

A CHANCE FOR

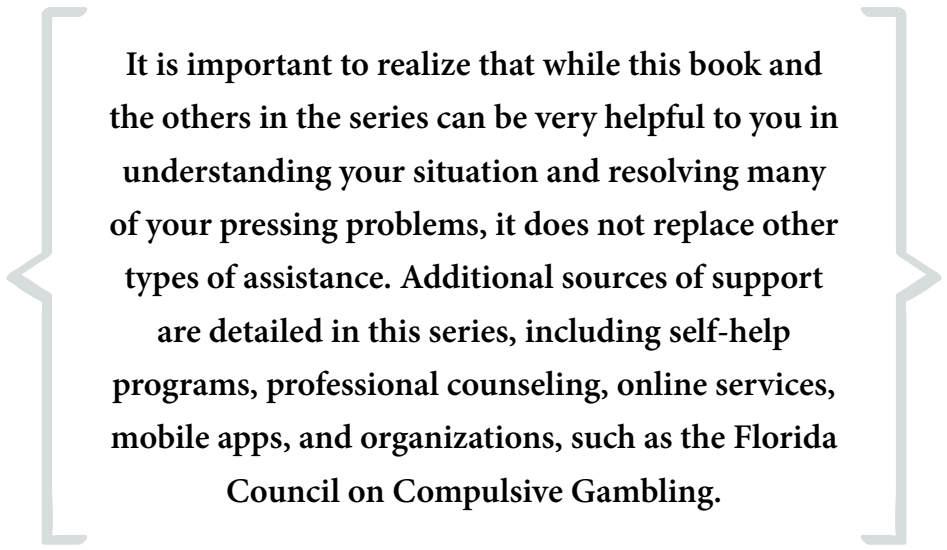
Change

Rebuilding Your Life

FOR COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS



BOOK SIX



It is important to realize that while this book and the others in the series can be very helpful to you in understanding your situation and resolving many of your pressing problems, it does not replace other types of assistance. Additional sources of support are detailed in this series, including self-help programs, professional counseling, online services, mobile apps, and organizations, such as the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling.

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Written and designed by Jackie L. Booth, Ph.D. and
Stephanie S. VanDeventer, Ph.D., of Paradox Learning Systems, Inc.

Edited by Laura M. Letson, MPA, Integrity 1st

A CHANCE FOR
Change

Rebuilding Your Life



This book is the sixth in a series of seven workbooks designed to aid in recovering from the adverse effects of problem and compulsive gambling.



The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG), established in 1988, is a non-profit educational and advocacy organization, under contract with Florida State government, dedicated to helping persons adversely affected by problem and compulsive gambling. The agency maintains a neutral stance on the issue of legalized gambling, while seeking to assist citizens in need of support. Primary responsibilities include:

- Operating the State's 24-hour confidential and multilingual toll-free Problem Gambling HelpLine, which offers supportive intervention, information, and referrals to self-help programs; professional treatment with certified providers; financial and legal services, online assistance, mobile apps, and more.
- Designing, implementing, and overseeing prevention, education, and outreach programs.
- Training mental health, medical and other health care professionals to assess and treat.
- Providing an Online Program for Problem Gamblers and Live Chat program.
- Sponsoring and performing research.
- Conducting education and/or responsible gambling training programs for government agencies, gambling operators, law enforcement authorities, academic and employee assistance organizations, and others.
- Implementing and overseeing gambling-specific outreach programs for impaired professionals; adolescents; military members, families and veterans; and seniors.
- Working with legal, law enforcement and judicial authorities on gambling-related cases.
- Offering a Speakers Bureau and a Peer Connect program.

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's development of *A Chance for Change* is the result of an identified need for alternate forms of education and assistance to those whose lives are negatively affected by a devastating gambling disorder (compulsive gambling).

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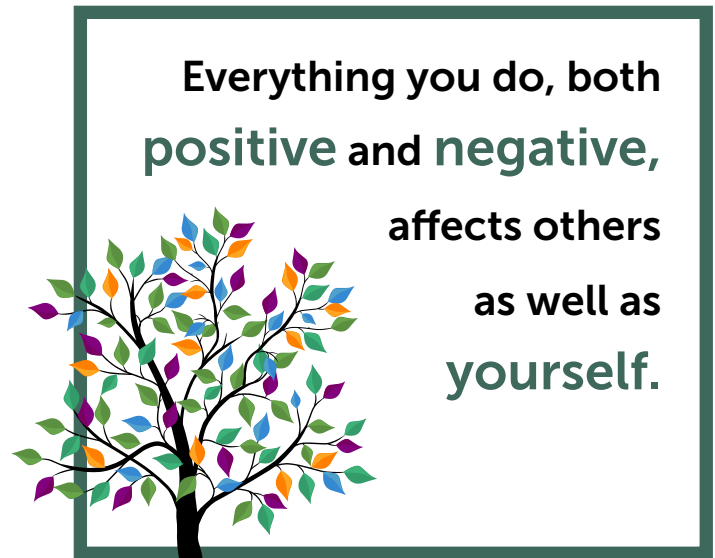
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Introduction

Most of us have a circle of family, friends, business associates, neighbors and acquaintances with whom we interact and who fulfill our relationship needs in different ways. The problems of compulsive gamblers often directly impact others in such areas as financial and legal issues, as well as basic relationship components of trust, honesty, friendship, and reliability. It is estimated that at least nine other people are affected by a gambler's addiction. Understanding yourself as well as the effects of your actions on others are important steps in the process of rebuilding your life.

It is essential to realize that while this book and the others in the series can be very helpful to you in understanding your situation and resolving many pressing problems, it is not intended to replace other types of support. Additional sources of assistance detailed in this series include self-help groups, professional counseling, online services, mobile apps, and organizations, such as the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling and Gamblers Anonymous. As new words are introduced in the text, they will appear in **boldface type**. A *Glossary* at the end of the book has definitions of these words.

As you read and work through the exercises that follow, you will learn new ways of thinking, skills to improve your communication with the people in your life, and ideas to enhance your relationships with others now and in the future. Your gambling may have isolated you from family, friends and other people. While it is not easy to rebuild relationships or make lasting new ones, it can be



done with patience, diligence and honest effort toward creating positive change.

Developing and maintaining relationships is both rewarding and demanding. If you are ready to improve the quality of your relationships with others, the opportunity to do so begins right here with you.

Reframing Thinking

Imagine standing in a room and taking a picture. When you look through the lens of the camera, you are putting a frame around one part of the entire view of that room and capturing it on film. The picture within the frame represents only part of the entire view. In a similar way we put frames around parts of our lives. These frames define what we see, believe, and experience and are the beliefs within which we operate. In reality, the framed parts of your life represent only one aspect of all possibilities for your life.

Frames can be positive or negative and often provide a natural set of rules or assumptions, which follow from the idea of the frame. Some typical frames in which people operate include:

- I'm a good parent
- I'm terrible at sports
- I can't dance
- Cooking is in my blood
- I'll never get ahead at work
- I'm a lucky person
- I'm not good at relationships
- I know how to make others laugh
- I'm not attractive enough

Some of these frames are positive and others are negative. Each statement could be made into a completely opposite statement that could also be a frame. Let's take a look at some of the assumptions or behaviors, which follow from maintaining a particular frame.

Frame: I'm terrible at sports.

Assumptions and Behaviors:

1. There's no point in trying because I'm so uncoordinated — just naturally awful.
2. I don't want to practice because I won't succeed.
3. I will embarrass myself if I try something athletic. I therefore don't engage in sports activities very often, if ever.

The frame, "I'm terrible at sports," is a belief. It may be right or wrong, but it also is probably neither entirely true nor false. This belief has come from some experience in the past, whether from failures as a child, things told within a family, teasing by friends, etc.

Once it has been identified and internalized as a frame, it becomes a strong belief and a way of operating in that aspect of life. People often assume that frames are absolutely true and they are not subject to change. They can be changed, however, and changing them is the key to building a new life. Changing a frame is simply a matter of altering your perspective and considering effective ways to modify your frame.

If you believe you are not good at sports, this will affect everything you do surrounding athletic activities. Similarly, if you reflected on this belief and considered whether it is absolutely true, perhaps you could change this frame. Remember, a frame is just a belief or a way of thinking. While it may be based on some experience in your past, it can be changed for your future.

A frame can also come from irrational thinking, an important topic discussed throughout this series. Some examples of irrational thinking related to gambling include:

- Blaming others for your gambling problems
- Telling yourself and others that your gambling is a good thing
- Claiming everyone gambles and you are no different from other people
- Believing you have a right to gamble even when it hurts others

- Refusing to believe you have a problem with gambling
- Believing other people somehow owe you something in life — success, happiness, material goods, etc.
- Believing if you just keep playing, you will eventually hit it big
- Claiming you are not responsible for your circumstances
- Telling yourself you will stop after the next win or when you get your finances in order
- Believing you can handle your problem on your own
- Viewing your gambling difficulties as a financial problem

Believing these thoughts to be true can build negative frames about your gambling and can seriously undermine your recovery. If any of these examples pertains to your own thoughts and beliefs, you have the opportunity now to change them.

To change a frame, you could jump right in with a new way of thinking and say, “I’m good at sports.” This would cause your thoughts to follow this frame with questions such as, “When have I ever felt competent at sports? What sports am I good at? Could I be good at them? What would I be willing to do?” Changing the frame changes your thinking. Changing your thinking changes your behavior. Any positive changes you can make will result in a more positive life. As you realize by now, change takes effort, time, and patience. But the rewards of positive change are well worth the effort.



Positive frames help you to grow and build your life.

Alternately, you could adopt a more moderate approach such as, “I’ve always thought I’m terrible at sports, but I might be wrong.” This frame again, opens the door to new ways of thinking. You might then begin to consider sports you might be able to play well, or at least be willing to try.

Positive frames help you to grow and build your life. Negative frames keep you in the same place and hold you down. In Book Two: *Beginning the Process of Change*, you read about the **gambler’s mask**. Masks are usually built from negative frames. Even if a mask is based on a frame that seems to be positive, such as, “I’m someone who just likes to have a good time,” it may be serving a negative end. A mask allows you to believe things which may or may not be true and which are often damaging to your life. Getting behind the false front and finding the real you are important to starting a new life. You can begin to do this by changing your frames. For instance, you can look at the frame, “I’m someone who just likes to have a good time,” and examine what that really means to you. How does this frame affect your life? How might other people interpret this frame as it applies to you? Is it a positive or negative frame?

List as many frames as you can think of that you use in your present life, including frames that involve gambling. Beside each, list whether it is positive or negative: a **positive frame** helps you to be a genuine person and leads you to a better life. A **negative frame** is part of a mask that holds you back from moving forward in your life.

Frame	Positive	Negative

Now, pick one of the positive frames on your list above and respond to the following questions.

Frame _____

Where did this frame originate? _____

How does this frame help you in your life? _____

How is this frame interpreted by others? _____

What positive feelings does this frame provide you? _____

How would you feel without this frame? _____

Now, select one of the negative frames from your list and respond to the following questions.

Frame _____

Where did this frame originate? _____

How does this frame hurt you in your life? _____

How is this frame interpreted by others? _____

What feelings does this frame provide you? _____

Are these positive or negative in your life? _____

How would you feel without this frame? _____

Restate this frame so that it is a positive influence in your life: _____

What changes could you make to cause this new frame to be a positive influence in your life? _____

Learning to change negative frames into positive influences is a powerful skill that can help you in your recovery. As you read and work through this book, remember that you are working to take charge of your life and to overcome feelings of **powerlessness**. Being powerless is the belief that you can do nothing to alter your circumstances. This book and the others in the series are designed to help you learn what it is you can do to continue to make positive changes in your life.

Additional forms are available on page 28 to practice reframing aspects of yourself. As you work

through this exercise, you may gain further insight and assistance from a self-help group, your sponsor or a professional therapist. For information about referrals to additional support services, as well as other resources to assist you in your change program, contact the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's 24-hour toll-free confidential and multilingual HelpLine by phone (888-ADMIT-IT), live chat, text, email, via the mobile app, or on social media. (See the *Additional Resources* section at the back of the book for contact information, as well as other supportive options.)



Take a break — think about the following questions and write down your answers.

When you're ready, move on to the next section.

What frame do you think most dominates your thinking about gambling?

How do you think this frame serves your life? _____

How could you rebuild and restate this frame to make it a positive influence in your life? _____

Recapturing Your Life

One of your **major goals**, in this change program, after you stop gambling, is to **rebuild and recapture your life.**



As you practice reframing your thinking, this will lead naturally to recapturing your life. If you recognize and identify yourself as a compulsive gambler, you have probably reached a point of crisis surrounding your gambling problem. Gambling may have affected many, if not most, aspects of your life. One of your major goals in a change program, after you stop gambling, is to rebuild and recapture your life. While this series of books addresses this topic throughout, it can be helpful to take the time now to consider specifically what areas you might want to work on. In the section to the right, put a checkmark ✓ beside any area of your life that has been negatively affected by gambling.

Gambling has negatively affected:

- ☐ My relationship with a spouse or significant other
- ☐ My relationship with parents
- ☐ My relationship with my children or grandchildren
- ☐ My relationship with friends
- ☐ My relationships at work or school
- ☐ My ability to obtain/keep a job
- ☐ My reputation as a person
- ☐ My financial affairs
- ☐ My freedom
- ☐ My physical surroundings, home, car, etc.
- ☐ My physical health
- ☐ My emotional health
- ☐ Other (specify): _____
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

In order to recapture what you have lost, you will first have to identify what harm has been done or what is gone, and then consider how to rebuild that area. In the next section, list each area of your life that has been affected by gambling, and then indicate the problems that exist in that area. Finally, write three things you

could do to begin to repair those problems. You may want to review the section titled ‘Making Amends’ in Book Three: *Staying the Course*. In this exercise you are building your skills by matching specific solutions to your identified problems and the sources of those difficulties.

Example:

Areas of your life affected by gambling	Major problems which now exist	Three things you could do to begin repair
<i>Relationships with friends</i>	1. <i>My friends don't trust me.</i>	1. <i>Talk to my friends — tell them that I am working on changing my life.</i>
	2. <i>My friends will have little to do with me.</i>	2. <i>Apologize for the ways I have wronged them and ask for forgiveness.</i>
	3. <i>I have lied to and hurt most of my friends.</i>	3. <i>Tell my friends what they mean to me and that I need their friendship.</i>

Now it's your turn. Try this with at least two areas of your life, and then revisit this exercise often, using the extra forms on page 30 in the back of this book.

Areas of your life affected by gambling	Major problems which now exist	Three things you could do to begin repair
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.

Areas of your life affected by gambling	Major problems which now exist	Three things you could do to begin repair
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.

In Book Two: *Beginning the Process of Change*, you practiced finding out about the *real you*. Finding the *real you* can be an essential part of recapturing your life as it can put you back in touch with your core feelings, beliefs and dreams. We are going to revisit this exercise in the section that follows. It may also be helpful to review your answers completed in Book Two of this series.

Finding the Real You

How do you know or recognize the real, true you? It can be difficult when you have buried those parts of yourself behind a mask. Maybe you haven't been in touch with your authentic self in many years. A good way to start is to take a deep breath, calm your thoughts and listen to your heart. This can work for everyone, no matter who you are, because it can help you begin the construction of new frames.

Take a deep breath and calm your thoughts. Now ask yourself a life-related question and listen for the answer from inside yourself. Some questions might be general and others might be specific.

Questions you might want to ask yourself:

- What do I most want in life?
- How do I truly want my life to be?
- Am I happy with life as it is now?
- What brings me peace?
- What matters most to me in the world?

List three things the *real you* is telling you about your life right now.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

By identifying your responses to these questions, you can begin to restructure your life. Being aware of how you are living and thinking, about what you really want from life, can help you focus on creating a realistic plan for life change. Remember that the process of **reflection** is useful in retraining yourself to think and act differently. You may want to review the section on ‘Establishing a Mindset-Reflection and Spirituality’ in Book Three: *Staying the Course*, which introduced this skill.

Another important skill is to practice affirming what it is you want to accomplish. One way to do this is to recite or pledge what it is you are thinking about and hope to do. **Affirmations** or pledges are inspirational statements a person repeats to help them reach a goal or stick to a plan. Often just the act of formulating your thoughts aloud, even to yourself, can help guide your actions towards your goals. Try this technique now by pledging to think about the *real you*, and to seek help.

Recite the following affirmation:

“I want to be honest with myself and others. I pledge to carefully examine my thoughts and actions. I want to understand myself and change my behavior.”

Remember that to continue moving forward with your plan for change, it is essential that you maintain abstinence from gambling. The combination of self-help support and working with a professionally trained therapist can be especially beneficial in sustaining abstinence. For additional support, referrals, and resources, contact the FCCG’s 24/7 confidential and multilingual Problem Gambling HelpLine at 888-ADMIT-IT.



Take a break — think about the following questions and write down your answers.

When you're ready, move on to the next section.

What do you think will be the most challenging aspect of restructuring your life?

What is a frame that might help you do this?

Take the time and make the effort to create positive frames for yourself that reflect the life you want to lead now and in the future.



Steps for Regaining Trust

As a compulsive gambler, it is very likely that you have broken the trust of others in your life. You may have promised to change and then failed on one or more occasions. The issues of broken trust may occur across a range and may be severe enough to have destroyed some of your relationships. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to attempt to regain trust. To begin, let's take a look at some of the issues surrounding trust.

First, be aware that while you might have come to the point where you are ready to change your life, your loved ones may not be at the same point of understanding or acceptance. Your thought processes and readiness to change are yours alone and it will take time, observation, and experience for others to accept that you are truly going to change this time. Be patient and realize that you must let others come to accept your change process in their own time. When *they* are ready, it may be possible for them to begin to trust you once again. Also, prepare yourself for the possibility that you might never be able to rebuild the trust you have lost with certain people.

Second, keep in mind that trust is a very delicate and valuable characteristic. It can be broken much more easily and more quickly than it can be repaired. There is no time limit on repairing trust. It will be different for everyone and two primary keys to the process are *patience* and *communication*.

Third, be prepared to earn back trust. Just because you may no longer be gambling, lying, or doing anything wrong does not mean that others will simply accept your changes at face value. You will have to prove yourself through time and by your behavior. Remember, it took a long time for you to get to the point you are at right now. Similarly, it will take a long time to rebuild the trust you have damaged.

Finally, none of this means you should give up or not follow through. Your change process is about you and regardless of how others respond, how long it may take, or how difficult it may seem, if it is important to you, then you should invest your time and effort for a better life.

To design a plan for rebuilding trust, consider the following basic steps:

1. Identify the person whose trust you have damaged.
2. Identify the nature of the broken trust. For example: was it emotional, financial, spiritual, etc.?
3. Describe what you did to break the trust.
4. Sit down quietly with the other person and tell them that you want to rebuild the trust between you.

continued on next page

5. Explain what you plan to do to regain their trust. Be specific. If you have repeatedly lied to a loved one, consider how you can prove that you are not lying to them now or in the future. One way to do that may be to account for your time. If you are going to be late, call and let them know where you are. Allow them to call you to check up without showing irritation or frustration at their mistrust. Their trust will slowly build as they see that you are where you say you are and that you are being truthful. Remember, it may take a long time and this is your turn to develop and exhibit patience.
6. Continue to demonstrate that you are trustworthy, despite the reactions of others.
7. Communicate regularly to see how others are feeling about your efforts.

You might be helped by listing any trusts you have broken and starting a plan for rebuilding those relationships. Use the following list (and others on page 32 in the back of the book) to begin.

Person whose trust I have broken: _____

Nature of this trust (*check all that apply*):

☐ Emotional ☐ Financial ☐ Physical ☐ Spiritual ☐ Other: _____

What I did to break their trust: _____

Steps I will take to prove my trustworthiness:

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

How I will know when I've been successful at regaining this trust:

Trust Pledge and Affirmation:

(Repeat the following to yourself, out loud or silently, every day)

I know I have hurt others by breaking the bonds of trust between us.
I want to rebuild that trust and realize this might be a long process. I realize
I need to make changes in my behavior. I am willing and I commit to doing
the hard work of earning the trust of those I love and care about.



Take a break — think about the following questions and write down your answers.

When you're ready, move on to the next section.

Do you believe you can rebuild your life to regain the trust of those important to you?

What is a frame that might help you to do this? _____

Has anyone in your life ever broken your trust? If yes, how did this make you feel and how was that trust repaired? _____

How can the experience described in the previous question help you rebuild trust between yourself and others? _____

Letting Go of Guilt and Shame

Guilt and shame are two emotions that are often combined, although they have distinct differences. Guilt is a feeling based on actions, usually concerning something a person should or should not have done. Guilt can produce a sense of regret. Shame is an emotion put on us by others, usually causing us to feel unacceptable. Both guilt and shame are emotions that serve the purpose of letting you know that you have done something wrong. They are like moral alarm clocks designed to wake you up to the reality that you are hurting others or yourself. Once they have done their job, it does no one any good to let the alarms keep ringing. This is the point at which the alarms need to be turned off and actions of change need to be taken.

When you have started the process of change and are honestly making amends, working on regaining trust, communicating with others, identifying **triggers** and developing a plan to prepare and self protect against them, and

maintaining abstinence from gambling, you are moving forward in your life. To keep the alarms of guilt and shame ringing serves no purpose.

Continuing to carry guilt and shame around with you can make it more difficult to move forward in your life. You might find that you are constantly thinking about things you have done and feeling pain or regret at how you have behaved. If these painful recollections get in the way of taking positive action to make your life better, you must address them. Thinking about and reflecting on your past actions can help you to avoid repeating former mistakes. However, repetitive thoughts that interfere with daily living are not helpful and can only prevent you from moving forward. Instead of spending time focusing on what you should have done or carrying feelings of guilt or regret as to what you shouldn't have done, it would be far more productive if you concentrate on the positive steps you are taking now to become a better person.

Thinking about and reflecting on past actions can help you to **avoid repeating former mistakes.**



Letting Go of Guilt and Shame

Let go by practicing the same calming and reflection exercises you have worked on before in this series:

1. Stop what you are doing and go to a quiet place.
2. Close your eyes and take a deep breath, letting it out slowly.
3. Do this several times until your mind is quieted.
4. Now with your body relaxed and your mind calmed, tell yourself that guilt and shame are not productive parts of your life and you are moving toward positive behaviors to take their place.
5. Say the following to yourself or out loud:

"I have been ashamed of my past behavior and know that I have hurt others deeply. I want to let this feeling go and move forward in my life. I choose now to do so by taking positive steps through making amends, avoiding triggers, regaining trust, remaining abstinent, and communicating with others I care about. I am building a new life that I can be proud of."

Always **listen to the inner voice of the *real you*.**

It will keep you on the right path.



The act of letting go of guilt and shame is not intended to clear the slate for you to continue to behave in old ways with no emotional consequences. The purpose of letting go of these feelings is to make way for growth and rebuilding in your life. If you are not being honest with yourself about your intentions, you will continue to feel guilty at some deeper level. That guilt will be a result of knowing that your intentions are untrue. Always listen to the inner voice of the *real you*. It will keep you on the right path.

Special Concerns for Family Relationships

Many gamblers, as they work through the process of examining their perceptions and actions, find it difficult to think about how to heal their relationships with the people they may have hurt the most — their families. Reflecting about the problems gambling has caused your spouse, children, parents, and other loved ones is painful and overwhelming. You may think your children are too young to understand what you are experiencing. Or you may feel that discussing your problems with your children will undermine the authority and responsibility you have as a parent. You may feel discouraged about your ability to make up for the embarrassment you have caused your parents or relatives. The pain and suffering your spouse has endured because of your gambling may be devastating for you to acknowledge and accept.

Again, the problems that accompany compulsive gambling were not created overnight and they will certainly not be overcome in a few days or weeks. Dedicating yourself to taking the steps outlined in this series and following through with the activities that can help you change your life are positive decisions you can make each day. If you are working through the exercises in this book by yourself, you may want to share some of your statements, answers, and comments with your loved ones. Do not be afraid to declare your commitment to change to family members if you are honestly making an effort to work on your recovery. If you feel comfortable, share with your spouse or other loved ones your plans for change and the steps you are taking to make amends for your actions. Again, remember

**Rebuilding your life
is only complete when
you reconnect with
loved ones.**

that the people whose lives your gambling has affected may not be on your timeline for healing and change. While you may feel excited and exhilarated about your hope for recovery, others may not yet be ready to accept or trust your commitment to change.

You may need to seek help from a professional therapist to address family problems related to your gambling. It may also be helpful for your spouse, partner or other family members to participate in professional treatment, either as a family or individually. There is a self-help group for family members and loved ones of compulsive gamblers called GamAnon. Gam-Anon is an organization that assists members in learning acceptance and understanding of the gambling illness, using the program and its problem-solving suggestions as aids in rebuilding lives. For information about Gam-Anon meetings, referrals to professional therapists, and other supports, depending on your individual circumstances, contact the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling at their 24-hour confidential 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine.

Living With the Burden

In the previous section you learned that letting go of guilt and shame about your past actions could free you to change your life. While you are letting go of these feelings, you are still aware of the wrongs you have done to others, and the problems you might have created in your own life. This can be experienced as a tremendous burden, carried with you as you move forward. This burden serves a purpose by reminding you of where you have been and helping to keep you from repeating old errors, but if you carry this heavy burden with you everywhere you go, eventually you will run out of strength to construct a new life.

Put the burden down, but don't forget about it. Allow it to serve its purpose as a reminder, but don't let it keep you from picking up new positive behaviors. You may never forget your past, but now you must create your future. Carry your new habits and attitudes with you and live with the burden of your past by letting it rest. This topic is one that frequently surfaces in self-help groups and professional treatment. You may find it beneficial to discuss your feelings about the burdens you carry with your sponsor, the FCCG's Peer Connect Program, or other supportive people. The FCCG 24/7 confidential and multilingual HelpLine (888-ADMIT-IT) can assist you with additional resources and referrals to self-help programs, therapists, and other support services.

As you work on your recovery, there will be moments when you will be reminded of your burden and will revisit it and acknowledge your past mistakes. You may want to review some of the exercises in Book Three: *Staying the Course*, which

highlight ways to include reflection in your recovery program. Use the skills of reflection to make these moments meaningful and then step forward into your new life.

For example, if one of your burdens is that you have caused others great financial hardship, try to put the burden down by asking yourself if you are working as hard as you can to address this.

Some of the questions you can ask:

- Have I taken responsibility for my former actions?
- Have I made amends to those I have wronged?
- Am I making attempts to communicate honestly with those I have wronged?
- Am I working to regain the trust of those I have wronged?
- Have I made all possible attempts to make amends to those I have wronged?

If, after careful thought, you can answer "yes" honestly to all of these questions, then you are taking positive steps to move forward. You should continue to make attempts to put your burden aside as you take steps toward change. If you cannot answer "yes" to these questions, then you must re-evaluate your intentions and your actions for change. This might be a good time to consult with a sponsor or therapist to help you consider these ideas further.



Take a break — think about the following questions and write down your answers.

When you're ready, move on to the next section.

Do you feel guilt regularly? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(Remember, guilt produces a sense of regret.)

What do you feel guilty about? _____

Do you feel shame regularly? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(Remember, shame causes us to feel we are unacceptable.)

What do you feel shame about? _____

What are two burdens you are presently carrying?

1. _____

2. _____

Do you feel that you could learn to let go of these feelings? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What will you do to make this happen? _____

How will you know when you have successfully let go of these feelings? _____

One Day At A Time Checklist

A major life change, such as you are undergoing in this program, can sometimes seem overwhelming. There might be many parts of your life you are working on simultaneously, with different results in each area. It might help you to think about things from the point of view of one day at a time. You will encounter new and different

challenges and opportunities each day, and every day is a chance to start over with renewed strength and commitment.

To help, the following chart might be useful in reviewing your daily progress. An additional copy of this chart can be found in the back of the book. Copy it and use it regularly.

Date:

Life Area	Describe Challenges	Describe Progress
Physical Health		
Emotional Health		
Triggers		
Communication with Others		
Making Amends		
Remaining Abstinent		
Being Honest		

Life Area	Describe Challenges	Describe Progress
Reflection		
Addressing Finances		
Addressing Legal Problems		
Letting Go of Shame and Guilt		
Living with the Burden of What I've Done		
Creating New Frames/Positive Ways of Thinking		
Rebuilding Trust		

Area(s) I will continue to focus on today: _____

Looking back over your checklist regularly can help you to see areas where you are progressing and others where you may need to apply more effort. If you carefully jot down

comments in the description categories beside “progress” and “challenges” in the checklist, you will quickly begin to see how much your life is changing in all areas.

Summary

In this book, you have examined how “frames” or states of mind can affect your perceptions and help you to build new ways of thinking and behaving. You have considered how you might regain trust and have accepted the reality that some trust might never be recovered. You have revisited the idea of making amends and have thought about restitution for the wrongs you have done to others, as well as practicing the steps of reflection in order to understand your behaviors, motivations, and the real you, or core self.

Finally, you have explored how to let go of the shame and guilt as well as the burden of what you have done in your life, understanding that your past behaviors cannot be erased, but you can start now to build a new future for you and your loved

ones. This book, like Book Three: *Staying the Course*, is one of the books in this series to which you will want to return regularly to examine your comments and to reassess your answers as you grow and change.

It’s a long, difficult process to set up a system or plan to confront and solve problems. As you have worked on the sections of this book, hopefully you have gradually begun to see change as an opportunity for tremendous growth and happiness.

Celebrate your successes and your willingness to stay on the recovery path to rebuilding your life and long-lasting change.

“With ordinary talents and extraordinary perseverance, all things are attainable.”

Sir Thomas Buxton, Author



Glossary

Affirmations: An affirmation or pledge is an inspirational statement a person repeats to help them reach a goal or stick to a plan.

Gambler's Mask: The gambler's mask is a false front a person uses to hide the truth, whether it is a behavior, emotion or thought.

Guilt: Guilt is a feeling based on actions, usually concerning something a person should or should not have done.

Negative Frame: A negative frame is the belief a person has, usually about himself, herself or another person, that causes them to think negatively.

Positive Frame: A positive frame is the belief a person has, usually about himself, herself or another person, that causes them to think positively.

Powerlessness: Powerlessness is the belief that you can do nothing to alter your circumstances. You may feel that you have no control over certain behavior or actions. This is only a belief. There is always something you can do.

Reflection: Reflection is the act of examining your thoughts and emotions.

Shame: Shame is an emotion put on us by others, usually causing us to feel unacceptable.

Trigger: A trigger can be people, places and things or emotions of feelings that cause you to react or respond in a manner that can be detrimental to your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Triggers often lead to relapse.

Additional Resources

There are several resources you might access to help you deal with gambling related issues mentioned in this book. Some of these are listed below:

Statewide Assistance

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) offers a toll-free confidential and multilingual 24-hour Problem Gambling HelpLine and referral service that provides supportive intervention, information about problem and compulsive gambling, self-help, and professional treatment referrals. The FCCG trains medical and healthcare professionals to assess and treat compulsive gamblers and loved ones. For additional information about the programs and services of the FCCG, refer to the page prior to the Table of Contents, as well as the following sub-section, *FCCG Resources*.

Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling, Inc.
24/7 Problem Gambling HelpLine
Confidential/Multilingual
888-ADMIT-IT (888-236-4848)
Office: (407) 865-6200
E-mail: fccg@gamblinghelp.org
Live Chat: gamblinghelp.org
Text: 321-978-0555
888-ADMIT-IT App:
<https://landing.appypie.com/888-admit-it>
Website: www.gamblinghelp.org

FCCG Resources

The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine offers in-person, online and phone supports for persons experiencing difficulties due to gambling, including an Online Program for Problem Gamblers (OPPG) and a Peer Connect option, free to Florida residents. The OPPG is an 8-week program that allows participants to use self-paced exercises, videos and readings, while interactive questionnaires provide individual feedback on participant results from licensed mental health professionals, as well as an assessment upon completion. The HelpLine further provides a Peer Connect service, which enables individuals seeking help for a gambling problem to speak with a recovering compulsive gambler. 888-ADMIT-IT offers referrals to financial and debt counseling; professional treatment; legal assistance; self-help programs; practical how-to resources, such as this workbook series, *A Chance for Change*, in addition to other print resources, including information and tools for financial recovery, self-exclusion options and other supportive measures.

The FCCG HelpLine may be contacted by phone, text, live chat, email, and on social media platforms. To learn more, visit the 888-ADMIT-IT mobile app.

Self-Help Programs

Self-help is a critical part of the recovery process. Self-help programs can assist you with tools for recovery by providing support, direction, motivation, resources, and a sense that you are not dealing with the gambling problem alone. An aspect of many self-help programs is sponsorship. Sponsors may provide additional information, encouragement, fellowship, and guidance to newcomers on a voluntary basis. They may also furnish assistance and offer suggestions to newcomers on a case-by-case basis.

While there are several self-help organizations, there are primarily two programs dedicated to compulsive gamblers and those they adversely affect.

Gamblers Anonymous (GA) is a support group for compulsive gamblers — a fellowship of men and women of all ages, social and economic backgrounds, races, and religions, who meet regularly to share their experience, strength and hope. The only requirement for membership in GA is the desire to stop gambling. There are no dues or fees for membership.

Gamblers Anonymous offers a Pressure Relief Group that assists the gambler and family members in addressing financial, legal, and other problems. Pressure Relief is typically performed after a gambler has participated in

GA for a specified period, at which time a budget is devised, and a repayment plan is recommended. Pressure Relief requires special training and as such, not all GA fellowships within the State of Florida offer this service. In instances where it is unavailable, individuals can receive financial, legal and other assistance via the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine.

Gamblers Anonymous
International Service Office
1306 Monte Vista Avenue, Suite 5
Upland, CA 91786
Office: 909-931-9056
Email: isomain@gamblersanonymous.org
Website: www.gamblersanonymous.org

Gam-Anon is for persons adversely affected by the gambler's activities (e.g., spouse or partner, sibling, child, parent, or friend). Gam-Anon assists members in learning acceptance and understanding of the gambling illness, using the program and its problem-solving suggestions as aids in rebuilding loved ones' lives and, upon recovery, giving assistance to those who suffer. It is not necessary for the gambler to attend Gamblers Anonymous in order for a friend or other loved one to participate in the Gam-Anon program.

Gam-Anon
International Service Office, Inc.
P.O. Box 307
Massapequa Park, NY 11762
Office: 718-352-1671

Additional Resources (continued)

Email: gamanonoffice@gam-anon.org

Website: www.gam-anon.org

You can contact the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling HelpLine directly for additional information and a current list of in-person, phone and online meetings.

Professional Treatment

There are times when guidance and support can be particularly helpful when provided by a trained therapist or counselor. These professionals can aid you in sorting out options and strategies when learning to cope with situations or difficulties that may arise in your life. Professional treatment differs from self-help programs in that it allows you the opportunity to share very personal information in a one-on-one dialogue with a trained specialist. Such treatment also provides you with an option of participating in individual, couple, or group counseling sessions.

While there is a cost for professional treatment, some insurance companies will provide coverage. So, it is important to review your policy closely to determine whether you and your loved ones are covered for such medical help. It is also important to note that the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling can refer Florida residents to certified counselors who will furnish you and loved ones with treatment supports, based upon an ability to pay. For more information about professional treatment options, call the FCCG 24-hour HelpLine at 888-ADMIT-IT.

Online Supports, Podcasts and Mobile Apps

Online Supports, Podcasts, and Mobile Apps can provide real-time, and ongoing motivational messaging, meditation techniques, support networks, and other self-care and stress release activities, that support behavioral change and assist individuals during their lifelong path to recovery from a gambling addiction. These options enable individuals to access help as needed and serve as supportive measures from anywhere at any time. While many of these options are identifiable upon conducting online searches on a computer or on a mobile device, the 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine can provide some helpful options for those struggling with difficulties due to compulsive gambling.

Print Resources

There are numerous resources designed to help problem and compulsive gamblers with issues ranging from stress reduction to financial and legal assistance. While many can be very helpful, they should not be considered stand-alone programs for change. Some recommended resources include:

Cuban, M. (2016). *Gambling Addiction Cure: Gambling Addiction Cure and Recovery of Your Life*, Independently Published.

Cunliffe North, R. (2008). *Women Overpowered by Compulsive Gambling*, Xlibris Corporation.

Custer, R. & Milt, H. (1985) *When Luck Runs Out*. NY, NY: Facts on Files, Inc. Publications.

Davis, D.R. (2009). *Taking Back Your Life: Women and Problem Gambling*, Hazelden Publishing.

Estes, K. & Brubaker, M. (1994). *Deadly Odds: Recovery from Compulsive Gambling*. Newport, RI: Edgehill Publications.

Gamblers Anonymous (2013). *Fourth Step Inventory Moral Book*, Los Angeles; Gamblers Anonymous Publishing, Revised March 2007, Printed October 2013.

Gamblers Anonymous (2007). *Big Book - Sharing Recovery Through Gamblers Anonymous*. Los Angeles: Gamblers Anonymous Publishing.

Hardin, R., Abott, W., Braastad, J., Frahm, J., Lindel, R., Phillips, R., & Steinberger, H. (2013). *SMART Recovery 3rd Edition Handbook*, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Self Help Network, Inc.

Journal of Gambling Studies (1990). National Council on Problem Gambling. NY, NY: Human Sciences Press.

King, A. (1999). *The Diary of a Powerful Addiction*. Crown Publishing, Tyndall, Canada.

Lee, Bill (2005). *Born to Lose: Memoirs of a Compulsive Gambler*, Hazelden Publishing.

Lesieur, H. (1984). *The Chase: Career of the Compulsive Gambler*, Cambridge: Schenkman Books, Inc.

Mawer, P. (2019). *Overcoming Gambling (Overcoming Common Problems)*, Sheldon Press.

Peltz, L. (2013). *The Mindful Path to Addiction Recovery: A Practical Guide to Regaining Control Over Your Life*, Trumpeter.

Wexler, A. & Wexler, S. (2015). *All Bets Are Off: Losers, Liars, and Recovery from Gambling Addiction*, Central Recovery Press.

Bibliography

Bradshaw, J. (1988). *Healing the Shame That Binds You*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications Inc.

Burns, D. (1999). *The Feeling Good Handbook*. NY, NY: Penguin Books.

Brown, J. (2002) *Getting Unstuck*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, Inc.

Colarusso, C. & Nemiroff, R. (1990). *New Dimensions in Adult Development*. NY, NY: Basic Books.

Covey, S. & Covey S.M. (2022). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*. St. Martins Publishing Group.

Dupont, R. (1997). *The Selfish Brain: Learning from Addiction*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press.

Eisenberg, N. (2000). *Emotion, Regulation and Moral Development*. Annual Review of Psychology.

LeDoux, J. (1996). *The Emotional Brain*. NY, NY: Touchstone Publications.

McGee-Cooper, A. & Trammell, D. (1994). *Time Management for Unmanageable People*. NY, NY: Bantam Books.

Mooney, A., Eisenberg, Al., & Eisenberg, H. (1992). *The Recovery Book*. NY, NY: Workman Publishing.

Walters, G. (2000). *The Self-Altering Process: Exploring the Dynamic Nature of Lifestyle Development and Change*. NY, NY: Praeger Publishers.

**Select a positive frame from your list on page 4
and respond to the following questions:**

Frame _____

Where did this frame originate? _____

How does this frame help you in your life? _____

How is this frame interpreted by others? _____

What positive feelings does this frame provide you? _____

How would you feel without this frame? _____

**Select a negative frame from your list on page 4
and respond to the following questions:**

Frame _____

Where did this frame originate? _____

How does this frame hurt you in your life? _____

How is this frame interpreted by others? _____

What feelings does this frame provide you? _____

Are these positive or negative in your life? _____

How would you feel without this frame? _____

Restate this frame so that it is a positive influence in your life: _____

**What changes could you make to cause this new frame to be a positive influence in
your life?** _____

Areas of Life Affected by Gambling

Exercise from page 8

Areas of your life affected by gambling	Major problems which now exist	Three things you could do to begin repair
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.

Areas of Life Affected by Gambling

Exercise from page 8

Areas of your life affected by gambling	Major problems which now exist	Three things you could do to begin repair
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.

Trust Building Worksheet

Exercise from page 13

Person whose trust I have broken: _____

Nature of this trust (*check all that apply*):

☐ Emotional ☐ Financial ☐ Physical ☐ Spiritual ☐ Other: _____

What I did to break their trust: _____

Steps I will take to prove my trustworthiness:

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

How I will know when I've been successful at regaining this trust:

Trust Building Worksheet

Exercise from page 13

Person whose trust I have broken: _____

Nature of this trust (*check all that apply*):

☐ Emotional ☐ Financial ☐ Physical ☐ Spiritual ☐ Other: _____

What I did to break their trust: _____

Steps I will take to prove my trustworthiness:

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

How I will know when I've been successful at regaining this trust:

One Day At A Time Checklist

Exercise from page 20

Date:

Life Area	Describe Challenges	Describe Progress
Physical Health		
Emotional Health		
Triggers		
Communication with Others		
Making Amends		
Remaining Abstinent		
Being Honest		

Life Area	Describe Challenges	Describe Progress
Reflection		
Addressing Finances		
Addressing Legal Problems		
Letting Go of Shame and Guilt		
Living with the Burden of What I've Done		
Creating New Frames/Positive Ways of Thinking		
Rebuilding Trust		

Area(s) I will continue to focus on today: _____

Notes



Notes



[illegible]

Notes



Notes





The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling's development of *A Chance for Change* is the result of an identified need for alternate forms of education and assistance to those whose lives are negatively affected by a devastating gambling disorder (compulsive gambling).

www.gamblinghelp.org