



VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Problem Gambling (Gabriela Byrne) Video

Speaker – Gabriela Byrne

[I believe it doesn't matter what you take into a gaming room, if it's loneliness, if it's boredom, if it's unresolved grief, if it's anything, if your senses are distracted, it gives you the illusion that for that time, nothing matters and people refer very often to that they're in a zone and that's what they are after that was what I was after, while I was there, my issues didn't matter. It was just me and the machine. I was there every day, sometimes three to five times a day, basically, as often as I could get money, or time to go there.

Now, from a very responsible mother, wife, work colleague and friend, you can imagine my behaviour started to change, there were endless lies about where I was, why I never was where I was, why I was always late, why specifically money was always an issue for us. I often refer to it as a love affair, right?

So at the height of my addiction, my family didn't matter, my children didn't matter. I remember taking money out of my daughter's money box, and I came home that night and she had found the note that I've taken the money, I remember sitting at her bedside and tears running down my face when my little girl said, Mommy, can't daddy buy you a poker machine. So you and the money can just stay at home, you know, that hurt, but at that moment, I would have done anything to stop but when the beast talked to me and said, let's just go and play \$10 and this time, you can control it. I wasn't strong enough and I switched from the Jekyll into Hyde and all I wanted was to feed the beast.

So they had trouble dealing with me, as a Mother that wasn't the loving and caring person that I should have been. Going back looking at my affair with the pokies the consequences of my behaviour for this over this four years as something that I have to live with. They're all forgiven me, I have forgiven myself but nobody can give me the time back.

There's lots of indications that more and more gambling, the gambling beasts became stronger and I became weaker, I would see this ugly thing talking to me and I'd talk back to it like I would talk to my worst enemy and say, hey, you would like to go and spend \$10, I don't. So you just get lost. So it's just one of the strategies that that helped and I put all those in a program called it the Free Yourself

program. And I've been teaching it to many people over the last probably 10 years and what I found is it gives people, besides the hope that they can make it, actually something hands on to do. Peter, my husband always says if you go to a gaming room every day, and you sit in front of a poker machine, everybody gets hooked, because that's the way they're designed and I agree.

I went to gamblers anonymous, I went to psychologists psychotherapists and I learned a lot about myself. When I relapsed after a prolonged period of not going, I started to research brain chemistry. You know, I understood that I was a drug addict. I didn't have to push a needle in my arm I produced my own drugs, walking into gaming room, adrenaline was pumping. When I look at a gaming machine, it's like, you know, looking at the old flame and thinking god, what on earth did I ever see in them? So I know that you know I've been changed to a point where they won't be an issue for me anymore.]