

## **Powerlessness & Unmanageability (And You)**

A first step inventory around food/unmanageability is an important tool in taking step one, because it catalogs the physical, emotional and spiritual decline that compulsive eating causes.

Describe specific behaviors with food, food secrets, binge foods & ways we were dishonest. Did we lie to get the food we needed? Did we steal time or money from family & others to feed the disease? What opportunities did we lose by chasing the food (the joys of dating, athletics, academic excellence, building healthy friendships, career, etc.).

How did it affect our self-esteem, our standing at work, attitudes towards institutions and authorities, or toward life in general? What about our belief in G-d?

Have we suffered from chronic negativity, depression, anxiety, rage or indifference?

Include ways in which our physical shape/size has curtailed “normal” activities. List health issues that have become chronic or increasingly worrisome.

This information is useful in the future when we (or a sponsee) are tempted to “re-think” whether it’s necessary to do the things that we once considered so helpful.

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**There are also areas of life often out of kilter with an addict in decline that don’t actually relate to food, but very clearly demonstrate a lack of balance.**

<b>This is an unmanageability checklist.</b>
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Some addicts achieve some short-term “white knuckle abstinence”, but they are quite unlikely to have any real success without picking up another compensatory addiction.

Going over them honestly (early on) with our sponsors often diffuses assertions that our sponsor is trying to “control us” in areas “not directly” related to our OA relationship.

These are simply ways that the disease disguises itself by taking other forms.

Here are some common distractions used by addicts to stir up unmanageability:

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Workaholism	Peer/Family pressure
Spending / Shopping (even w/out buying)	Not enough sleep
Drugs / Alcohol	Over-scheduling – spread too thin
Caffeine	Avoidance / Procrastination
Cleaning	Relationships / Co-dependency
Exercise	TV / Movies / DVDs / Trashy Novels
Smoking	Computer games / web surfing
Not paying bills / Gambling	Speeding / breaking the law
Using prescription drugs (for effect)	

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**The first step talks about powerlessness and unmanageability – name it & claim it**