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Mindful gambling improves wellbeing *Think... is that true for you?*

Regardless of how often a person gambles or the amount of money they spend, gambling-related stress is a side effect commonly experienced by a large number of Victorians.

Think... is that true for you? is the question posed by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation's new campaign, which encourages consumers to pause and reflect on whether there is a connection between the stress they may be feeling and their gambling.

"Even people who only gamble occasionally can experience negative consequences," Foundation CEO Shane Lucas said today.

"Frequently overlooked emotional effects include stress, regret, anxiety, impatience, guilt, anger, annoyance or simply feeling down for no apparent reason.

"They may seem minor at first, hardly noticeable, but the side effects can be cumulative and progressive and affect a person's health and wellbeing."

Mat Crompton, Group Business Director at The Shannon Company, which created the campaign, agreed in relation to his own gambling. He's keen to share his [story \(responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/mat\)](https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/mat) with others who have not yet recognised that their gambling can have a negative effect on their emotions.

"You do feel exhausted," Mat says. "The strain of your betting builds up within you.

"There's the let down when you don't win, of course, but it's more than that. You can feel frustrated, anxious – angry even. And over time those negative feelings build up."

Mr Lucas said that every year around 550,000 Victorians are affected by their own gambling, the majority of whom are unlikely to have realised that there is a relationship between how they're feeling and their gambling activities.

"The Foundation's 2018 community attitudes survey found that 48 per cent of Victorian adults are not aware that gambling can lead to negative emotional side effects.

"There is good news though. Once a person has that moment of realisation, when they understand that gambling may be causing their stress, making it go away can be as simple as a few minor behavioural adjustments," he said.

The campaign will run across various media for the next six weeks. For more information, visit effectsofgambling.com.au.

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