

SYMPTOMS LEADING TO RELAPSE

1. **EXHAUSTION:** Allowing yourself to become overly tired or in poor health. Some compulsive eaters are also prone to work addictions – perhaps in a hurry to make up for lost time. Good health and enough rest are important. If you feel well you are more apt to think well. Feel poorly and your thinking is apt to deteriorate. Feel bad enough and you might begin thinking that eating compulsively couldn't make it any worse.
2. **DISHONESTY:** This begins with a pattern of unnecessary little lies and deceptions with fellow workers, friends, and family. Then come important lies, to yourself. This is called rationalizing – making excuses for not doing what you do not want to do or what you should do.
3. **IMPATIENCE:** Things are not happening fast enough. Others are not doing what they should do or what you want them to do.
4. **ARGUMENTATIVENESS:** Arguing small and ridiculous points of view indicates a need to always be right. “Why don't you be reasonable and agree with me?” Looking for an excuse to eat compulsively?
5. **DEPRESSION:** Unreasonable and unaccountable despair (hopeless, helpless) may occur in cycles and should be dealt with – by talking about it. Best way to deal with depression is to take some form of action.
6. **FRUSTRATION:** Toward life, at people and also because things may not be going your way. Remember – everything is not going to be just the way you want it.
7. **SELF-PITY:** Feeling sorry for yourself. “Why do these things always happen to me?” “Why must I have a problem with food?” “Nobody appreciates all the things I'm doing for them.”
8. **COCKINESS:** Got it made – no longer fear compulsive eating – going into tricky eating situations to prove to others you have no problem. Do this often enough and it will wear down your defenses.
9. **COMPLACENCY:** “Eating compulsively was the furthest thing from my mind.” Staying abstinent was no longer a conscious thought either. It's dangerous to let up on disciplines because everything is going well. Always to have a little fear is a good thing. More relapses occur when things are going well than otherwise.
10. **EXPECTING TOO MUCH FROM OTHERS:** “I've changed; why hasn't everyone else?” It's a plus if they do – but it is still your problem if they do not. They may not trust you yet, may still be looking for further proof. You cannot expect others to change their lifestyle just because you have.
11. **LETTING UP ON DISCIPLINES:** Prayer, meditation, daily inventory, OA attendance. This can stem either from **complacency** or **boredom**. You cannot afford to be bored with your program. The cost of relapse is always too great.
12. **“IT CAN'T HAPPEN TO ME”:** This is dangerous thinking. Almost anything can happen to you if you get careless. Remember, you have a progressive, terminal disease and you will be in worse shape if you relapse. Do you remember how **cunning, baffling, and powerful** food is?