

The Newsletter of the Central Coast Problem Gambling Service

Special Features

True Stories

In this regular feature clients highlight their own experience.

Industry News

Problem Gambling Awareness Week.

Tips for Change

Helpful strategies to keep you on track

Problem Gambling Awareness Week

The Responsible Gambling Committee

Central Coast is hosting a **FREE** and friendly sausage sizzle. Join us at Terrigal Haven on Thursday 10th May from 11am-2pm. (wet weather venue Berkeley Vale



Come and have a snag and a chat with us and other service providers.

PROBLEM GAMBLING: Is It really an addiction?

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Problem Gambling:

Is it really an addiction?

CCPGS:New beginnings

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A clients story.

It is well researched that substance addictions like alcohol and drugs have a biological basis. So how does this work? When a person has engaged in prolonged use of drugs, the cells in the body that absorb the substance eventually produce more receptors to receive the molecules easier. With this the person can no longer get the same 'hit' from the drug - their body is now conditioned so they have to consume more of the substance to get the same effect. Increasing the intake of the drug causes the body's cells to produce even more receptors. These receptors are yearning to absorb the drug in the cell and without the drug the body feels great discomfort and relies on the substance to feel at ease.

The person is now what we call addicted.

So how can a behaviour be called an addiction?

There is no molecule of gambling so it can not be absorbed into the cells, so what is really happening?

The American Psychiatric Association classifies gambling as an impulse disorder. CNN Health Library speaks about "imbalances in the brain, chemicals serotonin, norepinephrine (adrenaline) and dopamine may be factors in compulsive gambling, GA defines gambling as a disease model. So the debate continues.

Being mindful of labels, is it habitual behaviour? As a counsellor, helper, health worker, carer, client what do you think?

We welcome your thoughts.

Contact Us:

Central Coast Problem Gambling Service (CCPGS).

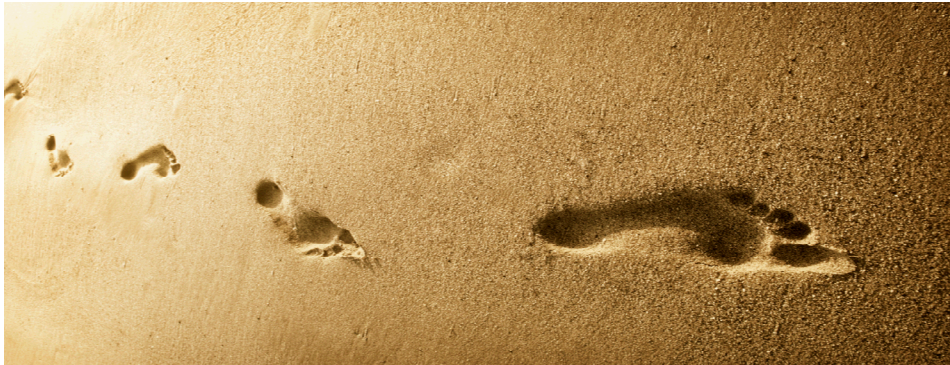
Ph: 43 44792

Fax: 43 424947

Email: ccpgs@bigpond.com

Www.problemgambling.net.au

Central Coast Problem Gambling Service Farewells Margie & Welcomes



First of all the service would like to say a fond farewell to Margie Delaney who held the position of Co-ordinator over an 11 month period. Margie was well liked by colleagues and staff and brought her own sense of self and knowledge to the service. She has returned to work in youth health on a part-time basis, we wish her well in her new position.

We give a warm welcome to Chris Davidson who returns to the service as Co-ordinator. He has a wealth of experience in Problem Gambling counselling and has enthusiastically embraced the position, steering us once again into a bright future.

Also we have the pleasure of introducing Robert Rus who has taken the position of part-time counsellor working from our Berkeley Vale and San Remo rooms. Robert has great energy and passion for counselling and fits extremely well into our team.

We look forward to launching our service at San Remo Neighbourhood Centre.

Appointments can be made with [Robert on 43 447992](tel:43447992).

Jillian Hogan, Services Manager and staff have welcomed us with open arms making our transition effortless. We thank you all.

Bronwyn.

“Action is the antidote to despair”.

A Mythic Tale.....

Empathy in Action.

The Land Of Unknown People

A stranger found himself in the Land of Unknown People. As he arrived the peasants were in great terror.

“What is terrifying you?”, asked the traveler.

“We will show you.” And they led him out onto a field where a huge melon was growing.

“We have never seen anything like this. This is a dangerous creature. It grows so quickly and it will soon take over our country.”

“Nonsense” said the traveler. “It is only a melon”, and with his sword he cut it up into pieces.

And the unknown people waited until he was asleep and they killed him at night, saying “He must be terribly powerful to be able to slay that fearful creature. We had better kill him while we can”.



Shortly, another stranger came past, and the peasants were terrified again for another melon had appeared and was growing very quickly. He asked them about the creature, and, with them showing him the location, he approached the melon very tentatively, examined it from a respectful distance. Withdrew thoughtfully, and discussed the strange creature with the peasants. Gradually he encouraged them to experiment with approaches to the melons, to touch one, and slowly to discover more about them and what they could do. Gradually they lost their fear, and learnt about melons.

This is indeed a therapist story. How many therapists have been ‘slain when they discovered the ‘real’ story too quickly, perhaps saying quite early, “It’s obviously a gambling problem”. It is no easy task for a therapist to control impatience, and to postpone the opportunity to demonstrate capacity for accurate diagnosis until the person is ready....but the penalties are extreme.

A.N.Z.J. Fam. Ther., 1993, Vol. 14, No.2



BEFORE WITHDRAWING MONEY

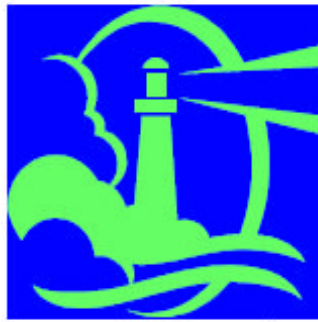
STOP

TAKE A BREAK

ORGANISE YOUR PRIORITIES

PUT INTO ACTION

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at



**Central Coast
Problem
Gambling
Service**

Wey Wey, Gosford, Berkeley Vale
Funded by NSW government from the
Responsible Gambling Fund

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**GAMBLING CHECK UP
NOW**

Ph.4344 7992

www.problemgambling.net.au

A Journey of Self Discovery and Change.

The first thing I remember about my introduction into gambling was the familiar call **“the green lights on and the bunny’s away, their racing”**. This was a typical example how my father and I spent most nights. My Dad would go to the bookie behind the local pub with me in toe, to bet on the dogs. Dad would bet on anything and pretty soon I would follow suit. I won in my earlier years often giving some of what I had won to my dad because he had lost his pay on the dogs, horses or pokies. I never thought that it would happen to me because I was luckier than him. I am not blaming dad for what I learnt because I had freewill and chose to gamble.

Another thing I learnt early, was not to be truthful about how much I gambled or where the money came from to gamble. In my first job I stole from my employer but was always able to put it back, but, he knew. When I met my wife I swore I would not gamble - I lied.

My gambling was not heavy at first. I would bet a few dollars here and there, mainly on the horses but anything was fair game. Over time I began to rely on gambling. It would occupy my free time then work time. I would make excuses to leave work to go and gamble. There were many good reasons; I would generally win, we need the money and I gamble to help us meet our commitments, I get frustrated at work and I need a way to release, its only a little bit and I can stop when I want to. All lies!

Because I gambled I lost my career job, the first and second houses I bought. I lost a potentially profitable business. I felt worthless and hit rock bottom, but still I did not stop. I was lucky, I rebuilt myself and had a good new career, but I kept gambling.

The gambling got heavier. Over decades I lost not tens but hundreds of thousands of dollars. “But its not about the money!!”, my daughter said this to me two years ago when my wife found out about my lying and trying to hide my gambling. Its about the relationships.

I had lied and been deceitful to my wife and family but most of all I was trying to deceive myself. I had let them down and had allowed gambling to rule and ruin my life, my very existence. I knew what I had to do but I still sort help to give me the tools thanks to my counsellor.

Today I can honestly say I have not broken my promise to my wife and family, that I would never go down that path again, its been two years, two months and ten days now. Everyday I look in the mirror and I know the misery I have caused that will never go away, I promise myself everyday I will never do that again. The pain is too great.