

Updated 2/23 – [12steppers.org](http://12steppers.org)

## Step One Worksheet with Questions, a Worksheet for Step 1 of 12 step programs

### Understanding Step 1

The concept behind the 1st step is significant, as addiction can lead to a tendency to hide problems from ourselves and others, pretending that we have control over our actions, while blaming others for the harm we cause. This denial can eventually lead to losing everything we hold dear in life, including relationships, careers, and even our sense of self. The problem lies in the idea that we are taught to always remain in control, even when it is at the cost of winning.

Acknowledging that we are powerless over our addiction may seem like defeat, but it is only a partial admission of defeat. We are recognizing that our attempts to control our addiction have failed and that we need to find a new path of recovery, which will help us regain control. The process of recovery is a productive one, even though it may initially be painful, as we are letting go of old habits and building new, healthy ones.

To let go, we must first admit the depth of our addiction and our inability to control it. This requires us to face our shortcomings and to be honest about the damage that our addiction has caused in our lives. With the support of others who understand our struggles, we can begin the process of rebuilding our lives and overcoming addiction.

### How to Work Step 1

To acknowledge that you have lost control of your addiction, one effective method is to attend a meeting and openly discuss your struggles. Admit to the group how your attempts to control your addiction have failed and the damage it has caused to your life and loved ones.

When you are ready to seriously work on the 12 steps, find a reliable sponsor who can help guide you through the process. Your sponsor can assist you in two crucial ways: they will be there for you when you feel like you may relapse, and they can help you compile a list of the worst behaviors and outcomes associated with your addiction.

Honesty is the guiding principle when working on the first step, and it is important to share all details with your sponsor and group, no matter how shameful you may think they are. Don't be afraid to tell your sponsor and group if you are struggling to maintain

your recovery or if you have relapsed. As long as you are honest and willing to accept help, you can overcome any obstacle.

### Step 1 Questions

How did you first become aware of your addiction, and what initially drew you to it?

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How do you feel when you refrain from engaging in addictive behaviors for a period?

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What specific behaviors does your addiction consist of? Which ones do you engage in the most, and why?

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In what ways has your addiction damaged your most important personal relationships, and how did it do so?

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Does your addiction make you feel isolated from other people, either internally or externally, and have others noticed this as well?

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What emotions or feelings typically trigger your engagement in addictive behaviors, and do you use them to mask other issues or problems? How does your behavior impact these feelings?

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What is the most significant negative outcome of your addiction, and how has it affected your life?

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How has your addiction impacted your finances, and how have you justified or hidden your spending from others?

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In what ways have you tried to conceal your addictive behavior from other people, and has it been successful?

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Have you experienced any physical or mental health issues because of your addiction, and how have you coped with them?

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Have you ever done something that you did not want to do, but engaged in it anyway because of your addiction? How did this make you feel?

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Have you ever put yourself in danger because of your addiction, and if so, how did you handle the situation? Did you learn from the experience or repeat it?

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What is the most embarrassing or humiliating situation that has occurred in your life because of your addiction?

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Have you ever manipulated or exploited other people to fulfill your addiction, and how did you rationalize it to yourself?

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During what period of your life did you feel the least in control, and was your addiction a contributing factor? How did this experience affect you?

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How much time have you devoted to your addiction during the worst and most typical periods of your addiction, and how has this affected other areas of your life?

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Have you ever betrayed someone else due to your addiction, and how did you justify it to yourself?

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How has your addiction impacted your career, and what measures have you taken to conceal your behavior at work? Have these measures been effective?

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When did you first realize that you were an addict, and did you feel that your life was unmanageable at that time? In what ways?

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## How Step 1 Helps Us Recover

Answering these questions will allow us to take stock of how our lives have become unmanageable and the damage we have done to ourselves and others. It shows how previous efforts to manage our addiction have failed. Admitting this failure allows us to prepare for a better path.

[Read more about step 1 & admitting powerlessness.](#)