

What Are You Abstaining From?

ABSTINENCE- the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy weight.

1. Answer the following questions by circling the items that apply. If you're not sure about an item, or it falls under the category of "sometimes" put a question mark next to it. If necessary, add more items to the list.

What are the foods that I consistently overeat when I have the chance to eat them?

What are the foods that I hoard, eat incessantly, or use to "bliss out"?

What are the foods that I first run to for comfort?

What are the foods that I have tried to control?

What are the foods that I am constantly negotiating (not peaceful around)?

Is there a common ingredient in these foods?

What substitutes am I using for a food that I REALLY want?

What are the food substitutes that I use to keep my mouth busy between meals (gum, coffee)?

If your answer is that you binge any and all foods, ask yourself what you END your binges with. You might start off trying to be "good" by eating a ton of carrots but once the "damn breaks" what do you go to?

When you look at the list of foods, is it the foods themselves or what you put on them for taste that can make a difference?

For instance, is celery a problem, or what you dip it into? Are potatoes a problem, or the butter/sour cream you put on it?

JUNK FOOD

Chocolate
candies
cookies
chips
sweetened drinks
soda

PROCESSED MEATS

bacon
sausage
ham
salami
pate
pepperoni

CONDIMENTS

ketchup
mustard
mayo

DESSERTS

Pastries
Baked goods
ice-cream
sorbet
cakes
pies

HIGH FAT

butter
creams
cheeses
dips
spreads
salad dressings
sour cream
high-fat dairy
fried foods
fatty meats
nuts
nut butter

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

gum
breath mints
yogurts
drinks
candies
frozen treats

CAFFEINATED BEVS

Regular/decaf coffee
caffeinated teas
diet drinks

MISCELLANEOUS

popcorn
dried fruit
nuts
seeds
puffed/popped foods
salted foods
protein bars

SUGAR

Honey
maple syrup
alcohol

FLOUR/WHEAT

pastas
crackers
breads
cereals

SUBSTITUTIONS

Sugar-free
Baked not fried
Gluten-free
Low-fat

OTHER ITEMS:

_____, _____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____, _____

2. Here is a list of common eating behaviors to refrain from:

eating until we're completely stuffed
rigidly restricting calories until we are weak
devouring our food, often finishing before everyone else
hiding our eating, or hoarding or hiding food, in order to eat extra amounts
searching magazines for the latest weight loss scheme, or following unrealistic diets or regimens
watching food centered television shows
visiting certain food stores/aisles to "window shop"
eating because it's free or because someone cooked it especially for us
eating to celebrate or because it gives us comfort during times of stress or unhappiness
needing to keep our mouths busy by chewing
eating at particular times or in particular situations, whether we need to or not
purging excess food with restrictive dieting, laxatives, vomiting, or extra exercise
eating out of containers or while standing up
sniffing our alcoholic foods or chewing them and spitting them out
eating while driving, watching television, or reading
distorted thinking leading us to believe more and more foods will cause us problems---this can lead to dangerous under-eating
eating excess "healthy" or "abstinent" foods

OTHER:

What Are You Eating?

PLAN OF EATING: *helps us abstain from compulsive eating, guides us in our dietary decisions, and defines what, when, how, where, and why we eat. This tool helps us deal with the physical aspects of our disease and achieve physical recovery. From this vantage point, we can more effectively follow OA's Twelve Step program of recovery and move beyond the food to a happier, healthier, and more spiritual life.*

3. Once you have come up with your list you will know exactly what you are ABSTAINING from (what you don't eat). Now it's time to choose a workable PLAN OF EATING (what you do eat and how much).

Options include:

- A. Follow one of OA's suggested "Dignity of Choice" formats.
http://bookstore.oa.org/pc_product_detail.asp?key=1CA4DF2A316E477FBFDC3FBC200054E9
 - B. Consult with a registered dietician (email me for good options if needed). Make sure to show them the list of foods you'll be abstaining from. It doesn't matter if they understand or not. They will only need to give you amounts and measurements within each food group for each meal to maintain proper nutrition daily.
- *If you don't already have one, buy a scale [for food], measuring cups and measuring spoons*
 - *Have all meals a minimum of 3 and ½ hours apart and a maximum of 6 hours apart. (all meals within the technical day; before midnight).*
 - *NO skipping meals.*
 - *Drink 8+ cups of water a day (64oz).*
 - *If at any time you begin to show signs of being sick (cold, flu, whatever) DO NOT change your food plan. Call a recovered sponsor for directions and suggestions on how to abstain.*
 - *If you go out to eat, call or text for directions in advance on what to eat.*
 - *Make no changes, additions or subtractions*

