

# The Female Gambler



**The Council on  
Compulsive Gambling  
of New Jersey  
3635 Quakerbridge Rd.  
Suite 7  
Hamilton, NJ 08619**

If you or someone you know  
has a gambling problem, call

**1-800-GAMBLER®**

or log on to

**www.800gambler.org.**

## **There Is Hope.....**

People often see gambling as a solution to their problems. For those that realize that gambling *is* the problem, there is hope. The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey informs and motivates professionals, legislators, educators, and community members about the effects of compulsive gambling on the individual, family and the State of New Jersey.

### **Available services include:**

- 1-800-GAMBLER© Helpline
- www.800gambler.org website
- Responsible gambling programs
- In-service programs and trainings
- Annual Statewide Conference
- Speakers for community groups
- Media Awareness
- School Outreach
- Expert Witnesses
- Referral to professional treatment and self-help programs

## Fact or Fiction?

**Fact:** One third of compulsive gamblers are women.

**Fiction:** Female gamblers brag when they win.

**Fact:** Most female gamblers do it to “escape.”

**Fiction:** Most women begin gambling at a very young age.

**Fact:** Most women stick to legal gambling.

**Fiction:** Female gamblers will not resort to illegal acts when they become desperate.

## The Female Compulsive Gambler

In 1980, the American Psychiatric Association classified compulsive (pathological) gambling as a “disorder of impulse control.” It is the psychologically uncontrollable preoccupation and urge to gamble, and it is not discriminatory. With 1/3 of compulsive gamblers being women, it is possible that you or someone you care about is affected by this illness.

### *The Progression*

**The Winning Phase:** Wins enhance the self-esteem and ego. Losses are rationalized as bad luck or poor advice. The gambler fantasizes about and is striving for “The Big Win.”

**The Losing Phase:** Losses increase and self-esteem becomes jeopardized. Gamblers begins chasing and borrowing money to “get even.” Common danger signals of this phase are lying, loan fraud, family disputes, absenteeism, and job changes.

**The Desperation Phase:** The gambler becomes obsessed with covering stolen money, secret loans, and withdrawals from bank accounts. She will panic at the thought that the gambling escape will end. Often, illegal activities begin to support the addiction. Severe mood swings set in, and suicide may be considered as a way out.

*“By the time my gambling addiction was identified, I had embezzled and written bad checks to cover over \$50,000 in gambling debts.”*

*-Carol, mother of three*

## Warning Signs.....

- ◆ Preoccupation with gambling
- ◆ Denial
- ◆ Shame & Guilt
- ◆ Chasing Losses
- ◆ Illegal Activities
- ◆ Manipulative Behavior & Lying
- ◆ Severe Mood Swings
- ◆ Financial Trouble
- ◆ Suicidal Thoughts
- ◆ Neglecting Responsibilities

## Female Gamblers Are Often...

- ◆ Victims of Abuse
- ◆ Recovering Addicts (or have a family history of addiction)
- ◆ Women over 30
- ◆ Escape Gamblers