Recover with Pride

LGBTQ+ GAMBLING HARM SUPPORT

Structure and Routine and Gambling Recovery

switchboard

REFRAME COACHING

University of Brighton

Structure and Routine and Gambling Recovery

What Is Structure and Routine?

Structure and routine refer to the habits, activities, and patterns that bring stability and predictability to everyday life. Having a routine does not mean every hour of the day is planned. Instead, it means having a framework that helps you manage your time, priorities, wellbeing, and responsibilities.

Gambling-related harm can often disrupt routine. As gambling becomes more prominent, people may find themselves neglecting relationships, work, finances, hobbies, self-care, sleep, or other important parts of life. Recovery can sometimes leave a gap where gambling once occupied time, energy, and attention.

Building structure and routine helps fill that gap with positive activities that support wellbeing and recovery.

For LGBTQ+ people, routine can provide stability during periods of uncertainty, stress, identity exploration, discrimination, life transitions, or social isolation. It can help create a sense of control and purpose when other areas of life may feel unpredictable.

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How to Use This Tool

A healthy routine should support your wellbeing rather than feel restrictive or overwhelming.

You may find it helpful to include:

- Regular wake-up and sleep times.
- Meals at consistent times throughout the day.
- Physical activity or movement.
- Time for work, education, or volunteering.
- Social connections and community engagement.
- Recovery activities and self-care.
- Hobbies and interests.
- Time for relaxation and reflection.

Start small and focus on building a routine that feels realistic for your current situation.

Remember, routines do not need to be perfect. Flexibility is important, and occasional setbacks are a normal part of recovery.

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How This Can Aid Recovery From Gambling Harm

Many people describe gambling as filling time, providing excitement, creating a distraction, or offering a sense of purpose.

When gambling stops, some people experience:

- Boredom.
- Restlessness.
- A loss of direction.
- Empty periods of time.
- Difficulty staying motivated.
- Increased focus on gambling urges.

Having a structured routine can help by:

- Reducing unplanned time that may trigger gambling urges.
- Increasing stability and consistency.
- Creating healthy habits.
- Supporting emotional wellbeing.
- Improving sleep and energy levels.
- Building confidence and motivation.
- Providing a sense of purpose and achievement.
- Encouraging engagement in meaningful activities.

Recovery is often stronger when gambling is not simply removed, but replaced with healthier and more fulfilling alternatives.

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LGBTQ+ Considerations

Many LGBTQ+ people have experienced periods of instability linked to discrimination, rejection, housing difficulties, poor mental health, social isolation, or challenges accessing appropriate support.

You may have experienced:

- Disruption to education or employment.
- Difficult family relationships.
- Isolation from community connections.
- Mental health challenges linked to minority stress.
- Significant life changes relating to coming out or transition.
- Periods of uncertainty regarding identity, support, or belonging.

Creating routines can provide a sense of consistency and safety during these challenges.

A routine can also help prioritise activities that affirm your identity, support your wellbeing, and strengthen connection with LGBTQ+ communities and supportive relationships.

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Practical Recovery Activities

To strengthen your recovery through routine, try:

- Creating a daily or weekly planner.
- Setting consistent bedtime and wake-up times.
- Scheduling activities during periods when gambling urges are strongest.
- Planning regular exercise or movement.
- Building dedicated recovery time into your week.
- Scheduling social activities and community engagement.
- Setting achievable daily goals.
- Reviewing your progress at the end of each week.

Remember that successful routines are built gradually. Small changes made consistently often have the greatest long-term impact.

Structure and Routine and Gambling Recovery

How We Can Help

Our Recover With Pride Recovery Coaches can help you build a structure and routine that supports your individual recovery journey.

We can support you to:

- Identify times, situations, or emotions that increase gambling urges.
- Develop realistic daily and weekly routines.
- Create positive habits that support wellbeing.
- Build accountability and consistency.
- Increase confidence and motivation.
- Explore activities that bring purpose and fulfilment.
- Strengthen recovery-supporting behaviours.
- Adapt routines to reflect your lifestyle, goals, and LGBTQ+ experiences.

Our coaches understand that recovery is about building a life that feels meaningful, balanced, and sustainable. We can work alongside you to help implement structure and routine into your day-to-day life, understand the benefits it brings, and develop positive habits that support lasting change.

Over time, structure and routine can help transform recovery from something you do occasionally into something that becomes part of everyday life, creating a stronger foundation for wellbeing, resilience, and long-term freedom from gambling harm.

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

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