

Double Column Technique

Situation <i>I received a coupon for \$20 in the mail to spend at the casino. I'm "charged up" about it and ready to take a trip there to "cash in" for a day of playing the machines.</i>	
Thoughts <i>This coupon comes at a good time. It's been a week or more since I've been gambling and it's something I enjoy.</i>	Challenges <i>For me it's never a good time to go gambling. I've lost a lot of money because of this bad habit and my wife is also very upset with me over this. I started therapy for help to stop. There's no enjoyment in disappointing my family, my therapist, and myself!</i>
<i>I'm feeling lucky now and quite sure that I'll find a hot machine ready to pay out. I'll be a winner!</i>	<i>The only "pay out" will probably be me! Here I go again with my magical thinking. I need to remember that every play is an independent event. There is no "hot machine" and the only "winner" here in the long run is the casino.</i>
<i>If I don't use this coupon, it will go to waste. I got a day off of work coming up and I don't want to be bored.</i>	<i>So what if it goes to waste! I don't have to be bored on my day off. I can spend time with my wife. There's really a lot for me to do. Let me check and revise my list of alternatives.</i>
<i>Getting this coupon really tempts me and I know that there will be more coming in the mail. Eventually, I'll have to give in to the urge.</i>	<i>Each time I stop myself from gambling I'm getting a little stronger. I'll call the casino advertising department and take myself off the mailing list.</i>

<i>No one will know if I just sneak off for a few hours to get in some gambling. I can keep it quiet.</i>	<i>My wife is very perceptive and will probably figure it out. Even if I pulled one over on her, that would make me dishonest and I'd feel guilty about it. Sneaking around will do more harm than good! It's not a way of overcoming this problem!</i>
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T. Powell, 2000/filled-in by W.L. Knupp