



## Chapter three: Rosa

### synopsis

After her husband's death, Rosa is alone for the first time in 43 years. On her daughter's advice she joins a seniors' club and goes on a club trip to the pokies. The lights, sounds and excitement of winning soon take her mind away from her loneliness. Rosa begins to use the pokies to escape from her grief; she knows she is losing money but cannot bear to tell her daughter that she feels out of control.

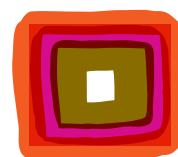
Rosa eventually admits her gambling problem to her daughter, who arranges for her to meet a Gambler's Help counsellor. Through counselling, Rosa is able to address the reasons why she started to gamble. She finds other ways to lead a busy and full life..

### target audience

People of any CALD backgrounds aged 50 and over  
People of Italian backgrounds  
Women of CALD backgrounds  
Seniors clubs and groups

### objectives

- Understand the relationship between isolation, grief or loss and issues such as problem gambling
- Explore options for professional help and self-help
- Discuss family counselling and support for people affected by others' gambling



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## discussion questions

### 1. What activities do you do together? Why did you choose these activities?

This is a question for an organised group, such as a senior citizens social club. Some clubs visit the pokies regularly because it is a convenient form of recreation and because they receive assistance and incentives from gaming venues.

### 2. Why did Rosa start visiting her local pokies venue?

Discuss the environmental and psychological factors that lead to Rosa's gambling problem.

Environmental factors include the attractiveness of the venue, easy accessibility and the feeling of being welcomed and entertained. Psychologically, gambling provides Rosa with an escape from loneliness, loss and grief. Rosa's identity as a wife and mother is also changing with her husband's death and her children leaving home. These issues make her vulnerable to gambling problems.

You can also use this question to discuss the differences between recreational and problem gambling. Talk about strategies for responsible gambling, such as setting time and money limits, leaving bank or credit cards at home, and not chasing losses.

### 3. Why is Rosa afraid to talk to anyone about her gambling?

Explore reasons why people with gambling problems might be reluctant to seek help, including the fear of being rejected by their family or community. You can also explore the potential consequences of not seeking help for a gambling problem.

### 4. How do you think Rosa's daughter might have felt when she discovered her mother's gambling problem? What would you do in her situation?

Discuss some of the signs of problem gambling, its impact on family members and ways to support problem gamblers. Use this opportunity to let people know that Gambler's Help also works with people affected by others' gambling. Offer some practical steps that people can take to support problem gamblers and to protect themselves.

### 5. What does the term 'counselling' mean to you?

Use this question to explore various understandings of the term 'counselling' – remember that some communities may be unfamiliar with the concept.

You can also use this opportunity to discuss couple and family counselling. It may be valuable to have a counsellor present to introduce themselves and explain their work.

### 6. What are some ways we can protect each other from gambling problems?

Talk about ways that people can protect themselves, their families, their community and the younger generations from problem gambling. Answers might include:

- finding alternative club or group activities
- not relying on gambling as a major form of entertainment
- increasing time with family
- providing more support to people experiencing loss and isolation
- being more supportive of people with gambling problems
- asking other community members if they need help or support
- having a better understanding of gambling and associated risks
- increasing awareness of warning signs for problem gambling
- promoting awareness of Gambler's Help and self-exclusion programs



#### Further information

For more information, resources and training contact the **Multicultural Gambler's Help Program**.  
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