

Contact information for  
anyone looking for help with  
their compulsive  
computer/video gaming

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**<http://cgaa.info>**

**Email:**  
**[helpline@cgaa.info](mailto:helpline@cgaa.info)**

**Phone:**  
**970-364-3497**

C.G.A.A. holds open meetings that the general public is welcome to attend. We encourage anyone interested to learn about us through firsthand experience of our meetings, although we request that non-addicts refrain from speaking during the discussion part of the meeting. Please refer to our schedule of online and face-to-face meetings.

**<http://cgaa.info>**



# **Contact Information for Professionals**



**Computer  
Gaming  
Addicts  
Anonymous**

## From the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

“Internet Gaming Disorder is identified in Section III as a condition warranting more clinical research and experience before it might be considered for inclusion in the main book as a formal disorder.

“Recent scientific reports have begun to focus on the preoccupation some people develop with certain aspects of the Internet, particularly online games. The “gamers” play compulsively, to the exclusion of other interests, and their persistent and recurrent online activity results in clinically significant impairment or distress. People with this condition endanger their academic or job functioning because of the amount of time they spend playing. They experience symptoms of withdrawal when pulled away from gaming.

“Much of this literature stems from evidence from Asian countries and centers on young males. The studies suggest that when these individuals are engrossed in Internet games, certain pathways in their brains are triggered in the same direct and intense way that a drug addict’s brain is affected by a particular substance. The gaming prompts a neurological response that influences feelings of pleasure and reward, and the result, in the extreme, is manifested as addictive behavior.”

While we who have experienced gaming addiction firsthand need no further research to be convinced ourselves, we enthusiastically encourage professionals to seek the research and experiences that will demonstrate that for certain people the disease of addiction forms around computer gaming as easily as it can form around

alcohol use, drug use, or gambling.

The American Society of Addiction Medicine has published the following definition of addiction. We gaming addicts in recovery recognize ourselves, our gaming behavior and our thinking patterns in these statements.

### **Public Policy Statement: Definition of Addiction (2013)**

#### **Short Definition of Addiction:**

“Addiction is a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry. Dysfunction in these circuits leads to characteristic biological, psychological, social and spiritual manifestations. This is reflected in an individual pathologically pursuing reward and/or relief by substance use and other behaviors.

“Addiction is characterized by inability to consistently abstain, impairment in behavioral control, craving, diminished recognition of significant problems with one’s behaviors and interpersonal relationships, and a dysfunctional emotional response. Like other chronic diseases, addiction often involves cycles of relapse and remission. Without treatment or engagement in recovery activities, addiction is progressive and can result in disability or premature death.”

We gaming addicts have found within ourselves the commonly recognized characteristics of addiction, such as:

- obsession
- continued use despite mounting problems
- compulsion to repeat it over and over

despite wanting to stop

- painful withdrawal symptoms when abstaining
- loss of control and inability to effectively moderate
- denial of problems and defensiveness
- hiding and lying about the behavior

Each of these is readily evident to the obsessive compulsive gamer who finally gets honest with him or herself, and to the family and friends who witness the downward spiral of gaming addiction.

Some recovering members of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous have found that their dormant addictions reawakened and fully focused their obsessive and compulsive qualities on gaming. Despite many years of recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction, some have returned to addiction's crazy obsessive thinking, compulsive behavior, denial, withdrawal from life, problems with family and careers, poor decision-making and neglect of health and relationships through excessive gaming.

Many family members and friends of obsessive compulsive gamers have witnessed the downward spiral of personality changes, anger, denial, depression, withdrawal from life and relationships, and deterioration of health, career and education. When confronting the gamer, they are met with the same levels of anger, defensiveness, manipulation and denial that are common with active alcoholics and drug addicts. They are left with no doubt that a powerful gripping condition is destroying the lives of their loved ones.