

The oldest addiction grabs the elderly

Never mind about the Kings and Queens...what about the Bubbys and Zaides?

Never mind about the Jacks...what about the Yunkles?

Never mind about getting a Straight?...what about standing straight?

And never mind about getting a Pair?...what about eating a pear??

Last week we talked about Youth Gambling. This week, let's talk about Senior Gambling.

Seniors are the fastest growing groups of gamblers...even ahead of students and/or teens (according to CNN). Between 1974 and 1994, the percentage of seniors grew from 20% to a whopping 50%. According to the same sources, gambling, all and any forms such as bingo, horse racing, or going to the casino, beats out shopping and golf combined as a preferred social activity.

How could Loto Quebec and its Montreal Casino have the audacity, the shame, the nerve, to actually arrange shuttle buses to pick up senior citizens from Montreal area senior citizen homes and take them to the casino for 'hours of fun and excitement'. If the senior citizen homes work amicably with Loto Quebec to arrange for these outings, they too, should be embarrassed and in total shame. I can tell you first hand, categorically and without a doubt, from speaking to local bank managers, that seniors on a regular basis, have been cashing out RRSPs, taking out RIF money, and withdrawing cold hard cash so that they are ready when the shuttle bus comes a calling. Once again, Loto Quebec and its casino

marketing team are in brilliant high gear. They provide transportation to and fro, free and/or discounted meals, special rewards and assorted prizes that attract the older individual.

The seniors live in a world of isolation, loneliness and boredom. The casino provides a distraction to these said people.

Imagine certain casinos send birthday cards as if Loto Quebec really cares when it's their birthday.

Seniors, as a whole, do not understand addiction, and more often than not, are shy and/or ignorant to seek help.

Again, as with any gambler, the tell tale signs of seniors with gambling problems may be loss of interest or participation in the homes' activities, boredom, blocks of time unaccounted for, possessions missing, or a general change in their attitude and personality.

What seniors fail to realize is that when their money is lost through gambling, it is almost impossible to replace, as they are no longer, as a rule, in the active work force.

Our federal and provincial governments have a public responsibility to prevent seniors from losing their life savings, as they have a responsibility to be public watchdogs against adolescent

smoking.

Gambling can easily become a problem to some people later in life as a result of losing a loved one or a drastic change in health. The senior relies on gambling as a way of dealing with any and all problems and instant gratification.

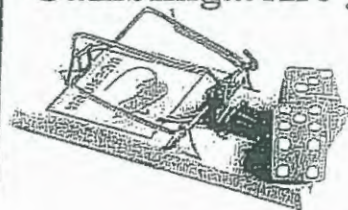
All of the above makes for, in my opinion, a horrible cocktail, as a way to pass one's remaining years.



Howard Riback
The winning hand
The Times



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For HELP call

Howard P. Riback 514-659-5621

He has been there and has come out on the winning side

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