



Casino ads always use the word gaming, their sneaky way to make gambling sound more socially acceptable. Actually, gambling is what it has always been since the first cavemen rolled bones to see who got the best-looking cave woman or the mastodon steak.

It's putting your money down, and although the odds always favor the house ... the gam(bl)ing house ... you hope good luck will send you home a winner. Yeah, sure. Of course, gambling to excess is an addiction. Even the casinos admit it by posting insincere signs like ... please gamble responsibly ... as if they really mean it. We're all familiar with the true loser image of the desperate senior so addicted to gambling that income and savings are lost at the casino. On the other side of the chip ... er ... coin, gambling in America has become a huge industry in the past several decades.

In addition to the traditional gambling towns of Reno and Las Vegas, other cities now boast shining neon facilities and posh hotels to attract customers. Added is the rise of Native American gambling, with many casinos on reservations. Of course, they've helped native Americans climb out of poverty and provide employment for thousands of tribe members.

If you've visited casinos lately, many players there are elderly and retirees. In some cities, daily casino buses pick up people and give free rides to and from casinos. Often, as more incentive, when they arrive at the casino, customers get \$10 or more to use in gambling or dining.

Gambling isn't necessarily a serious problem when you set an intelligent limit for each casino visit. If you lose that amount, stop gambling for the day. However, it can become an obsession.

Continuing losses can negatively affect health, family, job, savings or everything else vital in your life. When that happens, quit going to casinos and find another way to enjoy your sunset years