

## **HOW THE FREEDOM PLAYERS WORK**

- 1) Sit with a partner at a machine next to you for the duration of the action.
- 2) All of us should conduct ourselves in a sincere, classy way.
- 3) Once you sit down at a machine, insert \$1 or \$5 into the machine and then begin Freedom Playing.
- 4) We aren't there to engage the people who are using machines. If someone who is not casino staff engages you, be very respectful no matter how they communicating with you.
- 5) The casino staff may ask you to leave because we are not playing the machines the way they want their visitors to play. There is no law that requires citizens to play the machine a certain way so no need to leave at this point. You can simply move to a different bank of slot machines if needed.
- 6) If a uniformed police officer asks you to leave the premises, respectfully ask for what reason. After the officer describes why, you will want to stand up and leave the casino. But first, hit the cash out button, get your paper voucher and head to the Cash Out Windows or the self-serve cash out machines. If you don't leave the casino after being asked by a police officer, you could be arrested for trespassing and that is normally not our objective for the day.
- 7) When you're done Freedom Playing, hit the cash out button on your machine. You will receive a paper voucher worth the money you inserted at the beginning. Head to the Cash Out Windows or the self-serve cash out machines.
- 8) Whether you're asked to leave early or you play until your scheduled time, meet briefly with your team to recap your experiences at nearby location selected in advance.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER DISCUSSING WHILE FREEDOM PLAYING

- 1) **If I play these machines for a length of time, will I ultimately lose all of my money?** These gambling machines are built mathematically so users are certain to lose their money the longer they play. At the same time, the machines are literally designed so citizens cannot stop using them, exploiting aspects of human psychology and inducing irrational and irresponsible behavior. Every feature of a slot machine - its mathematical structure, visual graphics, sound dynamics, seating and screen ergonomics - is designed to increase a player's "time on device" – which means how long a person plays.<sup>1</sup>

Source: *Addiction By Design* by MIT Professor Dr. Natasha Schull, Pg. 112

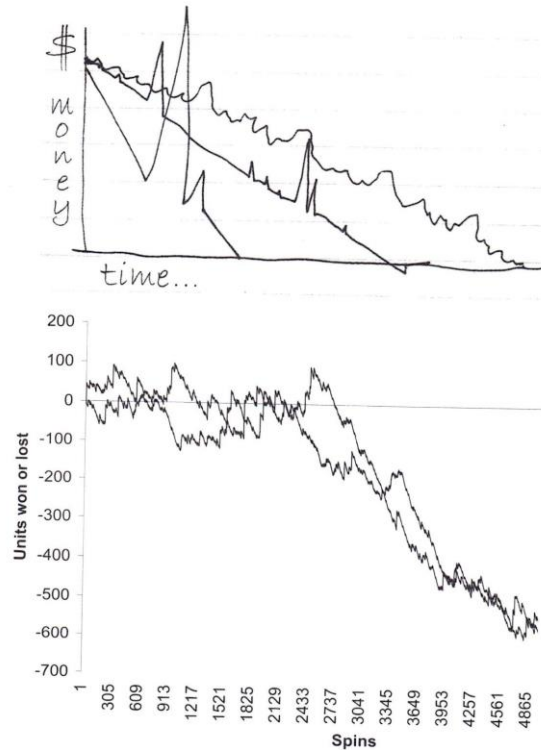


Figure 4.2. *Top*: Projected play trends for three different games, assuming the same initial bankroll. The shortest line represents a game with “high volatility” and “low hit frequency”; the longest shows “low volatility” and “high hit frequency”; the middle line shows moderate volatility and frequency. Drawn for the author by game designer Nicholas Koenig. *Bottom*: Play outcomes for two simulated gamblers on the same gambling machine, set at a hold percentage of only 5 percent. The graph follows the two gamblers from their first bet through 5,000 spins, representing four to eight hours of play (depending on the speed of the machine and the speed of play). The downward slope illustrates the “churn” by which play funds are gradually eroded over time. Although both gamblers experience wins, the house edge gradually consumes the winnings as they are reinvested in play. Assuming that each bets \$3.00 per spin, their averaged loss at the end of the play period is \$900.00. Graph built by gambling analyst Nigel Turner.

- 2) **Why is it that people who practice responsible gambling make up so little of the gambling profits?** “As I’m using this machine, I want to make sure to practice “responsible gambling.” Yet MIT Professor Natasha Schull’s book *Addiction By Design* reported that people who follow “responsible gambling” guidelines made up 75% of the players but contribute a mere 4% of gambling profits,<sup>2</sup> revealing that the entire revenue model for casinos hinges on getting citizens to lose control of themselves.”

**3) Why are there so many more people who've become addicted by casino operators than people who are employed at casinos?** According to the Illinois Gambling Board, there are several thousand more citizens who have banned themselves from the casinos because they're suffering serious damage than there are people who work at the states' casinos. (As of Oct 2014, part-time & full-time employees = 7,137; state's Self-Exclusion list = 10,943)

**4) How can I use these machines in such a way that I don't make public budgets worse for myself and everyone else?** "As I use this machine, I'm concerned about the 2/3 of citizens who never or rarely use state-sponsored gambling. The facts show that taxpayers end up paying higher taxes for less services and their states end up with worse budget problems over the long term. Income from casinos does not tend to grow over time as rapidly as general tax revenue. Expenditures on education and other programs will generally grow more rapidly than gambling revenue over time. Thus, new gambling operations that are intended to pay for normal increases in general state spending add to, rather than ease, long-term budget imbalances.<sup>3</sup>"

**5) Why is it that nearly all of the people who run casinos and the public officials who lobby to bring in casinos, don't gamble themselves?**

*The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *Times* reporter Gary Rivlin toured the headquarters of America's biggest maker of electronic slot machines, International Gaming Technology (IGT). "**When I asked one I.G.T. artist if he ever plays, he acted as if I had insulted him,**" Rivlin wrote. "**Slots are for losers,' he spat, and then, coming to his senses, begged me to consider that an off-the-record comment.**"<sup>4</sup> Despite reaping billions of dollars from the "losers" in America, nearly every major casino operator like Steve Wynn<sup>5</sup>, Penn National's Chairman of the Board Peter Carlino, Jim Murren<sup>6</sup>, CEO of MGM, and KT Lim<sup>7</sup>, Chairman of Genting, *do not gamble themselves*.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Natasha Dow Schull, PhD, *Beware: Machine Zone Ahead*, Washington Post, July 6, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/04/AR2008070402134.html>

<sup>2</sup> Focal Research Consultants, *The 1997/98 Nova Scotia Regular VL Players Study Highlight Report*, at 11, available at <http://stoppredatorygambling.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Nova-Scotia-Problem-Gambling-Study.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Lucy Dadayan at el, *For the First Time, A Smaller Jackpot*, Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, September 21, 2009, at 19-20, [http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/government\\_finance/2009-09-21-No\\_More\\_Jackpot.pdf](http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/government_finance/2009-09-21-No_More_Jackpot.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> **[The Tug of the Newfangled Slot Machines](#)** by Gary Rivlin, *The NY Times Magazine*, May 9, 2004

<sup>5</sup> "Casino Mogul Steve Wynn's Midas Touch," *60 Minutes*, April 12, 2009, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/casino-mogul-steve-wynns-midas-touch/>

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Ross Sorkin, *Is There Life After Blackjack? Ask MGM*, N.Y. Times, December 26, 2004, [http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/26/business/26vegas.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/26/business/26vegas.html?_r=0)

<sup>7</sup> *The Savvy Gambler*, THE BUSINESS TIMES, SINGAPORE, December 2, 2006, <http://stoppredatorygambling.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/KT-Lim-The-savvy-gambler.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Stop Predatory Gambling Foundation, *The Smartest Guys NOT in the Room*, <http://stoppredatorygambling.org/blog/category/research-center/the-smartest-guys-not-in-the-room/>