

BONUS GUIDE

# THE GAMBLING RECOVERY TOOLKIT

Practical Worksheets, Trackers & Accountability Tools

A companion to **One Ticket Away From Ruin**  
Eric John

# How to Use This Toolkit

Recovery from gambling addiction is not a single decision. It is a daily practice. This toolkit exists to make that practice concrete, measurable, and sustainable.

Why do most people relapse? Not because they lack willpower. Not because they do not understand the dangers. They relapse because they stop paying attention. They stop tracking. They stop noticing the warning signs. They drift slowly back into old patterns without realizing it until the damage is done.

This toolkit prevents that drift. The tools inside these pages are designed to create daily awareness of your recovery journey. They help you identify patterns before they become relapses. They turn abstract commitments into concrete actions. They transform recovery from a vague intention into a structured practice.

## Why Tracking Matters

Research in behavioral psychology consistently shows that self-monitoring is one of the most powerful tools for habit change. When you track your urges, your triggers, your victories, and your struggles, you create a data trail that reveals patterns you would otherwise miss. You begin to see:

- **Which triggers** hit you hardest and when
- **Which strategies** work best for you personally
- **Which times of day** or days of the week are most dangerous
- **Which warning signs** you tend to ignore
- **How much progress** you have actually made (even when it does not feel like it)

## How These Tools Help Prevent Relapse

Relapse rarely happens suddenly. It builds over days or weeks through small compromises: skipping a daily check-in, ignoring a trigger, rationalizing "just one look." These tools make those compromises visible. The daily tracker forces you to notice urges. The weekly review forces you to assess your progress honestly. The trigger worksheet forces you to know your enemy.

## Instructions for Using This Toolkit

- **Print this toolkit.** Physical copies are more effective than digital because the act of writing engages your brain more deeply than typing.
- **Start with Tool #1 (The Personal Recovery Contract).** Sign it. Date it. Make it real.
- **Use Tools #3 and #4 every day.** The daily urge tracker and recovery journal are your most powerful prevention tools.
- **Use Tool #5 once per week.** The weekly review keeps you focused on the big picture.
- **Use Tool #9 to track your 30-day progress.** Check off each day. Celebrate milestones.
- **Keep Tool #8 (The Emergency Action Card) on your phone.** Screenshot it. Make it your wallpaper. Make it accessible in 10 seconds.
- **Complete the Final Tool (Recovery Maintenance Plan)** after your first 30 days and review it monthly.

**The Golden Rule:** These tools only work if you use them honestly. Do not fill them out to look good. Do not sanitize your answers. Write the truth -- the full, uncomfortable truth. The truth is what sets you free.

**TOOL #1**

**THE PERSONAL RECOVERY CONTRACT**

*Purpose: Create a formal, binding commitment to your recovery that you can refer to in moments of weakness.*

This contract is not a legal document. It is a psychological document. When you sign your name to something, you activate a powerful mental mechanism called **commitment consistency** -- the human tendency to act in accordance with commitments we have publicly (or even privately) made. This contract leverages that mechanism to strengthen your resolve.

**My Reasons For Quitting Gambling**

*List every reason you can think of. Include financial, emotional, relational, and personal reasons. Be specific and honest.*

---

---

---

---

---

**What Gambling Has Cost Me**

*Money is only one part of the cost. Include relationships, time, mental health, opportunities, and self-respect.*

---

---

---

---

---

**What I Want To Gain Back**

*Paint a picture of your life without gambling. What does freedom look like for you specifically?*

---

---

---

---

---

**MY 30-DAY COMMITMENT STATEMENT**

*"I commit to completing the One Ticket Away From Ruin Recovery System for the next 30 days. I will follow all five pillars, use the daily tracking tools, and seek help when I need it. I choose recovery over gambling. I choose my future over temporary escape."*

**Name:**

---

**Date:**

---

**Signature:**

---

**Start of 30-Day Period:**

---

**End Date:**

---

**TOOL #2**

**THE TRIGGER AWARENESS WORKSHEET**

*Purpose: Identify the specific triggers that activate your urge to gamble. You cannot avoid what you cannot name.*

A **trigger** is any person, place, emotion, situation, or thought that activates the desire to gamble. Triggers are personal -- what triggers one person may not affect another. This worksheet helps you build your personal trigger profile so you can recognize danger before it becomes action.

**Understanding Your Trigger Categories**

Triggers generally fall into three categories. Rate each trigger below on a scale of 1-5 (1 = rarely affects me, 5 = almost always triggers an urge). Be brutally honest. This information is for you alone.

**EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS**

These are feelings that make gambling feel like a solution. Gambling temporarily numbs or distracts from these emotions.

Trigger	My Rating (1-5)	Notes: When does this trigger appear? What happens?
Stress (work, family, life)		
Anxiety (worry, nervousness, fear)		
Frustration (things not going my way)		
Loneliness (feeling isolated or disconnected)		
Anger (arguments, feeling disrespected)		
Excitement (wanting to celebrate or intensify a good mood)		

Boredom (empty time, nothing to do)

Sadness or depression

### SITUATIONAL TRIGGERS

These are specific situations or circumstances that create conditions favorable to gambling.

Trigger	My Rating (1-5)	Notes: When does this trigger appear? What happens?
Payday (having money available)		
Watching football or other sports		
Being alone at home		
Financial pressure (bills due, no money)		
Weekend boredom (Friday evening, Saturday)		
Late at night (past midnight)		
Having my phone in hand with nothing to do		
After drinking alcohol		

### SOCIAL TRIGGERS

These are people, groups, or social situations that expose you to gambling culture and normalize betting behavior.

Trigger	My Rating (1-5)	Notes: Who specifically? How do I respond?
Friends who gamble		
Betting groups (WhatsApp, Telegram)		
Tipster channels or social media accounts		

Casual conversations about gambling

Social media posts about big wins

Being around betting shops or viewing centers

### Reflection Questions

**1. What triggers me most often?**

---

---

**2. What trigger causes my strongest urges?**

---

---

**3. Which trigger appears before most relapses?**

---

---





Make copies of this page as needed. Print additional sheets for extended tracking.

**TOOL #4**

**THE DAILY RECOVERY JOURNAL**

*Purpose: Build self-awareness through daily written reflection. Journaling transforms recovery from a passive process into an active practice.*

Each evening, spend 5-10 minutes answering these five prompts. This simple practice has profound effects. It closes your day with intention, reinforces your commitment, helps you process emotions, and builds a record of your journey that you can look back on when motivation is low.

## Daily Reflection

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Today I felt:

Name your dominant emotions. Be specific.

---

---

### 2. The strongest urge happened when:

Describe the situation, time, and trigger.

---

---

### 3. What helped me stay gambling-free today:

Which strategy, person, or activity made the difference?

---

---

### 4. One thing I am proud of today:

No victory is too small. Recognize your effort.

---

---

### 5. What I need to improve tomorrow:

Be honest but kind with yourself. Growth comes from awareness.

---

---

**Daily Reflection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Today I felt:**

---

---

**2. The strongest urge happened when:**

---

---

**3. What helped me stay gambling-free today:**

---

---

**4. One thing I am proud of today:**

---

---

**5. What I need to improve tomorrow:**

---

---

## Daily Reflection

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Today I felt:

---

---

### 2. The strongest urge happened when:

---

---

### 3. What helped me stay gambling-free today:

---

---

### 4. One thing I am proud of today:

---

---

### 5. What I need to improve tomorrow:

---

---

**TOOL #5**

**THE WEEKLY RECOVERY REVIEW**

*Purpose: Measure your progress every 7 days. Weekly reviews prevent drift and keep you focused on what matters.*

The weekly review is your opportunity to step back from daily survival and look at the bigger picture. It takes 15-20 minutes every Sunday evening (or whatever day works for you), and it provides three critical benefits: it celebrates your progress, it identifies problems before they escalate, and it sets your focus for the week ahead.

Without weekly reviews, recovery becomes a blur of days. You lose track of how far you have come. You miss patterns that only become visible across a week. You allow small problems to grow into large ones. This simple tool prevents all of that.

**Week Review**

Week starting: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. How many urges did I experience this week?**

\_\_\_\_\_

Compare to last week. Is the number going up or down?

**2. How many did I successfully resist?**

\_\_\_\_\_

Calculate your resistance rate: \_\_\_ out of \_\_\_ = \_\_\_%

**3. What were my biggest triggers this week?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Look at your Daily Urge Tracker. Which triggers appeared most often?

**4. What improvement did I notice?**

*Any positive changes -- even tiny ones. Sleeping better? More money? Less anxiety?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. What challenges remain?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6. What will I focus on next week?**

*Set one specific, achievable goal for the coming week.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. On a scale of 1-10, how strong is my commitment this week?**

\_\_\_\_\_

*If below 7, what do I need to strengthen my resolve?*

**TOOL #6**

**THE RELAPSE ANALYSIS WORKSHEET**

*Purpose: Turn a relapse from a source of shame into a source of learning. This worksheet ensures you grow stronger from every setback.*

If you experience a lapse or relapse, complete this worksheet within 24 hours. Do not wait. Do not avoid it. The purpose is not to punish yourself -- it is to extract the maximum learning from the experience so the same pattern does not repeat.

Think of this worksheet as an investigator's report, not a confession. You are the detective studying a crime scene to prevent future crimes. Approach it with curiosity, not condemnation.

**Section 1: What Happened?**

*Describe the relapse in factual, specific terms. What did you do? When? Where? How much money was involved? Be objective -- no self-judgment, just facts.*

---

---

---

---

---

**Section 2: What Triggered It?**

**Emotion:** What was I feeling right before the relapse?

---

---

**Situation:** Where was I? What was happening? Who was I with?

---

---

**Thought Pattern:** What was I telling myself? What rationalization did I use?

---

---

**Section 3: Warning Signs I Ignored**

*Go back 48 hours before the relapse. List every warning sign that appeared. Did you check odds "just to look"? Did you follow a tipster? Did you avoid your accountability partner? Write every single sign you can identify.*

---

---

---

---

---

#### Section 4: What Will I Do Differently Next Time?

*For each warning sign you identified in Section 3, write a specific action you will take next time that sign appears. Be concrete and specific -- not "be stronger" but "call my accountability partner immediately."*

---

---

---

---

---

**Key Principle:** A relapse that is analyzed becomes a lesson. A relapse that is hidden becomes a pattern. Choose analysis. Choose growth.

**TOOL #7**

**THE COST OF GAMBLING AUDIT**

*Purpose: See the complete, true impact of gambling on your life -- not just the money, but everything else it has taken.*

Most gamblers underestimate the true cost of their addiction. They count the money lost but ignore the emotional damage, the relationship strain, and the missed opportunities. This audit forces a comprehensive, honest accounting of every area gambling has affected. When you see the full cost written in your own hand, the argument for "just one more bet" becomes much harder to make.

**Financial Losses**

*Estimate your total gambling losses over the past 12 months. Include direct losses and indirect costs (loan interest, overdraft fees, etc.).*

**Total money lost to gambling:** N\_\_\_\_\_

**Debt created by gambling:** N\_\_\_\_\_

**Savings affected or depleted:** N\_\_\_\_\_

**Other financial costs** (loans, fees, interest): \_\_\_\_\_

## Emotional Losses

Rate each area on a scale of 1-10 (1 = no impact, 10 = severely damaged). Then describe the specific impact.

Area	Impact (1-10)	Specific Impact on My Life
Stress levels		
Anxiety		
Sleep quality		
Self-confidence		
Self-respect		
Mental peace		
Ability to focus		
General happiness		

### Relationship Losses

List the specific damage gambling has caused to your relationships. Name the people affected and how.

Relationship	Trust Damaged?	Arguments Caused?	Isolation Created?
Partner / Spouse			
Parents			
Children			
Siblings			
Friends			
Colleagues			

### Future Opportunities Lost

What opportunities have you missed because of gambling -- directly or indirectly?

**Career opportunities missed:**

---

---

**Educational opportunities affected:**

---

---

**Business or investment opportunities lost:**

---

---

**Family goals delayed or cancelled:**

---

---

**Final Reflection**

**"Was gambling worth these costs?"**

*Look at everything you have written above. Read it twice. Then answer honestly below.*

---

---

---

---

## TOOL #8

### THE EMERGENCY URGE ACTION CARD

*Purpose: A quick-reference page you can screenshot, print, or save as your phone wallpaper. When the urge hits, every second counts.*

This tool is designed for speed and simplicity. There are no long explanations here -- just the exact steps to follow when a gambling urge strikes. Print this page and keep it in your wallet. Screenshot it and make it your lock screen. Tape it to your bathroom mirror. Make it impossible to avoid.

#### WHEN THE URGE HITS -- FOLLOW THESE STEPS

1. **STOP.** Do not open any app. Do not check any score. Freeze all betting-related actions immediately.
2. **IDENTIFY THE TRIGGER.** Ask: "What am I feeling right now? What happened before this urge appeared?" Name it.
3. **WAIT 15 MINUTES.** Set a timer. Do not make any betting decisions during this time. Just wait.
4. **MOVE YOUR BODY.** Walk. Do push-ups. Take a shower. Physical movement interrupts the urge cycle.
5. **CALL SOMEONE.** Call your accountability partner. Call a friend. Call family. Do not text -- call. Hearing a voice helps.
6. **READ YOUR RECOVERY STATEMENT.** Read the contract you signed. Read your reasons for quitting. Remind yourself why you started.

***Remember:** "I do not need a bet. I need relief. Betting has never solved my problems. It has only created new ones. This urge will pass. I will remain."*

### **My Personal Emergency Contacts**

*Fill in before you need them. Include people who know about your recovery and will answer your call.*

#	Name	Phone Number	Relationship
1			
2			
3			
4			

### **My Recovery Statement (Write Your Own)**

*Write a short, powerful statement you can read in 30 seconds when an urge hits. Make it personal and meaningful.*

---

---

---

---

---

**TOOL #9**

**THE 30-DAY PROGRESS TRACKER**

*Purpose: Visual progress monitoring. Checking off each day creates momentum, motivation, and a clear record of your commitment.*

The simple act of checking a box each day is surprisingly powerful. It creates a visual chain of success that becomes harder and harder to break. Every checked box is proof that you can do this. Every unchecked box is a reminder to get back on track.

**30-Day Checklist**

*Check the box for each day you remain gambling-free. If you have a lapse, leave the box empty, complete your Relapse Analysis Worksheet, and continue checking boxes the next day. One empty box does not erase the boxes before it.*

Day	Date	Check	Day	Date	Check	Day	Date	Check
1		<input type="checkbox"/>	11		<input type="checkbox"/>	21		<input type="checkbox"/>
2		<input type="checkbox"/>	12		<input type="checkbox"/>	22		<input type="checkbox"/>
3		<input type="checkbox"/>	13		<input type="checkbox"/>	23		<input type="checkbox"/>
4		<input type="checkbox"/>	14		<input type="checkbox"/>	24		<input type="checkbox"/>
5		<input type="checkbox"/>	15		<input type="checkbox"/>	25		<input type="checkbox"/>
6		<input type="checkbox"/>	16		<input type="checkbox"/>	26		<input type="checkbox"/>
7		<input type="checkbox"/>	17		<input type="checkbox"/>	27		<input type="checkbox"/>
8		<input type="checkbox"/>	18		<input type="checkbox"/>	28		<input type="checkbox"/>
9		<input type="checkbox"/>	19		<input type="checkbox"/>	29		<input type="checkbox"/>
10		<input type="checkbox"/>	20		<input type="checkbox"/>	30		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Milestone Celebrations**

*Recovery milestones deserve recognition. Planning your celebrations in advance gives you additional motivation. What will you do to honor each milestone?*

### **7 Days Gambling-Free**

One week. The hardest week is behind you. You have proven you can do this.

**My reward:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **14 Days Gambling-Free**

Two weeks. The initial withdrawal period is passing. Your brain is beginning to reset.

**My reward:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **21 Days Gambling-Free**

Three weeks. New habits are forming. You are building a new normal.

**My reward:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **30 Days Gambling-Free**

One month. You have completed the initial recovery program. This is not the end -- it is the foundation.

**My reward:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOOL #10**

**THE FUTURE SELF WORKSHEET**

*Purpose: Build long-term motivation by creating a vivid contrast between two possible futures. The future you choose depends on the decisions you make today.*

Human beings are naturally motivated by vivid mental imagery. When you can clearly picture two futures -- one where you continue gambling and one where you stop -- the choice becomes much clearer. This worksheet creates that mental contrast and anchors you to the future you actually want.

**Prompt 1: The Positive Future**

*What will my life look like 90 days from now if I stop gambling completely?*

Be specific and vivid. Describe your finances, your relationships, your mental health, your daily routine, and your sense of self.

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Prompt 2: The Negative Future**

*What will my life look like 1 year from now if I continue gambling?*

Be brutally honest. Do not hold back. Describe the realistic consequences of continuing on your current path.

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Prompt 3: The Choice**

**Which future do I want?**

*You are not a passenger in your life. You are the driver. Which destination are you steering toward?*

---

---

**Final Declaration**

*"I choose the future that gives me peace, freedom, and control. I choose recovery. I choose the man I am becoming over the man I used to be. This decision is mine, and I make it now."*

**Signature:**

---

**Date:**

---

# Final Tool: The Recovery Maintenance Plan

Recovery does not end after 30 days. The habits, structures, and tools you have built must become a permanent part of your life. This maintenance plan consolidates everything you have learned into a personalized, long-term system.

Complete this plan after your first 30 days. Review it monthly. Update it as your triggers change and your strategies improve. This is your living document -- the master blueprint for a gambling-free life.

## My Top 5 Triggers

*Based on 30 days of tracking, these are my most dangerous triggers. I will watch for them every day.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## My Top 5 Coping Strategies

*These are the strategies that have worked best for me. I will use them proactively, not just reactively.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### People I Can Contact When Struggling

*These people know about my recovery and have agreed to support me. I will call them before I call a betting app.*

#	Name	Phone Number	When to Call
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

### My Personal Recovery Rules

*These are my non-negotiable rules. I created them, and I will honor them.*

**Rule 1:**

**Rule 2:**

**Rule 3:**

**Rule 4:**

**Rule 5:**

**FINAL COMMITMENT**

Recovery is not a one-time decision.

It is a daily practice.

I commit to protecting the progress I have built.

I commit to using these tools.

I commit to asking for help when I need it.

I commit to becoming the man I was meant to be.

**Signature:**

---

**Date:**

---

**Next Review Date:**

---

## **THE TOOLS ARE IN YOUR HANDS**

You now have everything you need.  
Contracts to sign. Triggers to identify.  
Urges to track. Journals to keep.  
Weeks to review. Relapses to analyze.  
Costs to audit. Actions to take.  
Days to check off. Futures to choose.  
And a maintenance plan to keep you steady for life.

The only question remaining is this:

**Will you use them?**

*Recovery is built one day at a time,  
one tool at a time,  
one decision at a time.  
Start today. Stay free.*

-- Eric John