

Title:

Warning To Poker Players: Don't Bluff Your Way Out Of Anxiety

Word Count:

904

Summary:

The articles is about Poker, a very popular card game that is played in casinos, slot machines, and even on-line. Discussed in the article are the roots and plays of poker, including the stress and anxiety experienced by the players.

Keywords:

anxiety, anxiety treatment

Article Body:

Poker is a card game that involves gambling on a card's superior value. The players place a bet into a central pot and whoever holds the "hand" with the highest value wins. The game was first played in New Orleans in 1829 but other historians say that the game was developed by the Persians many centuries before.

While it is already a popular card game, it has again become a gambling craze. Aside from the World Series of Poker which is the challenge of choice for professional players, other poker enthusiasts can choose to play in other smaller tournaments, or they can even try the on-line poker service which may be a different environment from how it is played on a regular table. Still, these modern means of playing their favorite card game is drawing crowds and millions of dollars in pot money and winnings.

This is exactly how the game is played:

Poker is a card game where two people or more people play around a table, with two cards on hand for each player. Colored chips have assigned monetary values and are used as betting tokens. After placing their bets, the card dealer shows a set of three cards from the deck. This is what they call the "flop cards." The players then think of strategies that could heighten their chances of winning. Then the betting begins again. The fourth card, or what they call "the turn" shows up, which spurs the players to bet again. The last card picked from the deck is called "the river." After this, the players then have to show their best five card combination. The player with the best combination, which means the set with the highest value, wins the pot. This is how the traditional poker

is played in the United States. However, a number of game variants have been developed such as draw poker, stud poker, and community card poker.

If studied in-depth, Poker is more than just a form of gambling. It is certainly more than just playing with cards. This game involves critical thinking and correct timing. To be played in winning form, a player must learn the important technique and skill called a "bluff." Good poker players also know how to control their emotions and facial expressions, hence the term "poker face." Those who easily get affected by other players sometimes reveal their thoughts and planned card moves through their reactions.

The popularity of the game has reached global proportions. Some sports channels like ESPN even cover numerous poker tournaments. But there is more to see in these card tournaments than just the card play or the winner's pot. By watching poker on television, people can see the different looks on the players' faces. While they usually try to conceal their facial expressions, you can still see a slight change in their expression when as they think of the next move or get stung by their own mistake in playing the cards. Sometimes, poker players can even look very agitated, nervous, scared or worried --- all at the same time.

The winnings in poker can be as high as several millions of dollars. No wonder, many players especially those who have not reached the ranks of the poker elite can still be victimized by their own anxiety while playing cards. Like in other games, people who play poker feel the anxiety because of many reasons. Anxiety in poker games are often seen as a hassle to the players, since this causes them to look bad to the other players. This means that the cards you are holding may not be a winning pair. Anxiety can bring the player down, by just feeling it and showing it to other players. For the world-class professional players, the anxiety comes from the fear of becoming an "instant celebrity." Some professional poker players see their game or job as a very cerebral activity. To them, the mere thought of making cerebral poker a means to attain instant celebrity is just dreadful. The loss of privacy and the intrigues associated with fame is just too much for some professional poker champions who like the game to remain a solitary pursuit, free from the limelight and fanfare.

Anxiety treatments, of late, have become viable alternatives for those who have been in the poker circuit for quite some time. All the years of pent-up anger, frustration and disappointment in playing poker had already accumulated in their system. Nothing short of a treatment is necessary to enable them to regain their edge in the game. Lowering their anxiety level may actually take stopping them from playing their favorite game for some days or even weeks. Through progressive counseling, a therapist can help a player vent his anger or frustrations ---whether it be for calling someone's bluff and then losing the

game... or for always failing to make it to the top spot of the World Series of Poker.

For some people, anxiety is just a temporary discomfort that quickly fades away after a game. But for those who really need anxiety treatments, a quick visit to the doctor or therapist is a must. Anxiety is something no one should gamble with. Indeed, the game demands even the world's best player to remain stoic, unperturbed by the ups and downs of the card play. But for serious cases of anxiety, donning that "poker face" may be the last move you should do.