

TRIGGERS TO PROBLEM GAMBLING

A Brainstorming Activity



Triggers can fuel your desire to gamble. A variety of triggers exists, and they are often different for everyone. It can be helpful to separate your triggers into events, thoughts and feelings. Try to think of what your triggers might be—whether

they are events, thoughts or feelings—and add them to the lists below. This will help you increase your awareness of the triggers that lead to your gambling behaviours.

Events	Thoughts	Feelings
<i>Tax benefit cheque in the mail</i>	<i>I know who will win in the hockey playoffs.</i>	<i>I'm bored.</i>
<i>Birthday celebration</i>	<i>The only way I can pay off this debt is to win at the slots.</i>	<i>I'm feeling angry.</i>
<i>Mobile push notifications about gambling events and/or activities</i>	<i>I will bet \$50 and leave.</i>	<i>I'm depressed.</i>
<i>Lottery and sports lottery tickets in the corner store</i>	<i>Today is my lucky day.</i>	<i>I can't fight with my partner anymore.</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Although this is not a complete list, it can help you start your own brainstorming around triggers to problem gambling and provide you and your therapist/counsellor with areas where coping strategies may need to be enhanced or developed.

Adapted from: Herie, M.A. & Watkin-Merek, L. (2006). *Structured Relapse Prevention: An Outpatient Counselling Approach* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.