Recover with Pride

LGBTQ+ GAMBLING HARM SUPPORT

EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) and Gambling Recovery

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EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) and Gambling Recovery

What Is EFT?

Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT), sometimes known as "tapping", is a self-help technique that combines gentle tapping on specific points of the body while focusing on thoughts, emotions, urges, or challenges that you are experiencing.

EFT is designed to help reduce the intensity of difficult emotions by encouraging awareness, self-acceptance, and emotional regulation. Many people use EFT to manage stress, anxiety, cravings, shame, worry, low mood, and difficult life experiences.

For LGBTQ+ people experiencing gambling-related harm, emotions such as rejection, stigma, discrimination, loneliness, identity-related stress, or financial worries can sometimes contribute to gambling behaviours. EFT can provide a practical way to manage these emotions without turning to gambling as a coping mechanism.

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How to Use This Tool

EFT involves identifying a difficult feeling or experience and gently tapping on a series of acupressure points whilst repeating a statement that acknowledges the challenge you are facing.

A simple example might be:

"Even though I am experiencing a strong urge to gamble right now, I accept myself and how I am feeling."

You can use EFT when:

- Experiencing gambling urges.
- Feeling anxious, stressed, or overwhelmed.
- Struggling with shame, guilt, or self-blame.
- Managing difficult emotions linked to finances.
- Coping with discrimination or identity-related stress.
- Preparing for challenging situations or conversations.

Like any recovery tool, EFT often becomes more effective through regular practice and repetition.

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How This Can Aid Recovery From Gambling Harm

Many people gamble not because they want to gamble, but because they want relief from how they are feeling.

EFT can help by creating space between emotions and actions. Rather than immediately acting on an urge, EFT encourages you to pause, acknowledge your feelings, and respond in a healthier way.

Regular practice may help you to:

- Reduce the intensity of gambling urges.
- Manage anxiety and stress.
- Improve emotional awareness.
- Decrease feelings of shame and self-criticism.
- Build confidence in managing difficult emotions.
- Reduce impulsive decision-making.
- Strengthen emotional resilience.
- Develop healthier coping strategies.

Over time, EFT can become a valuable alternative to gambling when difficult emotions arise.

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LGBTQ+ Considerations

LGBTQ+ people can experience unique emotional pressures that may contribute to gambling-related harm.

These may include:

- Homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, or discrimination.
- Identity concealment.
- Difficult coming-out experiences.
- Family rejection.
- Social isolation and loneliness.
- Minority stress.
- Internalised stigma or shame.
- Concerns around acceptance and belonging.

These experiences can create emotional distress that feels difficult to manage.

EFT provides a simple and private technique that can help reduce emotional overwhelm, increase self-compassion, and support emotional wellbeing. It can be particularly helpful when coping with feelings linked to stigma, rejection, identity challenges, or low self-esteem.

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Practical Recovery Activities

To incorporate EFT into your recovery journey, consider:

- Using EFT when gambling urges occur.
- Practising daily for five to ten minutes.
- Combining EFT with journalling or mindfulness.
- Using tapping before financial reviews or recovery planning.
- Exploring emotions such as shame, guilt, anger, or anxiety.
- Tracking changes in urge intensity before and after each session.
- Creating a list of personal affirmations to use during tapping.

The goal is not to eliminate difficult emotions completely, but to develop healthier ways of responding to them.

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How We Can Help

Our Recover With Pride Recovery Coaches can support you to explore whether EFT could become a useful part of your recovery toolkit.

We can help you to:

- Understand how EFT works.
- Practise simple tapping techniques.
- Use EFT to manage gambling urges and cravings.
- Identify emotional triggers linked to gambling.
- Explore the impact of LGBTQ+ experiences on emotional wellbeing.
- Develop healthier coping mechanisms.
- Build confidence in using EFT independently.
- Integrate EFT into your wider recovery and wellbeing plan.

Our coaches can work alongside you to help build positive habits, strengthen emotional resilience, and develop practical skills that support long-term recovery. Together, we can help you find healthier ways to manage life's challenges, reducing reliance on gambling and supporting a more balanced, fulfilling future.

Refer for support here:
www.switchboard.org.uk/service/recover-with-pride/referral/

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