

Gloria's Story

March 6, 2017

Editor's Note: *Today's op-ed comes from a woman named Gloria who describes her experiences with gambling disorder. We thank Gloria for sharing her story with BASIS readers, because we believe that stories such as hers help raise awareness, reduce stigma, and, ultimately, improve lives. This op-ed is part of our [Special Series on Gambling Disorder](#).*

My name is Gloria. I am 71 years old, a wife, a mother, a grandmother and I have a major gambling problem.

Nine years ago my life fell apart. I got in trouble because of my gambling. When it all came out, my family was blindsided because they had no idea of the extent of my gambling or what I had done in order to gamble.



I never thought I had a gambling problem. I felt it was under my control when in reality gambling was controlling me. I wound up going to jail for 16 months for stealing from my boss.

I attended a Gamblers Anonymous meeting and really identified with the people

there. G. A. and my relationship with a Higher Power gave me the courage to face my legal situation and eventual imprisonment. I was able to honestly look at what I had done and begin an effort in recovery that would restore my life to what it had been. I was fearful of losing my family and all that I loved.

Gamblers Anonymous and my Higher Power have saved my life. I am not proud of what I did, but I believed I could make amends by following the steps in the program and not gambling one day at a time. I was able regain control of my life and accept what I had done, learn from it and move on.

I will always feel guilty for the things I did to feed my gambling habit and the harm I did to others, especially those I loved and who loved me. G. A. has taught me never to give up and to work hard to be the better person I want to be. Today I can look at myself in the mirror and be comfortable with the progress I have made. It has now been more than 8 years since my last bet.

I am grateful for the Gamblers Anonymous program, the people I have met there and all who have helped me along the way as well as the love and support I have received from my husband, children and grandchildren.

— Gloria

For more information: Gloria's story teaches us that recovery from gambling disorder is possible. Many people recover on their own. Others, like Gloria, use mutual help and support groups such as Gamblers Anonymous. Some people benefit from professional help. Some benefit from online resources, such as [Your First Step to Change: Gambling](#). Still others find that a combination of professional treatment and other resources works best for them. Although the path to recovery is complex and challenging, taking the first step is essential to making changes.

What do you think? Please use the comment link below to provide feedback on this article.