

Self-help Groups for Pathological Gamblers in the Czech Republic



TRANTINA, F.

Student, Department of Addictology, 1st Faculty of Medicine, Charles University in Prague and General University Hospital in Prague, Czech Republic

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SUMMARY: *Self-help groups for pathological gamblers in the Czech Republic operate on the principles of Gamblers Anonymous and their Twelve-Step Programme. The main tenets include anonymity, the independence of self-help groups, the imitation of good practices in relation to gambling behaviour, the promotion of the principle of abstinence from all types of gambling activities, and the encouragement of abstinence from alcohol and other addictive substances. Self-help groups are usually the first opportunity for a person to share their gambling problem. They may be particularly helpful in abstaining from gambling for those whose pathological gambling has not yet caused extreme problems and have maintained their social ties. The element of spirituality does not seem to be very effective in the atheistic environment of Czech society; in fact it is often an obstacle. Self-help groups tend to supplement professional care and constitute a suitable aftercare programme.*

KEY WORDS: GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS – SPIRITUALITY – SELF-HELP PROGRAMMES

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Address for correspondence: František Trantina / trantin@email.cz / Náměstí míru 600/20,
120 00 Prague 2-Vinohrady, Czech Republic