

Hi, my name is Marc and I'm a cokehead. A Diet Cokehead.

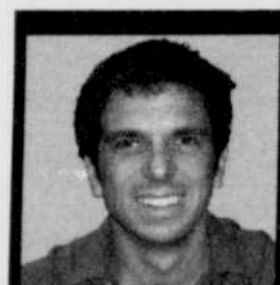
I became addicted last year when 15 of the 60 pounds I lost came back and took up residence on my midsection like an unwanted houseguest. In a misguided attempt to increase my energy while cutting carbs, I worked myself up to a 64-ounce-a-day habit. I was speeding so fast I could actually read the stock market crawl on CNN.

I guess I have an addictive personality. Given a chance to ride the mood elevator, I'll push all the buttons. Any little hit of adrenaline will do. I even get a rush just hearing that little bell telling me I've got e-mail.

My addiction of choice, however, has always been food, which I've used to self-medicate ever since I gave up Gerber. As a result, my weight has gone up and down more than the Dow Jones industrial average. During the past 25 years, I've managed to gain and lose 75 pounds—twice.

That's like gaining and losing the Olsen twins.

I fluctuate between concave and convex; I'm like Dr. Anorexical and Mr. Wide. Sometimes I'm an obsessive undereater, the pleasure-denying psycho who orders a cheeseburger



The Gospel According to Marc
by Marc Acito

with fries, then tells the server to hold the bun, hold the cheese and hold the fries until all that's left is a hockey puck on a plate. You've seen the type: the manic label reader having a low blood sugar meltdown in the grocery store

aisle. ("How can this beef be 7 percent fat? I've never seen a thin cow in my life!")

Other times I'm the compulsive overeater, the out-of-control gorger who devours everything in sight like the cavemen in *Quest for Fire*, then hides his expanding gut by using the "untuck and suck" method.

As a result, I'm forever on a diet. In fact, right now I'm on two because I'm not getting enough food from the first. But after having read every conceivable diet book, I've concluded that the only way to lose weight is simply to eat the books.

I know, I know—I should consume in moderation. But, having an addictive personality, I don't do anything in moderation. "More is more" is my motto.

Waist management

My addiction notice



I once sought help for my condition by going to a support group, but gave up when I realized that the people in recovery were still miserable. (And not particularly thin, I might add.) You see, the problem with food addictions is that, unlike drugs or alcohol, you can't just stop eating; there's no such thing as cold turkey, unless it's on a deli platter with cheese, ham and pickles. For a food addict, facing meals is like taking a tiger out for a walk three times a day—six if you snack as much as I do.

Lately, I've grown so frustrated I've actually contemplated taking up methamphetamines and cigarettes because they don't have any calories. Sure, they might kill me, but I'd die THIN.

(Luckily, I'm not the recreational drug type. I took Viagra once and it literally kept me up all night. Every time I rolled over it was like I had a kickstand.)

I tell myself that the battle with my bulge makes me more accessible and lovable, like Oprah, yet a vision of being hard-bodied has stuck with me through thick and thin.

So, I've finally come to the conclusion that at this point in my life it's futile to fight. I have a naturally obsessive personality. In fact, some of the best things that have happened to me came as a result of harnessing those compulsions, which is how I managed to write a novel while working 60 hours a week at a job that sucked the life out of me.

Now, instead of trying to kick my addiction, I'm going to switch it. I've decided to become a compulsive exerciser.

That's right, I'm determined to become a gym rat, although I prefer to think of myself as a gym bunny because bunnies are cute and soft. (And so am I.) Instead of obsessing about food, I will obsess about isotension, adrenal fatigue and lactic acid. (That is, as soon as I understand what the hell they are.)

I haven't started making strange, glutinous shakes in my blender yet, although I have downloaded several photos of hot, muscular guys with a similar body type for motivation. Hey, it's a start.

But being a musclehead sure beats being a cokehead.

And that, my friends, is *The Gospel According to Marc*. **J**

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