

Recognising Signs, Getting Help, and Creating a Recovery Plan

DISCLAIMER:

This guide is provided for general informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical, psychological, or legal advice. Bilnor Staffing Solutions is not a healthcare provider and does not diagnose, treat, or manage addiction or any related conditions. Individuals struggling with substance abuse or gambling addiction should seek support from qualified medical professionals, counsellors, or accredited rehabilitation services. Bilnor Staffing Solutions accepts no liability for any actions taken based on the information contained in this guide.

Addiction whether to substances or gambling can affect anyone. It impacts health, relationships, finances, and employment. The first step toward recovery is recognising the problem and knowing where to get help. This guide offers supportive, practical steps for identifying addiction, accessing resources, and building a recovery plan.

1. Recognising the Signs of Addiction

Common Behavioural Signs

- Feeling unable to stop despite negative consequences.
- Hiding the behaviour or lying about usage.
- Declining work performance, absenteeism, or financial problems.
- Irritability, mood swings, or withdrawing from family and friends.
- Losing interest in hobbies or responsibilities.

Substance Abuse Indicators

- Using drugs or alcohol to cope with stress or emotions.
- Needing increasing amounts to feel the same effect.
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms when not using.

Gambling Addiction Indicators

- Spending more money than intended while gambling.
- Borrowing money, selling items, or using credit to gamble.
- Chasing losses in hopes of “winning it back.”
- Gambling impacting finances, relationships, or mental health.

Note: Recognising these signs early gives the best chance for recovery.

2. Accessing Help & Support Resources (South Africa)

Professional Support Options

- **GP / Medical Doctor:** First point of contact for confidential guidance.
- **Psychologists / Counsellors:** Provide structured therapy and coping strategies.
- **Rehabilitation Centres:** Offer inpatient or outpatient programmes.

South African Helplines

- **South African National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence ([SANCA](#)):**
Offers counselling, assessment, and treatment referrals.
- **South African Depression and Anxiety Group ([SADAG](#)):**
Helpline for emotional crises, addiction support, and referrals.
- **[National Gambling Board](#):**
Provides information and support for gambling addiction.
- **[Lifeline SA](#):**
Confidential counselling for emotional and addiction-related struggles.

Community & Lifestyle Support

- **Support groups** such as NA (Narcotics Anonymous), AA (Alcoholics Anonymous), and Gamblers Anonymous.
- Faith-based or community counselling groups.
- Online support forums for anonymous help.

Note: Reaching out is a sign of strength, not failure.

3. Creating a Practical Recovery Plan

Step 1: Acknowledge the Problem

Write down how the addiction has affected your life physically, financially, emotionally. This increases awareness and strengthens motivation to change.

Step 2: Remove Triggers

- Avoid people, environments, or situations that encourage the behaviour.
- Replace harmful habits with healthy alternatives (exercise, hobbies, social groups).

Step 3: Develop a Support System

- Tell a trusted friend or family member.
- Commit to regular counselling or support group meetings.
- Use professional help when cravings or challenges feel overwhelming.

Step 4: Set Clear Goals

Examples:

- "I will not gamble this month."
- "I will attend weekly counselling."
- "I will reduce my alcohol consumption gradually with professional support."

Keep goals realistic and time-bound.

Step 5: Build Healthy Routines

- Sleep schedules
- Nutritious meals
- Exercise

- Stress-management activities (journaling, meditation, prayer, therapy)

Consistency creates stability, reducing relapse risk.

4. Managing Relapse

Relapse can happen but does not mean failure.

If it occurs:

- Speak to a support person immediately.
- Review what triggered it and adjust your plan.
- Continue therapy or meetings do not isolate yourself.

Key Mindset: Recovery is a journey. Keep moving forward.

5. Protecting Your Finances During Recovery

- Allow a trusted person to help manage finances temporarily.
- Block gambling sites on devices.
- Set budget limits with your bank.
- Avoid credit, loans, and high-interest finance during recovery.
- Rebuild financial habits slowly and responsibly.

Addiction is challenging, but recovery is absolutely possible with the right steps:

1. **Recognise the signs.**
2. **Reach out for help.**
3. **Follow a structured recovery plan.**
4. **Build strong support systems.**
5. **Protect your financial and emotional wellbeing.**

You are not alone, help is available, and recovery is achievable.