

The Gambling Clinic's Treatment for Problem Gambling

There's good news for people who are experiencing harm from their gambling or are concerned they may have a gambling problem or gambling addiction. The **Gambling Clinic** has developed an effective treatment for helping people gain control of their gambling and make the changes they want in their lives.

We call our treatment **TGC-MCBT**. That stands for The Gambling Clinic's Motivationally Enhanced Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Here's what TGC-MCBT includes:

Therapy using cognitive behavioral techniques and motivational enhancement. Clients meet individually with their therapist, typically about once a week for eight to ten sessions.

Peer Support from a peer recovery specialist, or peer for short. A peer has lived experience with addiction and walks alongside a TGC client as they work to gain control of their gambling and make changes in their life.

Tools to equip clients to understand their gambling and build skills to make and sustain changes in their gambling and their lives.

Setting Goals for Treatment

Each person's treatment is tailored to meet their individual goals and situation. The Gambling Clinic is gambling neutral, which means that the client decides what changes they want to make. In consultation with their therapist, a client might choose to set a goal to refrain from gambling completely.

Or, the client could set a moderation goal focused on limiting how much money they will risk gambling, how frequently they will gamble, and/or how long a gambling session will last. For example, a client might set a moderation goal of gambling at most one day a week, for no more than one hour, and risking a maximum of \$150.

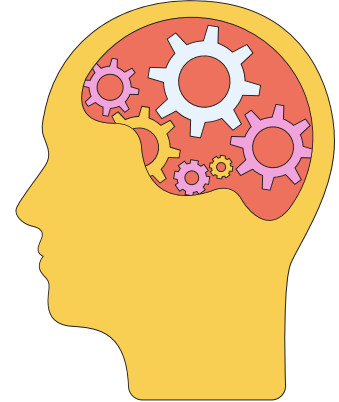
Once the client and the therapist have worked together to set a goal, they explore tools and strategies for the client to use to work toward this goal. With a goal that is specific and measurable, they are able to see whether the methods the client is using are successful for controlling their gambling and to adjust as needed.



Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Gambling

The Gambling Clinic treatment team uses **cognitive-behavioral techniques (CBT)**, teachable skills and strategies that focus on the way a person's thoughts, emotions, and environment influence their actions. When a person understands what leads to their behaviors, they're better able to make changes and develop behaviors that are healthier and more productive. CBT for gambling also involves exploring the function that gambling serves in the client's life and looking for other ways that function can be served.

TGC-MCBT has five phases, and it usually takes between eight and ten sessions to complete. The client meets individually with their therapist, and sessions last about an hour. Most people meet weekly initially and then meet a little less frequently in later phases to allow more time for practicing new skills between sessions. The specific schedule is up to the client and their therapist based on the client's schedule and their individual needs and preferences.



Support From Peer Recovery Specialists

As soon as a client makes that first call to The Gambling Clinic and schedules an appointment with a therapist, the client is connected with a peer recovery specialist. A peer knows firsthand about overcoming addiction and is available by phone or text in between sessions to serve as a resource.

Peers can help clients with practical matters like helping them self-exclude from a sports betting app or find debt counseling. Clients can also reach out to their peer if they have an urge to gamble or if they have a setback and are unsure how to get back on track.

Once a person starts treatment with The Gambling Clinic, we are with them every step of the way.



Tools for Making Changes

As part of the TGC-MCBT program, the client's therapist and peer may introduce them to tools to help them pursue their goals and make changes in their gambling and their life. Here are some examples of tools we offer:

- **Timeline Rewind** for the client to track and reflect on their past gambling
- [Self-exclusion guide](#) for the client to control their access to sports betting apps and/or casinos
- [Ad and content-blocking guide](#) for the client to limit the gambling content they see on social media, in email, and on the web, in order to avoid content that may evoke the urge to gamble
- **Urge surfing guide** (Bowen et al., 2021) for using mindfulness to manage cravings for gambling

These are just a few examples of our tools. We will work with the client to identify tools and resources that can help them achieve their goals and make the changes they want.



Get a [FREE SCREENING](#) for feedback
on your gambling.

Concerned That You May Have a Gambling Problem?

If you're concerned about your gambling or wondering whether you may have a gambling addiction, you can use our [screener](#) to get feedback on your gambling. We also invite you to [contact us](#) to discuss whether The Gambling Clinic's treatment could be right for you.

Concerned About a Friend or Family Member's Gambling?

If you're concerned about a friend or family member's gambling, you can read more about supporting them [here](#) and find a screening form welcome to [here](#). You can also [contact](#) The Gambling Clinic to learn more about our treatment or to get guidance on talking with your friend or family member. We also offer therapy for the partners or other family members of people experiencing problem gambling.

Give us a [call](#) to discuss how we can support you.

Are You a Therapist Treating a Client with a Gambling Disorder or Addiction?

You may be interested in some of the following resources:

- [The Gambling Clinic's](#) web page for healthcare providers and mental health professionals
- Our handbook, [Gambling Disorder](#)
- [Blog post](#) about researcher's meta-analyses on CBT for problem gambling
- [Blog post](#) about CBT for gambling
- [Self-exclusion guide](#) for an individual to control their own access to sports betting apps and/or casinos
- [Ad and content-blocking guide](#) for a person to limit the gambling content they see on social media, in email, and on the web, in order to avoid content that may evoke the urge to gamble



Conclusion

The Gambling Clinic has more than **25 years'** experience helping people get control of their gambling and make the changes they want in their lives. Our TGC MCBT program is based on what we have learned from our work with clients over the years and on research conducted by us and others about gambling, addiction, and related topics.

Our program is effective for helping people overcome problem gambling. If you or someone you know is struggling with gambling, we hope you'll reach out so we can discuss how we could help you too.

