

Empowered

WINTER 2013

ELLIOTT-HUDSON COUNSELING SERVICES LLC

ISSUE SIX



Bridging Your Gap from Gambling Addiction to Recovery

From My Perspective

Amends-making is a frequent topic of discussion, especially in early recovery. Clients driven by shame and guilt report a strong desire to “make things right” for those they have hurt. While it is important that the client becomes cognizant of the damage that has been caused because of the disease, timing is everything in the amends-making process.

Amends-making in Twelve Step programs is found at Step Eight, and there’s a reason why it isn’t one of the early steps. The client has to be prepared for the outcome of the amends that they are trying to make.

Sometimes the amends/apology will be accepted without reservation. Sometimes those affected express skepticism and adopt a “wait and see” position sometimes with “conditions.” Other times there are those affected who reject the client’s amends outright, and the client has to be prepared to accept negative feedback and rejection.

Most importantly, the client needs to come to realize the devastating impact of the disease on the gambler himself or herself. Gambling, or any addiction, does not allow someone to become the person he or she

is meant to be. While actively gambling, the client is living in a dream world, an illusion created by the act of gambling itself. Until the spell is broken, the client cannot comprehend and subsequently address the damage.

For the gambler, acceptance of gambling as a disease is essential for the process of self-forgiveness to occur. However, there are barriers to this process.

The belief held by many people that gambling is a choice makes self-forgiveness a challenge for the gambler. Many clients were criticized

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From My Perspective (continued)

for their loss of control when they were active in their addiction. They were told by others that stopping gambling is a matter of willpower and that their behavior was a choice. People who aren't addicted to gambling may ask, "Why can't you just stop?" Listening to these beliefs reinforces the gambler's feelings of guilt and shame. Addiction is not a choice. Logically, who would deliberately seek such a destructive way of life?

Not forgiving oneself continues the process of placing judgments and limits on oneself. That, in turn, makes the recovery process a challenge. Ultimately, the forgiveness of self is the greatest gift for the recovering gambler and a cornerstone to building a strong recovery foundation. **Self-forgiveness — what a gift!**

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You may have gathered from the January-February vacation dates that something is happening, and so it is. I'll be taking a long vacation and have been invited to speak at the 5th International Gambling Conference: Gambling in a Mobile Era in Auckland, New Zealand. The main conference Feb. 19-21 follows two pre-conference days. I'm teaming up with two gentlemen from the "southern hemisphere" to present a workshop.

I'll send a reminder notice in January with emergency and other information.

### Check Out This Book!

I encourage you to [click here](#) to read my latest gambling book review.

## My Practice Schedule

### SCOTTSDALE

|           |                          |         |
|-----------|--------------------------|---------|
| Monday    | 7:30 AM                  | 8:30 PM |
| Tuesday   | 7:00 AM                  | 8:00 PM |
| Wednesday | Mesa-Chandler<br>all day |         |
| Thursday  | 7:30 AM                  | 1:30 PM |

Other times by special arrangement

**If you need to cancel your appointment, please notify me as soon as possible since I often have a waiting list.**

### MESA-CHANDLER

|           |                    |         |
|-----------|--------------------|---------|
| Monday    | Scottsdale all day |         |
| Tuesday   | Scottsdale all day |         |
| Wednesday | 7:00 AM            | 2:00 PM |
| Thursday  | 2:30 PM            | 6:30 PM |

Other times by special arrangement

**Please remember to bring a folder or binder to each session for handouts and your assigned homework.**

## Winter Holidays & Vacation Schedule

**Dec. 22 - Dec. 29** (Sun - Sun.) & **Dec. 31 - Jan. 1**, (Tues. and Wed.): Winter Holidays

**Jan. 29 - Feb. 22:** Vacation & New Zealand gambling conference

Please use the resources below if you are in need of support.

**Empact: 480-784-1500**

**Banner Helpline: 602-254-4357**

**Magellan: 602-222-9444**

**Nursewise: 1-866-495-6735**

**GA Hotline: 602-266-9784**

**AA (help / information) 602-264-13**

At all other times if you have an emergency, call (480) 390-3952. Also, please use this phone number for last-minute cancellations (less than 24 hours before your appointment) or if you are going to be late to a session or group. **Due to my increased caseload, I may not be able to reschedule a last-minute cancellation.**

**Please Note: I do not text message.** Phone calls or email only please. I will make every effort to empty my voice mail box daily. Please call if you need to change an appointment that day.

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