

STEP ONE

Read STEP I .

Refer to AA Big Book as indicated in questions below. Keep a journal to write on the following:

I. STEP ONE POWERLESSNESS EXERCISE

****Give 3 or more examples on each question.**

1. Obsessing of fantasizing about my addictive behavior(s). (Alcohol, drugs, sex, food, spending, gambling, etc.)
2. Trying to control my behavior(s).
3. Lying, covering up or minimizing my behavior(s).
4. Trying to understand or rationalize my behavior(s).
5. Effects on my physical health.
6. Feeling guilty or shameful about my behaviors (or the other extreme, feeling defiant or prideful about my behaviors).
7. Effects on my emotional health (depression, fatigue, etc.)
8. Effects on my social life (spending less time with friends/family, etc.)
9. Effects on my school or work life (calling in sick, not performing well, etc.)
10. Effects on my character, morals, values (lying, cheating, stealing, etc.)
11. Effects on my spirituality.
12. Effects on my financial situation.
13. Contact with the police or courts.
14. Has my preoccupation led to insane or strange behavior'? (Insanity - Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results)
15. Has my preoccupation led to loss of memory?
16. Has my preoccupation led to destructive behavior against self or others'? (STDs, health risks, etc.)
17. Has my preoccupation led to accidents or other dangerous situations'?
18. Do I keep overly or unnecessarily busy? How?
19. Do I feel depressed a lot of the time?
20. Am I able to share my feelings. If not, why not?

21. Have I changed my physical image to support my addiction?
(exercising to be attractive, cosmetic surgery, attempting to be unattractive)
22. Have I made promises to myself that I have broken? (i.e. "I promise I will NEVER do THAT again!")
23. Have I denied that I have a problem? ("everybody does it, I am not as bad as so and-so)
24. Has my addiction affected my self esteem? (No one would love me if they know what I have done)
25. Have I tried to relieve my pain about my behavior? How'? (Sexually act out, drink, overeat to cover up shame/despair)
26. Have I tried to manipulate people into supporting my addiction? How?
27. Have I given up my hobbies and interests'? What were these?

II. POWERLESSNESS INVENTORY

Powerless: means unable to stop the behavior despite negative life consequences. Be very explicit about types of behaviors and frequencies. ****Give 30 examples of your powerlessness over your addiction.**

Example: Sara said she would leave if I slipped again, and I did it anyway.

III. STEP ONE UNMANAGEABILITY EXERCISE

We can use the spiritual malady references mentioned in the AA Big Book to review honestly the unmanageability in our CURRENT lives. The following are statements that best capture the inner and outer experience of the addict for what is called the Big Book, "the spiritual malady". The disease of addiction has three parts: physical, mental and spiritual. The spiritual part of the puzzle is the deepest part and is sometimes called the "root of our troubles" or "untreated addiction" (whether we are acting out or not). These are manifestations of being blocked off spiritually and they are basically caused by self-centered fear. The Big Book says on page 62, "Selfishness - self-

centeredness (That, we think is the root of our troubles". But remember, it then says on page 64, "When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically." That's why if we JUST stop acting out and DON'T grow spiritually, our inner life (as the RESULT of what is listed below) continues to get worse because we haven't dealt with the root of the problem yet. If you CURRENTLY have unmanageability in the following areas of your life, please consider the fact that you may be suffering from untreated addiction (whether you are acting out or not) you may be headed toward acting out, and you may be closer to a relapse than you think you are. It doesn't matter so much how long it's been since you acted out, what matters MORE is how close you are to acting out again.

1. Am I generally restless, irritable (which means `easily annoyed') and discontented (which means `never satisfied')?

Y/N Do you experience these feelings often? Y/N Do you feel like you never belong or that you are not a part of, even in SAA? Y/N Are you usually uncomfortable in your own skin? Y/N Do you experience an ongoing sense of sadness? Y/N Do you often feel like `something is missing'? Y/N

2. Am I having trouble with personal relationships? (page 52) Do you take care of others too much, to the point where you neglect to do the things you need to take care of yourself? Y/N List names of those close to you (family, friends, co-workers) and evaluate how you are getting along with these people. Also include your relationship with yourself and your Higher Power. Include a few examples of how you treat perfect strangers or those who can't do anything for you. What seems to be the problems that you are having with those around you?

3. Am I having trouble controlling my emotional nature? (page 52) Are most of your days best described as emotionally up and down? Y/N Consider how you manage your emotions. Are you in control of your negative emotions or are they in control of you? In Control/ Not in control? When you lash out in anger, do you feel like you have no other choice or that it is `their fault'? Y/N Look at some of your more frequent negative emotions (like jealousy, impatience, lust, fear, guilt, frustration, greed, anger, shame, etc.) and analyze them individually in the following way: When you feel this way, what do you say and do? Are you able to find ways to quickly work through them without harming yourself or others, or do you become unapproachable for hours or days at a time? Are you quick to criticize with a biting or sarcastic tongue? Do you beat yourself up for being this way`?

4. Am I prey to misery and depression? (page 52) How often in the average month are miserable or depressed? ___ times. How long does it

last and what do you do to get rid of it? How do life and other people's behavior cause you misery and depression? What was going on the last few times you were miserable or depressed? Are any of these recurring? Y/N Which ones? When you are miserable or depressed, do you avoid people, sleep all day, think about hurting yourself or others, or seek escape through alcohol/drugs/food/etc. or extended periods in front of the TV or computer? Y/N

5. Am I having trouble making a living? (page 52) What areas of your life are not in balance? Included here are: finances/savings/spending/credit cards/loans, your marriage/parenting/friendship/work life, education, physical/emotional/mental/spiritual health, do you set aside time for fun/for being alone, are you overweight, do you drink too much coffee or smoke too much, are you having problems getting or keeping a job, have you had a routine medical check-up recently, etc.

6. Do I feel useless? (page 52) Do you often wonder why you are even alive? Y/N Do you often feel inconvenienced or taken advantage of by others? Y/N Do you have difficulty finding interests of 'fitting in'? Y/N Do you feel like there's no meaning to your life or that you have nothing to contribute to life? Y/N Explain any YES.

7. Is fear a big part of my life? (page 52) How much of the average week are you experiencing fear? % What do you say or do when you feel fearful? What does fear prevent you from doing? How do you get rid of fear? List some of your more common fears. Ask yourself why you have them and if they are real or imagined.

8. Am I often unhappy? (page 52) How much of the average week are you unhappy? ___% What do you say or do when you are unhappy? How do you get rid of unhappiness? Can you usually be described as positive and upbeat? Y/N When asked about how you are doing, you say that you are doing well. Even though you say that, do you often know deep down within that this is not the truth? Y/N What areas or past events in your life bring about recurring unhappiness?

9. Am I of real help to other people? (page 52) When was the last time you brought someone new to a meeting? Do you include your number on phone lists for newcomers? Y/N Or do you think that you have nothing to offer them? Y/N Every week, do you reach out to someone in need or in pain (in SLAA AND outside SLAA) and expect nothing in return? Y/N Are you successful when you try to help others? Y/N Do you think that it is more important to grow in ways that would make you become more helpful to others? Y/N

10. Do I think I know what's best for everyone? Are you often like the actor who wants to run the whole show; is forever trying to arrange the lights, the ballet, the scenery and the rest of the players in your own way? Do you believe that everybody, including yourself would be pleased and that life would be wonderful if only they would do as you say? Can you sometimes be quite virtuous, kind, considerate, patient, generous, even modest and self-sacrificing; yet at other times be mean, egotistical, selfish and dishonest (depending on which will work in getting YOUR way)? Are you often a victim of the delusion that you can wrest (to take away by force) satisfaction and happiness out of this world if you only manipulate well? (page 60-61) Y/N Do you spend a lot of time getting frustrated when others don't behave the way you think they should? Is there anyone that you refuse to forgive? Y/N

11. Am I driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking and self-pity? (page 62) Do you often wonder why you do what you KNOW you shouldn't be doing and don't do what you KNOW you should be doing? Y/N Do you have trouble showing up on time? Y/N What is the general condition of your inner dialogue/self-criticism? Good/Bad Although you may not be currently acting out, do you have other 'addictions' (areas in your life that are out of balance or out of control)? Y/N If so, give examples.

12. Am I an extreme example of self-will run riot, though I usually don't think so? (page 62) Do friends and relatives sometimes say that you are selfish even though you don't agree? Y/N Do you end relationships only because the other person doesn't act the way you think they should? Y/N Are you a "team-player"? Y/N Do you spend most of the time thinking of yourself instead of thinking of what you can do for others? Y/N Is your motto "what's in it for me"? Y/N Do you exhibit signs of or participate in 'road rage'? Y/N Would other drivers describe you as considerate? Y/N

13. Am I leading a double life? Are you very much the actor, presenting to the world your stage character, which is the one you like your fellows to see? Do you want to enjoy a certain reputation but know in your heart that you don't deserve it? Y/N Are you under constant fear and tension because of this, worrying that you may be 'found out'? (page 73) Y/N Are you lying to or keeping something from your sponsor/spiritual advisor/recovery network? Y/N Do you usually do what you say and say what you do? Y/N Are you involved in relationships (romantic or illegal) that you shouldn't be? Y/N

14. Am I like a tornado roaring through the lives of others? Do you have a habit of breaking hearts, sabotaging sweet relationships and

uprooting affections? (page 82) Y/N Have you avoided making amends to your family and those closest to you? Y/N Do you have difficulty keeping friendships for more than a few months? Y/N Do you have a habit of pushing people away? Y/N Are you pursuing newcomers for something selfish instead of only helping them in their recovery and spiritual growth? Y/N Do co-workers, family, and fellow SLAA's find you unapproachable? Y/N **15. Are my selfish and inconsiderate habits keeping my home in turmoil?** (page 82) Are you more interested in your own needs and wants than you are with the needs and wants of your family? Y/N Have you made amends to your family but continue the behavior you originally made amends for? Y/N Do you sometimes hide away at meetings to avoid responsibilities at home? Y/N Do you spend 'quality time' with your spouse/family on a regular basis? Y/N Would your spouse/family agree with your answer? Y/N Has anyone in your household recently said to you, "The only person you ever think of is yourself?" Y/N

IV. UNMANAGEABILITY INVENTORY

****List as many examples as you can that show how your life has become totally unmanageable because of your dependency.** Remember "unmanageability" means that your addiction created chaos and damage in your life.

Example: Got caught stealing to support my addiction.

After evaluating these areas, can you now admit that even though you may not be currently acting out, your life (especially your inner life) is unmanageable? Y/N

V. THE SECRET LIST

Taken from: *'Facing the Shadow' by Patrick Carnes. Ph. L).*

Usually people with compulsive sexual behavior have a significant number of secrets: out-of-wedlock children, credit cards their spouses do not know of, cyber lovers that spouses have no clue exist. In fact many of the problems you face are probably problems because of the secrets they involve. You might ask yourself how many of the problems would be worse if everybody knew the truth about your behavior. Secrets themselves are a problem.

First, you may carry the emotional stress of knowing you are being dishonest. Then, you have the anxiety of trying to remember who you told what so that you do not trip yourself up,

Each of these problems takes a toll on you. What is worse, you end up believing some of your distortions. By telling a story often enough, an addict starts to live as if the story is reality. You must start with reality. Remember to include the 'omitted' not just the lies you have told, but what you have also left out.

As you list each secret, note who does not have an accurate picture about you by indicating those from whom you have kept the secret.

**** Make a list of (a)each secret and (b)from whom you have kept the secret.**