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### Crap!

I wouldn't have called myself an addict, however I did love the game. Gambling fueled me. I loved the risk, but did this make me an addict or was I just a thirteen-year-old kid trying to find a way to pass my time? My game of choice was craps. The dice, though small, possessed a power way beyond what I could have ever imagined. It still blows my mind as to how a pair of dice controlled so much of my life. I was very good at the game even though, honestly, there is no skill involved. People always asked me if there was a certain strategy to win. I would always say jokingly, "I guess it's all in the way you manipulate the dice." Now I realize that I was not manipulating the dice, but the dice were manipulating me. When I gambled, I lost my self. . I wasn't addicted to drugs or alcohol; gambling was my addiction. Did this mean that I was just as bad as a drunken parent or a crack head sleeping in the streets? Looking back, it could have easily become that bad.

I knew I loved the game from the very first time I touched the dice. I felt powerful. I began betting a quarter. That quarter soon turned into a dollar, and then five dollars, and then ten. Soon the bets had raised to twenty dollars a roll. I had lots of money and felt great about it. I never thought of myself as an addict, until one day when I was sitting in church. My pastor said that gambling was a sin. This statement hit me. I knew that I needed to stop, but I found myself still playing the game. I hated myself. I began to wonder, what would happen if I had lost

all of my money? Would I try to get more to try to keep playing? I told myself that if I lost all my money I would just quit, but deep inside I knew that I would not be able to. Everything I once had was now falling apart right in front of my eyes. I was still winning, but realizing that I was an addict was worse than any loss I could have taken. I found myself not eating and not caring about anything else but gambling.

One day I was playing right before lunch. As I began to toss the dice, I felt someone grab my wrist. It was a hall monitor. She said, "Come with me." I felt like vomiting. My heart had sunk to the very pit of my stomach. I knew what was coming. My silent intervention. I walked to the dean's office. Those hundred steps had to have been the longest I had ever taken. As the dean reprimanded me, I said nothing. I accepted my punishment silently and respectfully. I knew I deserved it. My parents had to come in for a conference. After my dad realized what I had done, he couldn't look me in the eyes.

Later on that night, as I'm about to go to sleep, my dad walks into my room. He says, "You're not my son. My son wouldn't be so stupid as to do what you've done here today." And that was it. Nothing else. Those few words were worse than any amount of grounding or punishment could have been. Just as quickly as my addiction had begun, it had now ended. I thank God every night that my problem ended the way it did.