

Step 1 Overview

Step 1 – We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors, that our lives had become unmanageable.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. Romans 7:18

What is typical first step?

Each person's story is unique. However, the events recounted in that story are usually of 2 types: events that are not widely shared by others in the group; events that are quite similar to those in the lives of many others in the group (porn, masturbation, affairs, paid sex, etc.).

Delivered orally to a group of men in a support group setting

Typically 10-20 minutes in length

Written in advance, reviewed with sponsor, maybe multiple times

Rigorously honest, but not graphic in details – sponsor should help remove triggering material

Key phrases:

Admit

Break through denial about our condition

Admit defeat, guilt, and shame

Powerless

Inability to stop – “this is the last time”

Rationalization – “not so bad”

Unmanageable – life does not work anymore, catastrophic failures

Late/“no show”, spending, eating, poor health, etc.

Divorce, Employment termination

Format - suggested

How/when entered recovery

Discovery

Wife found porn; Illegal activity – arrest; Job loss; Affair

Voluntary

Less frequent, but some just get tired, want something better

Bottom line – ready for help – program not for people who need it; for people who want it

Family of Origin

Ancestors with addictive, compulsive behaviors

Earlier trauma, exposures

Not an excuse, not to dishonor – to recognize influences from early life

Concise history of sexual impurity – told thru the lens of **Powerlessness** and

Unmanageability – including cost

First sexual experiences, including first exposure to porn

Subsequent experiences as relevant to disclose scale and scope of sexual activities

Each event should be related to powerlessness or unmanageability

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Conclusion – with this admission, ready to proceed to next step

First step exercises – building blocks of First Step; serve as research notes for drafting it

Family of origin

Examples of powerlessness

Examples of unmanageability

Cost of Addiction

Benefits of giving first step

Admission paves the way for next step

Often provides some relief from guilt and/or shame

Reinforces commitment to working the steps

What a first step is NOT

Not a clinical disclosure – detailed account of who, what, when, where, how often.

Not a detailed history of sexual history

Not a declaration of freedom