



# Open Meeting

presented by  
Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon

October 1, 2014  
Albany, New York

## WELCOME

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## Gamblers Anonymous

**Gamblers Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from a gambling problem.**

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**The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop gambling. There are no dues or fees for Gamblers Anonymous membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Gamblers Anonymous is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses or opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to stop gambling and to help other compulsive gamblers do the same.**

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**Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real problem gamblers. No one likes to think they are different from their fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our gambling careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could gamble like other people. The idea that somehow, someday, we will control our gambling is the great obsession of every compulsive gambler. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of prison, insanity or death.**

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**We learned we had to concede fully to our innermost selves that we are compulsive gamblers. This is the first step in our recovery. With reference to gambling, the delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.**

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**We have lost the ability to control our gambling. We know that no real compulsive gambler ever regains control. All of us felt at times we were regaining control, but such intervals – usually brief – were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. We are convinced that gamblers of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period of time we get worse, never better.**

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**Therefore, in order to lead normal, happy lives, we try to practice to the best of our ability, certain principles in our daily affairs.**

From *GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS*, published by Gamblers Anonymous International Service Office, Revised October 2013, pages 2-3

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## **The Recovery Program**

Here are the steps which are a program of recovery.

1. **We admitted we were powerless over gambling –that our lives had become unmanageable.**
2. **Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to a normal way of thinking and living.**
3. **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of this Power of our own understanding.**

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## **The Recovery Program**

4. **Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves.**
5. **Admitted to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
6. **Were entirely ready to have these defects of character removed.**
7. **Humbly asked God (of our understanding) to remove our shortcomings.**
8. **Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**

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## The Recovery Program

9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

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## The Recovery Program

12. Having made an effort to practice these principles in all our affairs, we tried to carry this message to other compulsive gamblers.

From *GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS*, published by Gamblers Anonymous International Service Office, Revised October 2013, pages 4-5.

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## The Unity Program

In order to maintain unity, our experience has shown that:

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon group unity.
2. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for Gamblers Anonymous membership is a desire to stop gambling.
4. Each group should be self-governing except in matters affecting other groups or Gamblers Anonymous as a whole.

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## The Unity Program

- 5. Gamblers Anonymous has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the compulsive gambler who still suffers.
- 6. Gamblers Anonymous ought never endorse, finance or lend the Gamblers Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
- 7. Every Gamblers Anonymous Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

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## The Unity Program

- 8. Gamblers Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9. Gamblers Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10. Gamblers Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Gamblers Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

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## The Unity Program

- 11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and internet.
- 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the Gamblers Anonymous program, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

From *GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS*, published by Gamblers Anonymous International Service Office, Revised October 2013, pages 6-7.

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**To all Gamblers Anonymous members, particularly the new Gamblers Anonymous members:**

- 1. Attend as many meetings as possible per week. MEETINGS MAKE IT.**
- 2. Telephone other members as often as possible between meetings. USE THE TELEPHONE LIST!**
- 3. Don't test or tempt yourself. Don't associate with acquaintances who gamble. Don't go in or near gambling establishments. DON'T GAMBLE FOR ANYTHING.**
- 4. Live the Gamblers Anonymous Program ONE DAY AT A TIME. Don't try to solve all your problems at once.**

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**To all Gamblers Anonymous members, particularly the new Gamblers Anonymous members:**

- 5. Read the RECOVERY and UNITY steps often and continuously review the Twenty Questions. Follow the steps in your daily affairs. These steps are the basis for the entire Gamblers Anonymous Program and practicing them is the key to your growth. Get involved and be of service. If you have any questions, ask them of your Trusted Servants and Sponsors.**
- 6. GET A SPONSOR. IT IS DIFFICULT TO RECOVER ON YOUR OWN! Sponsorship gives an opportunity for members to work on a one-on-one basis to achieve recovery by sharing, practicing, and working the 12 Steps of Recovery.**

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**To all Gamblers Anonymous members, particularly the new Gamblers Anonymous members:**

- 7. We encourage every Gamblers Anonymous member to have a Pressure Relief Group Meeting as it offers guidance toward a normal way of thinking and living. The Pressure Relief Group Meeting may help alleviate legal, financial, employment and personal pressures. Adherence to it will aid in your recovery.**
- 8. BE PATIENT! The days and weeks will pass soon enough, and as you regularly attend meetings, abstain from gambling and follow the guidelines on this page, you will experience continued recovery.**

From GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS published by Gamblers Anonymous International Service Office, Revised October 2013, page 17.

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## Gam-Anon REFLECTIONS

The devastating effects of the gambling problem led us to a Gam-Anon meeting. For many of us, it was the first time we had ever spoken out loud and to another person about our excruciating pain. A paralyzing wall of loneliness and isolation was lifted, as we heard others share similar experiences.

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## Gam-Anon REFLECTIONS

From the "older" members who smiled and nodded their heads as we spoke, we saw a flicker of hope, as we felt the desire to better our lives. Baby steps of growth and change began to emerge as we listened and learned each time we got together. The commonality of our feelings and emotions kept us coming back, week after week, month after month, and year after year.

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## Gam-Anon REFLECTIONS

We learned that setbacks and growth spurts are all part of a gradual healing process. Every part of our lives, spiritual, emotional and physical felt the impact of our new outlook.

This special group of people constantly touches our lives to the deepest core. Because of their care and understanding, we are able to live full and enriched lives. We are forever indebted to those special few who say, "My name is . . ." at meetings all over the world.

From *Reflections on Our Gam-Anon Experience*, published by the Gam-Anon International Service Office, Inc., 1992, Preface.

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## The Purposes of Gam-Anon

- A. To grow spiritually by living by the twelve steps of Gam-Anon.
- B. To learn to understand the gambling problem and its impact on our lives.
- C. To give encouragement and understanding to the compulsive gambler.
- D. To welcome and give assistance and comfort to those affected by the gambling problem.

The Gam-Anon Way of Life, a Gam-Anon Handbook, published by the Gam-Anon International Service Office, Inc., 2005, page 3.

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## Gam-Anon UNITY STEP 3

*The only requirement for Gam-Anon membership is that your life is affected by someone who has a gambling problem.*

We are aware that the Gam-Anon program could apply to anyone, whether or not he or she has this type of problem, but the gambling problem is our common problem. Gam-Anon will not turn away or discourage attendance by anyone whose life has been affected by the gambling problem. Once a member, always a member.

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## Gam-Anon UNITY STEP 3

It doesn't matter if you have lived with the problem for many years or if the problem is new to you. It doesn't matter if you are the spouse, parent, child, widow, widower, fiancée, or friend of the gambler. It doesn't matter if the gambler is still gambling or has stopped, is in Gamblers Anonymous, or not. It doesn't matter if you have debt or not. If you have been affected by the gambling problem, you are welcome in Gam-Anon.

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## Gam-Anon UNITY STEP 3

This step is one of acceptance, for we understand as perhaps few can. It embraces all, regardless of race, religion, social or economic background. The message is . . . "Come join us . . . we hold out our hand in compassion and understanding . . . you are not alone."

From *The Gam-Anon Way of Life, a Gam-Anon Handbook*, published by the Gam-Anon International Service Office, Inc., 2005, pages 30-31.

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## Serenity Prayer

God, Grant me the  
Serenity to accept the things  
I cannot change.  
Courage to change the things  
I can, and  
Wisdom to know the  
difference.

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## For more information:

- [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org)
- [www.gam-anon.org](http://www.gam-anon.org)

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