

**GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS®**  
**INTERNATIONAL SERVICE OFFICE**



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FOR MEETING INFORMATION  
IN YOUR AREA CALL  
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**GAMBLERS  
ANONYMOUS**

# **YOUR FIRST MEETING**

Take a deep breath—we have all been exactly where you are standing right now. It is completely normal to feel nervous, but we hope that by the time this meeting ends, you will feel a genuine sense of relief. You are not alone anymore. We don't just understand the chaos and isolation of a gambling problem; we are here to offer you clear direction, steady support, and a practical way out of the mess you are facing. For now, try to let your guard down, settle in, and just listen to what our members have to say.

You are safe here.

If you are feeling overwhelmed by a loss of respect, financial stress, or low self-esteem, please know you are not alone. Everyone in our community felt exactly the same way before taking their first step. Joining Gamblers Anonymous means acknowledging a challenge you cannot tackle by yourself. Compulsive gambling is a genuine illness, but with the support of this program, you can build a stable, fulfilling life free from gambling.

It is completely normal to struggle with heavy emotions right now, like shame, self-blame, or even despair. However, our meetings connect you with people who understand your journey. They will share fresh insights, practical strategies, and real hope for a better future. You are always welcome here, alongside others who are successfully navigating recovery. Together, we will help you ease the pressure and start resolving your financial worries.

Until now, you probably viewed gambling purely as a financial issue, even though you knew deep down that something else was wrong. You likely went to extremes to hide your behavior, wipe your digital footprint, and keep your losses a secret. Living that double life is exhausting. The crushing weight of your secret became a core part of the addiction itself.

Carrying this alone makes it easy to believe you are uniquely broken or completely isolated. In Gamblers Anonymous, you will find massive relief in hearing stories just like yours. We share our experiences not to dwell on the past, but because opening up is essential for ongoing recovery. This vulnerability happens in a space of total acceptance.

You have wasted so much energy protecting your reputation, maintaining an image, and pretending everything is fine. Keeping up appearances is an overwhelming burden, but you can finally drop it here. You do not have to "con" us or pretend to be a success. You can leave the face-saving masks and deflections at the door.

You will quickly realize that your problems are not unique. Hearing the raw honesty in these rooms will stop you from believing you are the worst person on earth or beyond help. You will hear stories of losses worse than yours, and some not as severe. Gambling has disrupted your life, but this fellowship offers a practical solution.

Here, you will find people who truly understand your pain because they have faced the same walls and are learning how to climb over them. Active addiction distorts your worldview and forces you into survival mode. By listening to other members, you will discover healthier ways of thinking and living that feel impossible right now. This program will help you set realistic goals and build authentic values, guided by people who have successfully turned their lives around.

Welcome to your first Gamblers Anonymous meeting.