



AVOIDING TRIGGERS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is upon us. For many it is a time of celebrations and family gatherings. But for those experiencing or recovering from a gambling problem, it's also a season of temptations and potential triggers, especially with many opportunities to gamble right at our fingertips.

Gambling is very much normalized in today's society. Activities like a card game around the kitchen table, a friendly bet on a sporting event or game, or getting scratch off tickets as a stocking stuffer are just everyday events that go on during the holidays. But for some, they are the kind of temptations that can trigger the urge to gamble and potentially impact someone's recovery.

Here are a few tips to help you and your loved ones avoid triggers and the urge to gamble so you can safely maintain your recovery during this holiday season.

BUDGETING

Create a budget for the holidays and make sure you don't have access to a surplus of funds.

GIFTS

Make sure your loved ones know not to give you gifts in the form of cash, scratch-off tickets or other gambling games.

FAMILY GATHERINGS

Request that family and friends refrain from gambling when playing games together this holiday season.

MAKE A PLAN

If you think there may be a triggering situation during the holidays, make a plan for what you will do about it. It may not always be possible, but planning can take the stress out of the situation.

LEAN ON YOUR RESOURCES

Connect with your sponsor, jump on a meeting, talk with a loved one, listen to a podcast, or schedule a session with your therapist to make sure you're in a healthy place this holiday season.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

As you prepare for this holiday season, make sure you know where you can find help if you or a loved one are experiencing the urge to gamble. The hours that local counselors and treatment centers have may vary during the holiday season.

The NY Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG) has Problem Gambling Resource Centers (PGRC) all across NYS to help you or a loved one get connected to help.

To get connected to your local PGRC visit www.NYProblemGamblingHELP.org.

We're here to help!



Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen (BBGS)

A "yes" answer to any of the questions means the person is at risk for developing a gambling problem.

1. During the past 12 months, have you become restless, irritable or anxious when trying to stop/quit down on gambling? YES NO
2. During the past 12 months, have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gambled? YES NO
3. During the past 12 months, did you have such financial trouble as a result of your gambling that you had to get help with living expenses from family, friends or welfare? YES NO