they may engage in illegal activities such as writing bad checks, stealing or fraud to obtain money for gambling. These and other activities can lead to significant marital problems that include mistrust, poor communication, inadequate conflict resolution, unsatisfactory sexual relations, abuse, neglect, domestic violence, separation and divorce.
 - **Parental:** Problem gamblers often neglect their parental duties and the spouse frequently winds up "picking up the pieces" - taking on the role of both parents.
- **Psychological:** Spouses of problem gamblers have reported psychological symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and thoughts of committing suicide due to the stress created by their partner's gambling.
- **Physiological:** Headaches, gastrointestinal ailments and insomnia are some of the physical symptoms that have been reported by spouses of problem gamblers.

What spouses can do:

If you are experiencing problems due to your partner's gambling, seek help for yourself and your children. Also, it is important to realize that problematic gambling is considered a psychological disorder and that **help is available** for problem gamblers. Problematic gambling can be successfully treated and you can encourage your partner to get help. Individuals interested in learning more about gambling and/or problem gambling should contact The Gambling Clinic at 901-678-7867 or the Tennessee Redline: 1-800-889-9789.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The Gambling Clinic A Center for Self-Change
The University of Memphis
901-678-STOP (7867)
website: www.thegamblingclinic.memphis.edu
email: gambling@memphis.edu

