

Session 9

Title: Gambling Recovery Supports, Self-Help Groups & Lived Experience Panel

Date: 2/4/2025

9 am-12 pm

Presenter: Valerie Tebbetts, ICGC II and Stephen Matos ICGC II, RSS

Description: Peer support in recovery has been shown to improve outcomes and promote better health for those receiving services. As a result, recovery supports are an expanding part of treatment across all mental health and addiction services. In this presentation a team of Peer Counselors will provide valuable information and insight into recovery supports for disordered gamblers that can be stand-alone services or supplement clinical treatment to improve outcomes. Topics will include peer support services in CT and how to access them. This training will provide statewide information on Gamblers Anonymous, SMART recovery, and other open recovery meetings as well as a discussion of online recovery meetings and resources. The pros and cons of Voluntary Self Exclusion from “bricks and mortar” casinos and online sites will be discussed, including what it is, how to complete the process and how to locate individuals who can help in CT, MA and RI.

The financial consequences of disordered gambling can be a stressor that detracts from clinical treatment and prevents successful outcomes. This training will review tools and information that can help those experiencing gambling harm manage financial consequences including budgeting, debt solutions, and financial accountability solutions.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define the role of peer support in gambling recovery and treatment
2. Identify at least 3 peer support services available to disordered gamblers.
3. Name at least two tools helpful in financial management and/or debt repayment.

Presenter Bios:

Valerie Tebbetts, RSS, ICGC II

Valerie Tebbetts has been in recovery from disordered gambling for over 10 years. She has been a trainer in the State of Connecticut with the staff of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Problem Gambling Services and has presented at the National Council on Problem Gambling's (NCPG) convention on “Mindfulness Based Recovery” and “Financial Issues and

Problem Gambling". She is an Internationally Certified Gambling Counselor and holds certifications as a CCAR Recovery Coach and a DMHAS Recovery Support Specialist. Valerie previously worked as a Peer Counselor for the Bettor Choice treatment program and is currently the Helpline Coordinator for the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling. She also works as a Recovery Coach in a medication assisted treatment program for opioid dependent individuals at UCFS Healthcare in Norwich, CT.

Stephen Matos, RSS, ICGC II

Stephen Matos is a person in long-term recovery of over 32 years from gambling, alcohol and as a person affected from problem gambling. After retiring from the State of CT DOT as an operations manager in 2012, Stephen began working for The Connection's Bettor Choice Gambling Treatment Program and MCCA's Bettor Choice Program as a Peer Counselor and Recovery Support Specialist. Stephen facilitates recovery groups, family support groups along with seeing clients individually focusing on supporting those with gambling disorders and their family members along the road of recovery. Stephen works closely with the DMHAS Problem Gambling Services and the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling in the facilitation of trainings, prevention, awareness activities and manages PGS gambling recovery support grant

providing recovery opportunities for persons in recovery from problem and persons affected by it. He has presented on peer support related issues at the 2015 National Conference on Problem Gambling, CCAR's Pathways to Recovery Conference in 2016, honored with the CT Council on Problem Gambling's Recovery Award in 2015 and presented at their State Conference in 2017. Stephen is a graduate of Advocacy Unlimited Recovery University, certified as a Recovery Support Specialist and has completed CCAR's Recovery Coach Academy and is an Internationally Certified Gambling Counselor (ICGC-II).