

# 11

## Gambling Disorder Clinical Practice Workbook

A clinically branded, function-preserving edition retaining the original exercises, psychoeducation, checklists, logs, planning tools, and response space.

DSM-5-TR · ICD-11 CLINICAL ALIGNMENT

1 · Gambling Behavior Self-Assessment

2 · Understanding Gambling Triggers

3 · Gambling Consequences

4 · Financial Impact Analysis

5 · Emotional Regulation Strategies

6 · Challenging Negative Thoughts

7 · Behavioral Activation

8 · Communicating About Gambling

9 · Relationship Repair

10 · Boundaries With Yourself

11 · Identity Beyond Gambling

# How to use this workbook

- Use this workbook selectively and collaboratively; it is educational and does not replace individualized assessment, diagnosis, treatment, medical care, or crisis services.
- Skip, pause, or modify any activity that increases distress, danger, shame, or loss of functioning. Adapt language for culture, disability, neurodivergence, health, resources, and lived context.
- Ratings in this workbook are reflection tools unless a named, validated measure and interpretation are explicitly provided.

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## Gambling Behavior Self-Assessment

The following are common signs you might be struggling with gambling disorder. Rate each statement on a scale from 1-5 (1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”):

| Statement                                                                                                                   | Rate (1-5) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. “I gamble to escape from problems or to relieve feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, or depression.”                | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 2. “I need to gamble with increasing amounts of money to achieve the desired excitement.”                                   | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 3. “When I lose money gambling, I often return another day to get even.”                                                    | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 4. “I rely on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.”                        | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 5. “I feel restless or irritable when I attempt to cut down or stop gambling.”                                              | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 6. “I frequently think about gambling, planning my next venture or reliving past gambling experiences.”                     | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 7. “I lie to family members, friends, or others to conceal the extent of my involvement with gambling.”                     | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 8. “I continue to gamble despite experiencing negative consequences in my life.”                                            | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 9. “I have tried to cut down or stop gambling several times but haven't been able to.”                                      | 1-2-3-4-5  |
| 10. “I have jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.” | 1-2-3-4-5  |

Score: \_\_\_\_/50

The score reflects the severity and impact of your gambling disorder.

1. What statements resonated with you more than the others?

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2. Which of the identified patterns or habits from the assessment do you feel most interested in working on changing?

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Gambling Disorder is characterized in the DSM-5 as a persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior leading to clinically significant impairment or distress. The disorder is diagnosed when at least four of the following criteria are met within a 12-month period:

1. Need to Gamble with Increasing Amounts of Money
2. Restlessness or Irritability
3. Repeated Unsuccessful Efforts to Control Gambling
4. Preoccupation with Gambling
5. Gambling as a Way to Escape Problems or Relieve Negative Mood
6. Chasing Losses
7. Lying to Conceal Gambling Activity
8. Jeopardizing or Losing Relationships or Opportunities
9. Reliance on Others for Money

## Understanding Gambling Triggers

**1. Identifying Emotional Triggers:** Reflect on the emotions you frequently experience before you feel the urge to gamble. For each emotion, describe a situation where you felt this way and subsequently gambled.

*Example:*

- *Emotion: Stress*
- *Situation: "After a long day at work, I felt overwhelmed and stressed. I went to the casino to escape and relieve my stress."*

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**2. List Situational Triggers:** Identify and list situations or environments that commonly lead to gambling. Consider both physical and online environments.

*Example: Visiting a casino, seeing advertisements for gambling, having extra money, being with friends who gamble, online gambling websites.*

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**3. Reflect on Recent Gambling Episodes:** Think about recent gambling episodes and the situations you were in at the time. Write down the details of these situations.

*Example: "I was at home alone on a Saturday night, feeling bored. I saw an ad for an online gambling site and decided to check it out."*

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**4. Identify Thought Patterns:** Reflect on the thoughts that go through your mind before and during gambling. List these common thought patterns.

*Example: "I deserve to win this time," "Just one more bet," "I can win back my losses," "This will make me feel better."*

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**5. Keep a Trigger Journal:** Keep a journal for a week where you note every instance of the urge to gamble. Record the emotion, situation, and thoughts you had each time.

| Date   | Emotion | Situation                                              | Thoughts                                            |
|--------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| May 12 | Boredom | Sitting at home alone, scrolling through social media. | Maybe I should check out that new gambling website. |
|        |         |                                                        |                                                     |

| Date | Emotion | Situation | Thoughts |
|------|---------|-----------|----------|
|      |         |           |          |

## Gambling Consequences

**1. List Recent Gambling Episodes:** Write down a list of recent gambling episodes. Include details such as the date, time, amount of money spent, and type of gambling.

*Example:*

- *Date and Time: May 10, 2024 - 8.00 PM*
- *Amount Spent: \$200*
- *Type of Gambling: Online poker*

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**2. Describe Immediate Feelings:** Reflect on how you felt immediately after each gambling episode. Note any positive or negative emotions.

*Example: Excitement, temporary satisfaction, followed by guilt and regret.*

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**3. Identify Short-Term Effects:** Consider the short-term effects of each gambling episode on your life. Think about impacts on your mood, relationships, and daily activities.

*Example: Temporary mood boost, arguments with family, distraction from work responsibilities.*

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**4. Reflect on Long-Term Impact:** Reflect on how ongoing gambling has affected your life over time. Consider financial, emotional, relational, and psychological impacts.

*Example:*

- *Financial Impact: Accumulating debt and financial instability.*
- *Emotional Impact: Chronic stress, anxiety, and feelings of shame.*
- *Relational Impact: Strained relationships with family and friends.*
- *Psychological Impact: Lowered self-esteem and feelings of helplessness.*

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Financial Impact</b>     |  |
| <b>Emotional Impact</b>     |  |
| <b>Relational Impact</b>    |  |
| <b>Psychological Impact</b> |  |

**5. Visualize the Future with Continued Behavior:** Imagine what your life will look like if you continue your gambling habits. Visualize the potential future consequences in detail.

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**6. Visualize the Future with Positive Change:** Imagine what your life could look like if you successfully manage and reduce gambling. Visualize positive outcomes and improvements.

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**7. Write a Commitment Statement:** Write a statement committing to addressing and reducing the consequences of gambling. Sign and date it to reinforce your commitment.

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## Financial Impact Analysis

1. **Calculating Gambling Expenses:** Write down all recent gambling expenditures, including dates, amounts, and types of gambling.

| Date | Amount | Type of gambling |
|------|--------|------------------|
|      |        |                  |

2. **Calculate Total Gambling Expenses:** Sum up all the amounts listed to calculate the total amount spent on gambling in a specific period.

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3. **List Monthly Income:** Write down all sources of income for the month, including salary, freelance work, benefits, etc. Calculate the total monthly income.

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4. **List Monthly Essential Expenses:** Write down all essential monthly expenses, such as rent, utilities, groceries, transportation, insurance, and healthcare. Calculate the total monthly essential expenses.

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**5. Calculate Disposable Income:** Subtract the total monthly essential expenses from the total monthly income to determine your disposable income.

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**6. Calculate Gambling's Impact on Disposable Income:** Subtract the total gambling expenses from your disposable income to see the impact on your finances.

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**7. Reflect on Financial Strain:** Reflect on how gambling has affected your financial stability and write down any financial strains or difficulties you've experienced.

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**8. List Debts and Financial Obligations:** Write down all your current debts and financial obligations, including credit cards, loans, and any overdue bills. Include the amount owed, interest rate, and minimum monthly payment.

| Type of debt | Amount | Minimum payment |
|--------------|--------|-----------------|
|              |        |                 |

**9. Create a Debt Repayment Plan:** Develop a plan to pay off your debts, prioritizing high-interest debts first. Allocate a portion of your disposable income to debt repayment.

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**10. Set Financial Goals:** Identify short-term and long-term financial goals to work towards financial stability. Write down these goals and the steps needed to achieve them.

*Example:*

- *Short-Term Goals:*

- *"Reduce gambling expenses by 50% next month."*
- *"Save \$200 for an emergency fund within three months."*

- *Long-Term Goals:*

- *"Pay off credit card debt within a year."*
- *"Save \$5000 for a down payment on a house in three years."*

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**11. Create a Budget:** Create a monthly budget that includes all your income, essential expenses, debt repayments, and savings goals. Allocate specific amounts for each category and stick to the budget.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Income:   |  |
| Expenses: |  |

## Emotional Regulation Strategies

**1. Reflect on Recent Episodes:** Think about recent episodes where you gambled and the emotions you experienced. Write down the details of these episodes.

*Example:*

- *Date: May 15, 2024*
- *Emotion: Loneliness*
- *Trigger: "I was home alone on a Friday night, feeling lonely. I saw a gambling ad on TV and decided to gamble to pass the time."*

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**2. Identify Healthy Coping Mechanisms:** List healthy coping mechanisms to manage your emotions. Choose activities that help you process and regulate your feelings without resorting to gambling. The following are some suggestions. Check off the ones that may be helpful or add more to the list:

- ☐ Hold a cold ice cube
- ☐ Take deep, slow breaths
- ☐ Splash your face with cold water
- ☐ Engage in physical exercise (e.g., running, yoga)
- ☐ Dance to your favorite song
- ☐ Write in a journal
- ☐ Read a comforting book
- ☐ Watch a favorite movie or show

- ☐ Go for a walk in nature
- ☐ Spend time with a pet
- ☐ Call or text a friend
- ☐ Clean or organize a space
- ☐ Take a relaxing bath
- ☐ Go for a swim or soak in a hot tub
- ☐ Drink a soothing herbal tea
- ☐ Watch funny videos or comedy shows
- ☐ Engage in sensory activities (e.g., play with slime, stress balls)
- ☐ Color in an adult coloring book
- ☐ Take a cold shower
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
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**3. Create an Action Plan:** Develop a specific action plan for each emotional trigger. Include the steps you will take to manage your emotions and avoid gambling.

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**4. Practice Mindfulness Techniques:** Practice mindfulness techniques to stay present and observe your emotions without judgment.

Here are five mindfulness techniques:

### **Mindful Breathing**

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
- Close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose, then exhale slowly through your mouth.
- Pay attention to how the air feels entering and leaving your body. Notice the rise and fall of your chest and abdomen.
- Count each inhale and exhale as one cycle, up to ten, then start over. This helps to keep your mind focused.
- If your mind starts to wander to thoughts of gambling, gently bring your focus back to your breath without judgment.

### **Body Scan Meditation**

- Lie down or sit in a comfortable chair with your eyes closed.
- Focus your attention on your toes. Notice any sensations, tension, or relaxation.
- Gradually move your focus up through your body, from your feet to your head, paying attention to each part (e.g., legs, stomach, chest, arms, neck, face).
- Observe any areas of tension or discomfort without trying to change them. Just notice how your body feels.

- Finish by focusing on your whole body, feeling a sense of overall relaxation and awareness.

### **Urge Surfing**

- When you feel the urge to gamble, acknowledge it without trying to suppress it.
- Mentally note where you feel the urge in your body. Is it in your chest, stomach, or elsewhere?
- Focus on the physical sensation of the urge. Notice its intensity, and observe if it changes over time.
- Imagine the urge as a wave that rises, peaks, and eventually subsides. Stay with it until it passes.
- Use mindful breathing to stay calm and centered as you ride out the urge.

### **Mindful Walking**

- Find a safe and quiet place where you can walk undisturbed.
- As you walk, pay attention to the sensation of your feet touching the ground.
- Observe the sights, sounds, and smells around you without getting distracted by thoughts of gambling.
- If your mind starts to wander to gambling, gently bring your focus back to your walking and surroundings.
- Sync your breathing with your steps to help maintain a calm and focused state.

## Challenging Negative Thoughts

**1. Identifying Negative Thoughts:** Reflect on common negative thoughts you have related to gambling. Write down these thoughts.

*Example:*

- *"I'll never be able to stop gambling."*
- *"I need to win back the money I've lost."*
- *"Gambling is the only way I can escape my problems."*
- *"I'm a failure because I can't control my gambling."*

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**2. Describe the Situation:** For each negative thought, describe the situation in which it occurred. Include details about the context and your emotions at the time.

*Example:*

- *Negative Thought: "I need to win back the money I've lost."*
- *Context: "After losing \$500 in a single night at the casino, I felt desperate and anxious."*
- *Emotions: "Desperation (8/10), Anxiety (7/10)"*

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### 3. Challenging Negative Thoughts:

- For each negative thought, gather evidence for and against the thought.

*Example: Negative Thought: "I need to win back the money I've lost."*

| <b>Evidence For</b>                                          | <b>Evidence Against</b>                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>"I have lost a significant amount of money gambling."</i> | <i>"Chasing losses often leads to more significant losses. I have other ways to address my financial situation."</i> |

Negative Thought: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Evidence For</b> | <b>Evidence Against</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
|                     |                         |

- Challenge each negative thought by questioning its validity and considering alternative perspectives.

Are there other ways of looking at this situation?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is this thought based on facts or feelings?

\_\_\_\_\_

What would I say to a friend if they had this thought?

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How important will this be in a week, month, or year?

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**4. Reframing Negative Thoughts:** Reframe each negative thought into a more balanced and realistic thought.

*Example:*

- *Negative Thought: "I'm a failure because I can't control my gambling."*
- *Reframed Thought: "Struggling with gambling doesn't define me as a person. I'm taking steps to regain control, and seeking help is a sign of strength."*

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## Behavioral Activation

**1. Identify Core Values:** Reflect on what is most important to you in life.

*Example: Family, health, personal growth, financial stability, community, creativity.*

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**2. Identify Interests and Enjoyable Activities:** List activities that you enjoy or have enjoyed in the past. Include activities that align with your core values.

Example:

- Spending time with family
- Exercising (running, yoga)
- Reading and learning new things

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**3. Record Current Activities:** Keep a daily log of your activities for one week. Note your feelings before and after.

| Activity              | Feelings Before | Feelings After      | Notes                                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <i>Reading a book</i> | <i>Boredom</i>  | <i>Satisfaction</i> | <i>Felt accomplished finishing a chapter</i> |

| Activity | Feelings Before | Feelings After | Notes |
|----------|-----------------|----------------|-------|
|          |                 |                |       |

**4. Planning Positive Activities:** Based on your activity log, identify activities that align with your values and interests and have positive emotional outcomes.

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## Communicating About Gambling

**1. Identify Key People to Talk To:** List the people you need to communicate with about your gambling issue. Include family members, friends, and professionals.

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**2. Reflect on Your Goals:** Reflect on what you hope to achieve by communicating about your gambling.

*Example:*

- *Gain understanding and support.*
- *Seek accountability.*
- *Develop a plan to manage and reduce gambling.*
- *Obtain professional advice and resources.*

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**3. Prepare Your Message:** Think about what you want to say to each person. Write down key points you want to communicate.

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## Relationship Repair

**1. Identify Affected Relationships:** List the relationships that have been affected by your gambling behavior. Include family members, friends, and significant others.

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**2. Reflect on the Impact:** Reflect on how your gambling has impacted each relationship. Write down specific ways in which the relationship has been affected.

*Example: Impact on Sarah:*

- *Financial stress due to gambling losses*
- *Loss of trust from hiding gambling behavior*
- *Emotional strain from frequent arguments about money*

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**3. Acknowledge Your Actions:** Acknowledge and take responsibility for your actions that have hurt the relationship. Write down specific behaviors you regret.

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**4. Express Genuine Apology:** Write a heartfelt apology to each person you have affected. Be sincere and specific about what you are apologizing for.

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**5. Set Clear Boundaries:** Discuss and set clear boundaries that will help rebuild trust and prevent future issues. Write down these boundaries and agree to adhere to them.

*Example: Boundaries with Sarah:*

- *"I will be transparent about my finances and share access to my bank accounts."*
- *"I will inform you of any urges to gamble and seek your support to manage them."*

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## Boundaries With Yourself

**1. Identify Triggers:** List situations, emotions, or environments that trigger the urge to gamble.

*Example: Feeling stressed or anxious, visiting places with slot machines or casinos, receiving online gambling advertisements*

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**2. Set Clear Boundaries:** Define specific rules and limits to prevent gambling. The following are some examples. Check off the ones that apply or add more to the list:

- ☐ Avoid visiting casinos or gambling websites.
- ☐ Limit access to money by using a prepaid card with a set limit.
- ☐ Block gambling websites and apps on all devices.
- ☐ Unsubscribe from gambling newsletters
- ☐ Avoid Gambling-Related TV shows, movies, or articles that glorify gambling.
- ☐ Unfollow or mute accounts that promote gambling or show gambling-related content.
- ☐ Carry only a limited amount of cash and leave debit and credit cards at home to control spending.
- ☐ Establish a curfew for yourself to avoid late-night gambling sessions.
- ☐ Regularly attend meetings of support groups such as Gamblers Anonymous to stay accountable.

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## Identity Beyond Gambling

**1. Understanding Your Current Identity:** Write down how you currently see yourself. Include both positive and negative aspects related to your identity and gambling behavior.

*Example:*

- *"I see myself as someone who struggles with gambling addiction."*
- *"I am a hard worker and a dedicated friend."*

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**2. List Your Strengths and Positive Qualities:** Reflect on your strengths, talents, and positive qualities that are unrelated to gambling.

*Example:*

- *Compassionate*
- *Good listener*
- *Loyal friend*

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**3. Gather Feedback from Others:** Ask trusted friends, family members, or colleagues to share what they see as your strengths and positive qualities.

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**4. Identify Your Interests and Hobbies:** List activities, hobbies, and interests that you enjoy and that give you a sense of fulfillment.

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**5. Reflect on Past Achievements:** Reflect on past achievements and successes that you are proud of, unrelated to gambling.

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**6. Define Your Future Goals and Aspirations:** Think about what you want to achieve in the future, both personally and professionally.

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# 2026 Clinical Alignment

DSM-5-TR (including Sept. 2025 update) · ICD-11 CDDR / 2026 MMS

## Classification status

- DSM-5-TR: Gambling disorder · Formal diagnosis
- ICD-11 CDDR: 6C50 Gambling disorder · Formal diagnosis
- A title, checklist, or completed activity never establishes a diagnosis.

## Pages requiring the updated interpretation

- The audit identified source pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 14, 16, 23. The statements below supersede incompatible diagnostic, scoring, safety, or resource wording on those pages.

## Diagnostic and differential limits

- Confirm persistent/recurrent pattern, clinically significant impairment/distress, time frame, severity/remission, manic-episode exclusion, and substance/financial differentials.

## Document-specific corrections

- Pages [2, 4, 5] · Frame · Gambling Disorder · using the DSM/ICD status below; add duration, impairment, exclusions, and differentials without reproducing criteria. The title alone must never be treated as a diagnosis.
- Pages [1, 2, 3, 4, 5] · Verify the administration, version, scoring interpretation, psychometric fit, reproduction permission, and trademark terms for DSM-derived checklist; clearly separate screening from diagnosis.
- Pages [1, 3, 14, 23] · Do not rely on urge logs alone when there is imminent danger, illegal conduct, severe financial loss, withdrawal/overdose risk, coercive sexual behavior, procedure-related medical risk, or danger to others; require condition-specific risk management, level-of-care assessment, and qualified treatment. Apply this specifically to the workbook's Gambling Behavior Self-Assessment, Understanding Gambling Triggers, Gambling Consequences, Financial Impact Analysis sections.
- Pages [1, 16] · Review all medical assertions in Gambling Disorder with a qualified medical professional; distinguish psychoeducation from individualized advice and add referral thresholds, contraindications, and medication/procedure cautions appropriate to this population.

## Measures, scoring, and permissions

- Verify the administration, version, scoring interpretation, psychometric fit, reproduction permission, and trademark terms for DSM-derived checklist; clearly separate screening from diagnosis. required before publication required before reproduction

## Intervention scope and contraindications

- Do not rely on urge logs alone when there is imminent danger, illegal conduct, severe financial loss, withdrawal/overdose risk, coercive sexual behavior, procedure-related medical risk, or danger to others; require condition-specific risk management, level-of-care assessment, and qualified treatment.
- Assess intoxication, withdrawal, overdose, medical instability, co-occurring disorders, suicidality, and access to means or high-risk opportunities. Some withdrawal states require medically supervised care.
- Behavioral tracking does not by itself establish an addictive disorder; confirm diagnostic boundaries and functional impairment.

## Crisis and current resources

- U.S.: call or text 988; chat at <https://988lifeline.org/>. Immediate danger: local emergency services. International resources must be separately verified for the intended country and dated.

## Authoritative references

- <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/updates-to-dsm/updates-to-dsm-5-tr-criteria-text>
- <https://icd.who.int/browse/2026-01/mms/en>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/locators>
- <https://988lifeline.org/>

# 2026 Clinical Alignment

DSM-5-TR (including Sept. 2025 update) · ICD-11 CDDR / 2026 MMS

- <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240077263>
- <https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/MH/sud/>