



**FOR THE
GAMBLER**

10 THINGS TO DO

IF YOU ARE BECOMING CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR GAMBLING AND DON'T KNOW WHICH WAY TO TURN, VISIT WWW.GAMFAM.ORG.UK FOR INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE.

There isn't a 'one-size fits all' recovery programme, and what works for one person or family may not work for another. Therefore, it is important that you are aware of all the help and support that is available and if something does not work for you try a different approach – but do keep trying.

The '10 Things to Do' list has been developed by those at various stages of recovery and these are the actions, suggestions and practical ideas to help you with your own unique recovery. Some actions will be easier than others to implement and this is by no means an exhaustive list, but it is a good place to start.

1) GET SUPPORT – DON'T DO IT ON YOUR OWN

- Working on your recovery on your own can be incredibly challenging. Having the support and encouragement from someone you trust such as a family member or close friend is crucial
- Be open and honest with your nominated 'trusted support'. Drip feeding information can often cause more pain and further reinforce doubt and mistrust
- It is important to recognise that your family and friends will be struggling too. Being on the same or similar pages will support everyone's recovery
- Structured peer support such as the GamFam GRA5P programme; Gamblers in Recovery, Gambler's Anonymous or the NHS Gambling Clinic can provide you with the opportunity to talk with others who have empathy and understanding of your situation
- Attend as many peer support sessions as you can at the start of your recovery and develop a support network that you can reach out to for additional advice and encouragement

2) HAND OVER CONTROL OF FINANCES TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST

- The thought of having no say or control of your finances can be daunting, but if you set up a plan that helps maintain your dignity whilst removes the opportunity to gamble, this is a great place to start
- Close all accounts that may have links to gambling sites, open a bank account that has gambling blocks enabled and arrange shared access if possible
- Many banks offer the ability to limit spending on gambling by blocking an account or card from being used for gambling transactions. Monzo is one such bank that is highly recommended. For further information, visit the useful links page at www.gamfam.org.uk
- Allow your trusted support to monitor all transactions through online banking. GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation - a law introduced to protect the personal data of individuals to ensure that it is kept safe) may cause issues here but do look for a solution that works for you
- Only use a debit or pre-paid card (no cash), provide receipts for everything, set up a WhatsApp group for 'receipts'
- If you are using a bank with a high street presence, contact them to ensure no over-the-counter transactions are allowed and hand over all forms of ID so that no new accounts can be opened
- Set up a daily withdrawal limit of £1 (which is below the minimum of £10) to disable cash machine withdrawals

3) SET UP BARRIERS AND INSTALL FAMILY CONTROLS ON ALL DEVICES

- Visit www.gamfam.org.uk for advice on this
- Register with Gamban and Gamstop. Gamban places gambling blocking software on devices and is now available for free in the UK by visiting www.gamban.com/gamcare. Gamstop offers free self-exclusion from UK licensed gambling sites
- Visit www.internetmatters.org/parentalcontrols/ for direct access to step-by-step guides to set further controls on ALL devices that have access to the internet
- Ask your trusted support to manage the broadband hub to control how devices access the internet during certain times of the day
- Ensure you have spending limits set to zero on your mobile phone contract so that you cannot use your mobile phone credit to gamble
- Hand over your identification documents such as passport and driving licence so that you do not have access to these to open new gambling accounts or to apply for loans
- Remember these barriers are not there to 'catch you out' - they are there for your protection and to give you and your family additional peace of mind



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4) SELF-EXCLUDE FROM ALL HIGH STREET BETTING/ CASINO SHOPS/LAND-BASED CASINOS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY AND SURROUNDING AREAS

- For information on the Multi Operator Self-Exclusion Scheme (MOSES) please visit the useful information page at www.gamfam.org.uk
- This is not completely fool proof and does rely on the integrity of staff in these premises and only normally lasts for 12 months

5) FILL THE VOID LEFT BY GAMBLING

- Don't just replace gambling with another process addiction. It is important that you try to engage in something positive and beneficial
- Identify an interest or hobby that promotes a positive lifestyle such as keeping fit, jogging or simply going for a walk
- Focus on work; or simply spending quality time with your family and friends can help fill the time you may have spent gambling previously
- Recognise the importance of meeting your emotional and physical wellbeing – the Suffolk Minds Your Needs Met @ programme is a great place to start
- Research on the topic of Mindfulness to promote a positive mindset
- Complete a daily gratitude list – this will allow you to focus on the good things and support you in not taking your recovery for granted. It will help you replace resentment with gratitude and you will be less likely to relapse if you are grateful for what you have

6) TELL YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- It's never easy admitting to those who may not have a full understanding what a gambling disorder is, but the more people you can tell without compromise will act as another barrier and support
- Encourage your trusted support to attend a Peer Support programme for the 'Affected Other' such as the GamFam GRA5P programme; Gamblers in Recovery for Families and Friends, Gam Anon or the NHS Gambling Clinic

7) COMPLETE A FINANCIAL REVIEW

- Make a list of all debts and loans outstanding
- Register with an online credit reference agency (for example Credit Monitor) and give access to your trusted support. This will show all outstanding loans and accounts and will allow the person to track any activity on your credit file, acting as an additional barrier
- Contact each company, be honest and explain the situation and try to arrange a payment plan that is affordable to you.

You do not have to pay back all of the money straight away. Companies often would rather receive something rather than nothing

- Contact Step Change, the UK's leading debt charity for expert debt advice and fee-free debt management to help you tackle debt if you need additional support
- Set up a daily/weekly/monthly budget sheet with your trusted support to help you build your respect and relationship with money again

8) CHANGE YOUR E-MAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- Open new e-mail and social media accounts and delete existing ones where possible
- This can help limit the amount of post gambling marketing, offers and incentives you may receive
- Where this is impractical, go through existing e-mails and social media accounts and opt out of marketing and advertising material
- Allow your trusted support to open your post or have an arrangement in place that all letters are opened together and in particular from banks and loan companies.

9) BECOME 'THE EXPERT'

- Visit the useful information page at www.gamfam.org.uk and do some research
- Improve your understanding of what a gambling addiction is, and that it is a recognised mental health disorder
- Improve your understanding that some products such as online slots/casino's; Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) and in play betting are designed to be highly addictive
- Listen to stories of other recovering disordered gamblers on various podcasts or YouTube videos that are available
- Follow accounts on social media that you think may help develop your understanding and appreciation of those affected by a gambling disorder

10) WRITE A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE JOURNEY YOU HAVE BEEN ON...

- To help you if you choose to share your story with others
- To rationalise your situation, allowing you to step back and provide clarity on your next steps
- To act as a consistent point of reference when speaking with banks, loan companies, gambling companies and other support agencies you may wish to contact
- To save you relaying the same painful story time and time again; and to ensure you always give a consistent version of events and don't miss out important pieces of information
- Include in your writing a daily gratitude list to identify the things you are grateful for each day



GamFam does not aim to provide legal or medical advice. We are not legal professionals, doctors, or therapists. We are families of disordered gamblers and the advice and guidance is from our own lived-experience and what we have learnt from others. What has worked for us may not work for you and reliance on any information contained herein is solely at your own discretion.

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