

Advice for Responsible Gambling

The majority of people do gamble responsibly. It may help you to keep your gambling under control by remembering the following:

- > You are buying fun, not investing your money
- > Before playing, set strict limits on how much time and money you are going to spend
- > Quit while you're ahead
- > Only gamble with money you can afford to lose
- > Don't spend more money on gambling with the hope to win back money that you have lost
- > Keep up other interests and hobbies – don't let gambling take over your life
- > Don't gamble in order to escape from stress or boredom
- > Gambling in moderation is okay

For some however, gambling can become a problem. If you are concerned about the amount you are gambling, and feel it is taking over your life (or you are concerned for a friend or relative), then the following questions may help you and give you some guidance.

- > Have others ever criticised your gambling?
- > Have you ever lied to cover up the amount you have gambled or time you have spent doing it?
- > Do arguments, frustrations or disappointments make you want to gamble?
- > Do you gamble alone for long periods?
- > Do you stay away from work or college to gamble?
- > Do you gamble to escape from a boring or unhappy life?
- > Are you reluctant to spend 'gambling money' on anything else?
- > Have you lost interest in your family, friends or pastimes due to gambling?
- > After losing, do you feel you must try to win back your losses as soon as possible?
- > When gambling and you run out of money, do you feel lost and in despair, and need to gamble again as soon as possible?
- > Do you gamble until your last penny is gone?
- > Have you lied, stolen or borrowed just to get money to gamble or to pay gambling debts?

> Do you feel depressed or even suicidal because of your gambling?

If you feel you are answering more to 'yes' in the above questions, then it is likely a gambling problem exists.

For friendly and helpful advice from trained counsellors, call the National Gambling Helpline on 0808 8020 133. The helpline is open 8am to midnight, 7 days a week.

Sometimes just telling someone about your problem can be a relief and it is the first step towards dealing with your problem. You can also visit the Gamble Aware website www.gambleaware.co.uk for more information and advice.

British Red Cross is a member of the Lotteries Council www.lotteriescouncil.org.uk and therefore supports and contributes to research into problem gambling.

