

Beyond the Stereotype

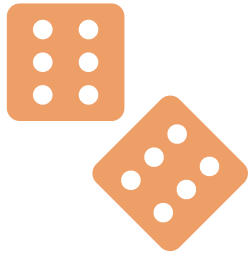
- The Hidden Struggles of Female Gamblers -

Insights of the helpline for gambling problems in The Netherlands

The national helpline for gambling problems in The Netherlands

- Tamara Silvis -

Understanding our role



October 1, 2021

Legalisation online gambling in
The Netherlands



**Dutch governmental
gambling authority (KSA)**

Regulator gambling industry, ensuring
fairness and safety

Main goals



24/7 helpline online resources to prevent gambling addiction



Free, confidential support for individuals, and their loved ones



Collaborate with healthcare providers and gambling operators



Raise awareness and encourage responsible gambling

Services



Support

- Counseling
- Financial care
- Peer specialist



Referrals

- Healthcare providers
- Treatment
- Peer support groups



Information

- Online resources
- Self help tools
- Podcast



Self exclusion

- Assistance
- Cruks
- Blocking software

Stories that profile the journeys of women affected by gambling addiction

Short case studies of female gamblers in The Netherlands

Lisa

Lisa is a 34-year-old career woman who seemed to have it all: a successful job, a loving relationship, and a comfortable lifestyle. All looking good on the outside.

Lisa

“How could I let this happen? I’m highly educated. I just want a break from being perfect all the time.”

"It's not about the money— It's the escape, the rush that makes the rest of life disappear, even if only for a little while."

Lisa – ‘The High Functioning Escapist’

Key challenges

- High pressure lifestyle > stress
- Societal pressure to maintain perfection
- Hiding emotional struggles
- Selfblame
- Secrecy
- Stigma

Mary

Mary is a 65-year-old retired widow, turned to gambling after the loss of her husband. She found comfort in the social atmosphere of the casino, believing it could provide a sense of belonging and connection.

Mary

"In the noise of the casino, I forget how quiet and sad my life really is."

"Sometimes, the sound of the slots is the only thing that makes me feel less alone."

Mary – ‘The Lonely Seeker’

Key challenges

- Grief and loneliness
- Financial strain
- Social isolation
- Resistance to change
- Age related vulnerabilities

Sophie

Sophie, a 45-year-old mother of two, struggled with a hidden gambling addiction for years. She was able to maintain a perfect exterior, but her gambling was causing financial and emotional distress.

Sophie

"I felt like I was trapped in a cycle of self-destruction."

"I was so afraid of what would happen if I was discovered."

"I felt like I had lost control of my life."

Sophie – ‘The Hidden Addict’

Key challenges

- Hiding the addiction
- Underlying trauma
- Balancing single motherhood
- Financial instability
- Emotional isolation
- Coping mechanisms

Final Thoughts

Hidden
suffering

Societal
pressure

Unmet social
expectations

Shame

Stigma

Fear of
judgement

Transformative power of support

No one should face gambling problems alone.



Thank you

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