Recover with Pride

LGBTQ+ GAMBLING HARM SUPPORT

Journalling and Gambling Recovery

switchboard

REFRAME COACHING

University of Brighton

Journalling and Gambling Recovery

What Is Journalling?

Journalling is the practice of regularly writing down your thoughts, feelings, experiences, challenges, and achievements. It provides a safe and private space to explore what is happening in your life and make sense of difficult emotions.

For people experiencing gambling-related harm, journalling can be a powerful recovery tool. Gambling often becomes connected to emotions, habits, stress, relationships, finances, and personal experiences. Writing about these experiences can help you identify patterns, understand triggers, and develop healthier ways of coping.

For LGBTQ+ people, journalling can also provide a space to reflect on experiences of identity, coming out, discrimination, relationships, community, self-acceptance, and resilience. It can help you explore challenges while also recognising your strengths and progress.

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How to Use This Tool

There is no right or wrong way to journal. The most important thing is finding an approach that works for you.

You may choose to write about:

- Your thoughts and feelings each day.
- Gambling urges and cravings.
- Triggers that lead to gambling.
- Financial concerns or achievements.
- LGBTQ+ experiences and identity.
- Stressful situations and how you responded.
- Recovery goals and progress.
- Things you are proud of or grateful for.

Some people journal for a few minutes each day, while others write only when something significant happens. Consistency is often more important than length.

You do not need to be a good writer. Journalling is for you, not anyone else.

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How This Can Aid Recovery From Gambling Harm

One of the biggest challenges in recovery is understanding the thoughts, emotions, and situations that lead to gambling.

Journalling helps bring these patterns into focus.

Regular journalling can help you:

- Identify gambling triggers.
- Recognise emotional patterns.
- Track recovery progress.
- Understand urges before acting on them.
- Reduce stress and emotional overwhelm.
- Improve self-awareness.
- Build motivation for recovery.
- Celebrate achievements and milestones.

It can also help you see how far you have come. During difficult periods, looking back at previous entries can remind you of the progress you have already made and the challenges you have overcome.

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LGBTQ+ Considerations

Many LGBTQ+ people experience challenges that can affect wellbeing and contribute to gambling-related harm.

These may include:

- Experiences of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, or discrimination.
- Identity concealment.
- Coming out experiences.
- Family rejection.
- Social isolation or loneliness.
- Minority stress.
- Questions around identity or belonging.
- Difficulties accessing support.

Journalling can provide a safe space to explore these experiences without fear of judgement.

It can help you better understand how LGBTQ+ experiences influence your emotions, confidence, relationships, and gambling behaviours. It can also support greater self-acceptance by allowing you to reflect on your strengths, values, and achievements.

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Practical Recovery Activities

To get started with journalling, try writing about:

- What emotions have I experienced today?
- Did I experience any gambling urges today? What was happening at the time?
- What am I finding difficult right now?
- What helped me cope today?
- What progress have I made this week?
- What am I proud of?
- What support do I need?
- What are three positive things that happened today?

Remember that not every journal entry needs to focus on challenges. Recovery is also about recognising growth, successes, and moments of joy.

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How We Can Help

Our Recover With Pride Recovery Coaches can help you use journalling as a practical tool within your recovery journey.

We can support you to:

- Understand how journalling supports gambling recovery.
- Identify useful journalling techniques and prompts.
- Explore links between emotions, identity, and gambling behaviours.
- Track recovery goals and progress.
- Develop greater self-awareness.
- Build healthier coping mechanisms.
- Establish positive daily habits and routines.
- Integrate journalling into your broader recovery plan.

Our coaches can work alongside you to help make journalling a meaningful and sustainable part of your recovery. We can help you better understand the insights it provides, explore the benefits it offers, and create positive habits that support long-term wellbeing.

Over time, journalling can become more than a recovery tool. It can become a record of your resilience, growth, and progress, helping you build a future that is healthier, more confident, and free from the harms of gambling.

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

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