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## How NFT & Cryptocurrency Trading Can Be Just Another Form of Gambling

Are you familiar with the new **“investment”** rage of Non-Fungible Token (NFT) and cryptocurrency trading? NFT day trading, cryptocurrency day trading, and stock market day trading have more in common with slot machines, poker, and sports betting than you might think.

They all involve the act of risking something of value on an activity that has an uncertain outcome – or simply put, gambling. Though not often recognized as such, day trading on the stock market – or with NFTs or cryptocurrencies – constitutes a form of gambling, and today’s trading apps and websites make it easier than ever.

All of these terms and how people are discussing them may seem confusing, and this unfamiliarity can be a good gauge for determining whether your trading activity is a form of gambling beneath the surface. Are you looking at NFTs and cryptocurrencies through the lens of long-term investment strategies (perhaps, together with a financial advisor) as a possible addition to grow your already diverse portfolio gradually over time? Or are you jumping in to try and catch the wave with money that you can’t afford to lose?

New technology paves the way for trends in the news, media, and pop culture more and more these days. Often, talk of technological breakthroughs comes with substantial hype,

especially when the idea of moneymaking is involved. You may hear a sensational story about NFT and cryptocurrency trading, whether on social media, in an article, or by word of mouth, and be tempted with dangerous thoughts like:

- ***“Am I missing out?”***
- ***“Isn’t this better than my 401(k)?”***
- ***“If I got good at this, couldn’t I quit my job?”***

Like clockwork, even those who have never traded before are moved to make buys to get ahold of the excitement, with NFTs, cryptocurrencies, headline-making stocks, and whatever else is hot at the moment. Many step into this “unknown realm” in hopes of making it big, without truly understanding what is at risk or what isn’t guaranteed. It’s imperative to understand the definition of gambling, to know the risks if you decide to gamble, and to recognize that day trading on investment products is a form of gambling, even if it looks like business.



“For many consumers, cryptocurrency purchases are a way to diversify their investment portfolio. However, what we have seen [from problem gambling help seekers] over the past few years is that serious harm can occur if it goes too far,” commented Raminta Diliso, Financial Harm Manager at GamCare. “The volatility and unpredictability of these currencies can sometimes create a similar environment to gambling, where people are starting to chase the rush rather than feel they are engaging in a financial activity.”<sup>1</sup>

While **“cryptocurrency addiction”** (also known as crypto addiction) is a topic of discussion, mental health professionals are understandably making the connection and referring to it as a sub-type of gambling addiction. It’s defined as **“the compulsive trading in cryptocurrencies and related activities with resulting negative consequences on a person’s life.”**<sup>2</sup> follows the hallmarks of disordered gambling, and can have the same devastating impacts on individuals and their loved ones. The terminology is less important than recognizing when there is a problem and that help and hope are available.

### Have you noticed any of the following signs and symptoms in yourself or a loved one?<sup>3</sup>

- Spending increasing amounts of time and money on online trading;
- Experiencing financial problems;
- Chasing losses (trading more to recoup trading losses);
- Constantly borrowing from family and friends;
- Always believing a “big win” is about to happen;
- Pawning belongings to raise funds for trading;
- Lying to friends and family about losses;
- Experiencing mood swings, depression and hopelessness;

- Constantly thinking about the next investment;
- Becoming restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop;
- Denying the problem;
- Trying many times to control, cut back or stop without success.

Did you know that the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine for Florida offers around-the-clock resources and assistance to gamblers and loved ones in need of assistance with problem gambling – regardless of the type of gambling? Confidential and multilingual help and hope are available 24/7 in Florida – call or text 888-ADMIT-IT now if you or someone you know is in need.

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) and a great time to spread awareness about how “888-ADMIT-IT Fills in the Blanks” and answers questions left by gambling addiction. Help “Shine the Light on Problem Gambling” for your fellow Floridians! Learn more at [problemgamblingawarenessmonth.org](http://problemgamblingawarenessmonth.org).

## References

1. Casino Beats. December 2023. GamCare research links crypto investing & gambling to similar harms. <https://casinobeats.com/2023/12/15/gamcare-crypto-investing-gambling-harms/>
2. “Guide to Cryptocurrency Addiction.” Castle Craig, 11 Apr. 2023, [www.castlecraig.co.uk/addictions-we-treat/behaviours/cryptocurrency-trading/guide/#what-is-cryptocurrency-addiction](http://www.castlecraig.co.uk/addictions-we-treat/behaviours/cryptocurrency-trading/guide/#what-is-cryptocurrency-addiction).
3. “Cryptocurrency Addiction.” Castle Craig, 1 Dec. 2023, [www.castlecraig.co.uk/addictions-we-treat/behaviours/cryptocurrency-trading/](http://www.castlecraig.co.uk/addictions-we-treat/behaviours/cryptocurrency-trading/).