

SEVEN TOOLS THAT WILL HELP YOU OVERCOME COMPULSIVE OVEREATING

Tool #1: Record Your Eating History

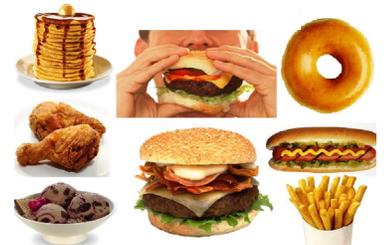
O Lord, ... Listen to my cry for help. Pay attention to my prayer, for it comes from honest lips. (Psalm 17:1)

An honest witness does not deceive... (Proverbs 14:5)



Begin by writing out your eating history. Start from your childhood and go to the present. Be honest and as thorough as possible. Some questions to ask yourself are:

- At what age do I remember eating compulsively?
- What was going on in my life at that time? How did I feel?
- What have been my favorite foods when I over ate / under ate?
- Have my favorite foods changed as I grew?
- What foods do I often obsess about having?
- What is my relationship with food when I have life events that cause strong reactions, whether good or bad?
- Do I graze all day?



Tool #2: Identify Binge Foods

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives... self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. (2 Timothy 1:7)



As you look at your past eating, you will discover that you do and have overeaten and that you have a strong desire for certain foods or food groups. These foods

can often start an unstoppable craving for more and more food. Make note of which foods fall into this category. The craving can be immediate or occur over several days, for example, you have one cookie today, two or three tomorrow and suddenly it becomes the whole bag.

Tool #3: Find a Sponsor

*Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.
(1 Corinthians 11:1)*

*Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine,
and learn from those who follow our example.
(Philippians 3:17)*



Find a person of your same gender who has the kind of recovery you do. The loss of weight and getting to a healthy lifestyle / weight is important. Your sponsor should also have some recovery with the issues that led them to compulsively overeat / undereat in the first place. Examples might be, low self-esteem, abusive childhood, victim mentality, need to control others, people pleasing, anger, etc. A regularly scheduled time to check-in with your sponsor is encouraged. Compulsive Overeaters live are often chaotic and scattered, and the structure of a regular call is helpful. Our sponsors can guide us through the Eight Recovery Principles, help us develop a Food Plan and hold us accountable for a daily eating plan, if we so choose. Some sponsors will expect any or all of these things to agree being your sponsor.

Tool #4: Find Accountability Partners

*Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble... A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.
(Ecclesiastes 4:9,10,12)*



These are people, also of the same gender, who have a similar amount of time in recovery as you do. These are people who can support us with a phone call, text message or e-mail. We call them for encouragement and prayer when we are struggling and we do the same for them. We also want to share our victories with each other. When sharing all kinds of things in our lives with each other we know it is safe.

Tool #5:

Abstain from Unhealthy Eating Behaviors

He who neglects discipline despises himself... (Proverbs 15:32a)

No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. (Hebrews 12:11-12)

In this tool, we list what food or foods you will stop eating by God's grace and with the help of the Holy Spirit. Abstinence can also include any eating behaviors you would like to stop doing. Examples of this might be:

- Eating after dinner
- Eating in the middle of the night
- Purging of food, for bulimics
- Not eating fast food meals / snacks
- Hoarding or hiding food
- Eating food because it is free
- Eating while driving, watching TV, reading, etc.



Begin slowly after you have completed your Food History. Pick one or at the most two foods or types of foods from which you will abstain. A food might be a cookie or peanut butter, a type of food might be foods with sugar or white flour. As you are defining your Abstinence, note the reactions your body has to certain foods. As you gain success in abstaining from your binge or trigger foods, you can add other foods and / or behaviors into your Abstinence. This process is best done with the counsel and guidance of a Sponsor.

Tool #6:

Create a Food Plan

May he grant your heart's desires and make all your plans succeed.

(Psalm 20:4)

Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed. (Proverbs 16:3)

So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. (Ephesians 5:15-17)

This tool is a menu of what foods you will eat. Start with a Food Plan, several are included here for you to look over. Daily write out what specific foods you will eat. For example, a Breakfast might include 2 servings of Protein. For today I am choosing 2 eggs for my Protein. Daily Plans of Eating can include:

- What you will eat
- When (what time of day)
- Where and how much you will eat
- How many calories (optional)

When we daily plan our food, it frees us from constantly thinking about food, "When will I get to eat again?" We do not have to make decisions all day long about food. A daily plan also separates our food from our emotions.

WHEN WE FAIL TO PLAN, WE PLAN TO FAIL

As we make a Plan of Eating we can also categorize our foods into three lists to help us abstain. As we become more aware of ourselves and our food, these lists can be changed and used frequently.



RED LIGHT FOODS:

Foods you cannot eat sanely and should avoid. This includes all your Binge and Trigger foods.

YELLOW LIGHT FOODS:

Foods you can eat, but with caution.

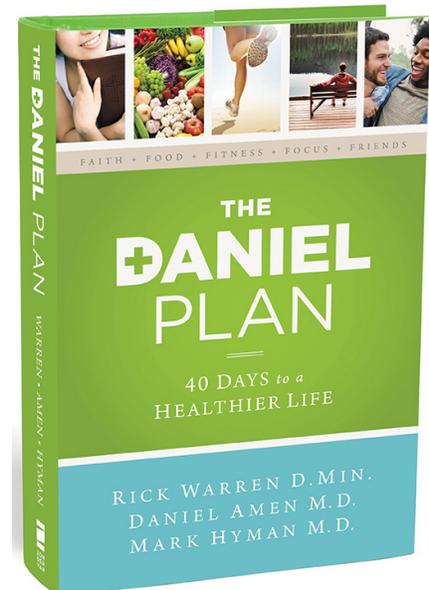
GREEN LIGHT FOODS:

Foods you can safely eat.

It is strongly recommended that you seek the advice of your doctor and/or nutritionist as you make your Food Plan.

There are many good Food Plans to follow. The website of Saddleback Church has a good plan for accountability groups called *The Daniel Plan*. Also listed on the following pages are several other Food Plans. Most of these Plans include what amounts of food make up a serving. Quantity of food is often a problem for Compulsive Overeaters as we have not learned to tell when we are full. Work with your sponsor on this issue. You may also choose to buy a food scale and to weigh and measure your food so you know when enough is enough. Once you reach your goal weight, additional portions of food can be added for maintenance.

Remember, your sponsor and your accountability partners are here to help, but it has to be **YOUR FOOD PLAN.**



Tool #7:

Choose an Exercise Plan

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Physical activity is an important part of a healthy life style. It will also help you lose the weight and keep it off. Most importantly it will help you feel better. Walking is the easiest and simplest form. There are many, many videos you can use in your home. The Wii program has several good ways to exercise and there are gyms everywhere you can join. Add exercise to your daily routine. Asking a friend or accountability partner to go walk with you for 30 minutes, 4 or 5 times a week will show you the benefits.



**GOD BLESS YOU AND HOLD YOU IN THE PALM OF HIS HANDS
AS YOU RECOVER FROM COMPULSIVE OVEREATING!**

PLANS OF EATING

(3-0-1 PLAN)

- Three moderate, nutritious meals per day, with nothing in between, one day at a time.
- Don't eat the foods and food ingredients you identify as causing cravings.
- Stop the eating behaviors you identify as causing cravings.

(BASIC PLAN #1)

BREAKFAST:

- 2 ounces protein
- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 2 cups milk or milk substitute

LUNCH:

- 4 ounces protein
- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 2 fat servings (10-12 grams fat total)

DINNER:

- 4 ounces protein
- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 3 vegetable servings
- 2 fat servings (10-12 grams total)

(BASIC PLAN #2)

BREAKFAST:

- 2 ounces protein
- 1 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 1 cups milk or milk substitute

LUNCH:

- 3 ounces protein
- 1 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 3 vegetable servings
- 2 fat servings (10-12 grams total)

DINNER:

- 3 ounces protein
- 1 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 3 vegetable servings
- 2 fat servings (10-12 grams total)

BEDTIME:

- 1 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 3 vegetable servings
- 1 cups milk or milk substitute

(HIGH-CARBOHYDRATE PLAN)

BREAKFAST:

- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 1 cups milk or milk substitute

LUNCH:

- 2 ounces protein
- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 3 vegetable servings
- 2 fat servings (10-12 grams total)

DINNER:

- 2 ounces protein
- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 3 vegetable servings
- 2 fat servings (10-12 grams total)

BEDTIME:

- 2 starch/grain servings
- 1 fruit serving
- 1 cups milk or milk substitute

(VERY LOW CARBOHYDRATE PLAN)

BREAKFAST:

- 4 ounces protein
- 1 fruit serving

LUNCH:

- 4 ounces protein
- 1 cup cooked vegetables
- 2 cups raw vegetables

DINNER:

- 4 ounces protein
- 1 cup cooked vegetables
- 2 cups raw vegetables

BEDTIME:

- 3 fat servings (14-16 grams) throughout the day

Before choosing any of these plans, we urge you to consult with your sponsor and a health-care professional.

WHAT IS A SERVING?

The serving sizes suggested below are general guides.

MEASUREMENTS:

The relationship between volume measures and weight measures is variable, dependent on the food, and the conversion to metric units is sometimes imprecise. In general:

1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons = 15 ml.

1 cup = 16 tablespoons = 240 ml.

1 ounce = 28.35 grams

PROTEIN:

Protein servings include all meats, poultry and fish.

One egg.

2 ounces of cottage cheese or ricotta cheese. 1/4 cup or 2 ounces of cooked beans.

1 ounce of regular tofu or 2 ounces of soft/silken tofu.

1 tablespoon peanut butter counts as 1 oz protein.

Count 1 ounce of nuts (peanuts, pistachios, soy nuts or almonds) as 2 ounces of protein.

STARCHES / GRAINS

One serving is an ounce of cereal regardless of volume (hot cereal to be weighed before cooking).

One slice of bread.

1/2 cup cooked pasta, potatoes, rice, corn, peas, winter squash and other starchy vegetables.

By weight, one serving is 4 ounces of cooked potatoes, sweet potatoes and yams.

One serving of the other starches (rice, peas, corn, barley, millet, etc) weighs 3 ounces cooked.

FRUIT:

One fruit serving means a moderate size piece of fruit.

6 ounces (or one cup) of cut up fresh fruit.

1/2 cup canned fruit packed in its own juices.

3/4 cup or 6 ounces frozen, unsweetened fruit (after thawing).

VEGETABLES:

Only the low-starch vegetable are usually used as vegetable servings.

The starchy vegetables (corn, peas, winter squash) are usually considered starch/grain servings.

One cup (4 ounces weighed) raw vegetable or 1/2 cup (3 ounces weighed) cooked vegetable.

MILK / MILK SUBSTITUTES:

One cup (8 ounces) of low-fat, unsweetened milk, soy milk or yogurt counts as a serving.

FATS:

Because so many low-fat and reduced-fat items are available, we have elected to specify the grams of fat suggested.

Usually 1 teaspoon of oil or butter contains five grams fat.

1 ounce of avocado,

Five olives,

2 tablespoons sour cream,

1 tablespoon cream cheese are 5-7 grams of fat.

NOTE ON READING LABELS

We carefully read labels or ask about the ingredients to make sure the foods on our exclusion list are not in what we are eating. Some ingredients like sugar are harder to remove, because there are many different names for sugar (e.g., sucrose, dextrose, fructose, glucose, etc.), and it is found in so many foods. Some of us eliminate any items that contain our trigger foods, while others eliminate only the items in which the triggers are listed in the first four ingredients.

STRUCTURE AND TOLERANCE

True admission of powerlessness means putting down the foods over which we are powerless. Those foods may be different for each of us. We need to be completely honest with ourselves, our sponsors and our health-care professionals about what foods, ingredients and eating behaviors cause cravings, compulsive eating or other problems.

Often, the idea of never again eating certain foods seems terrifying and impossible. Be assured that with adequate support and the Twelve-Step recovery program, you can do the things that used to seem totally impossible.