

**SINFUL STRATEGIES FOR LIVING**  
**Manifestations of the Flesh**

Below is a list of 30 different sinful strategies for living. Under each category are words and phrases which may portray you some of the time when you are under pressure. Place a check mark beside those categories (**bold**) that describe you.

To cope when things aren't going right or going my way, I tend to...

<p><b>Become self-absorbed (self-consumed) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming overly introspective</li> <li>• Feeling sorry for myself</li> <li>• Engaging in self-pity</li> <li>• Getting depressed by internalizing my anger and frustrations</li> <li>• Beating up on myself (hating myself)</li> <li>• Focusing on my suffering and trials to get attention and sympathy</li> <li>• Playing the role of a victim or martyr</li> </ul> <p><b>Become withdrawn (withdrawing myself) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming aloof (pull away from people)</li> <li>• Going into a shell</li> <li>• Running and hiding (escaping)</li> <li>• Avoiding others (becoming a loner)</li> <li>• Becoming unapproachable</li> <li>• Being overly introverted</li> <li>• Retreating to the silent treatment</li> <li>• Not communicating</li> </ul> <p><b>Become obsessed with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accomplishments</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How I look</li> <li>• What others think of me</li> <li>• My physical health</li> <li>• The past (especially past hurts and failures)</li> <li>• A devotion to a cause</li> <li>• Structure, order, rules, regulations</li> </ul> <p><b>Escape pain/pressure through:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carousing</li> <li>• Drugs/alcohol</li> <li>• Staying busy</li> <li>• Television</li> <li>• Athletics</li> <li>• Hobbies/games</li> <li>• Computers</li> <li>• Pornography</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Overeating</li> <li>• Religious activity and service</li> <li>• Becoming a workaholic</li> <li>• Work (career, business, job)</li> <li>• Gloom and doom thinking (refuse to see the positive)</li> <li>• Sex</li> <li>• Talking</li> <li>• School</li> <li>• Sleep</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Fantasy</li> <li>• Movies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Become self-disciplined (self-reliant) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming a perfectionist</li> <li>• Overcompensating by trying even harder so as not to fail</li> <li>• Becoming legalistic</li> <li>• Living by “the letter of the law”</li> <li>• Living by rules (have to’s, should’s, must’s, ought’s)</li> <li>• Becoming too hard and strict on myself and others</li> <li>• Setting unrealistic standards for myself and others</li> <li>• Basing acceptance (of self and others) on performance</li> <li>• Fearing making mistakes</li> </ul> <p><b>Become self-indulgent (self-gratifying) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming impulsive (hasty)</li> <li>• Buying things to feel better</li> <li>• Assuming “if it feels good, do it”</li> <li>• Becoming compulsive (lacking self-control)</li> <li>• Lusting (craving) for: alcohol, caffeine, sugar, sex, junk food</li> </ul> <p><b>Become anxious (worry and fret) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming fearful (apprehensive)</li> <li>• Lacking peace and rest</li> <li>• Becoming paralyzed (numb)</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming paranoid</li> <li>• Seeking astrology, horoscopes, fortune telling (tarot cards, palm reading, ouija boards, etc.) and/or the occult for guidance and strength</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become dominant by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming dictatorial (bossy)</li> <li>• Becoming demanding (pushy or nagging)</li> <li>• Becoming manipulative</li> <li>• Intimidating others</li> <li>• Demanding my rights</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Try to stay in control through:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blackmail (making threats)</li> <li>• Manipulation (use coercion)</li> <li>• Profanity (swearing)</li> <li>• The silent treatment</li> <li>• Passivity (play helpless)</li> <li>• Not eating (anorexia or bulimia)</li> <li>• Use of guilt</li> <li>• Favouritism</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Coming across insensitive, uncaring, indifferent, unconcerned, and/or unsympathetic</b></p> <p><b>___ Become complacent (non-chalant) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saying things like “It doesn’t matter...Its ok”</li> <li>• “Whatever”</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Challenge others by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming uncooperative (unteachable)</li> <li>• Causing dissention (strife)</li> <li>• Irritating (aggravating) others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming argumentative, rigid, inflexible, close-minded, stubborn, obstinate, unreasonable, or unyielding</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become pessimistic by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lacking confidence and optimism</li> <li>• Becoming skeptical (suspicious)</li> <li>• Distrusting others, myself, God, church, and/or government</li> <li>• Expecting the worse</li> <li>• Assuming the sores case scenario to protect myself from disappointment and pain</li> <li>• Never being satisfied or content</li> <li>• Never being satisfied or content</li> <li>• Never being pleased with self/others</li> <li>• Becoming jealous of other’s success and happiness</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Develop a critical attitude by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding fault with others, myself, and everything around me</li> <li>• Nit-picking things to death</li> <li>• Becoming judgmental (opinionated)</li> <li>• Complaining a lot (becoming negative)</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become hostile (venting my anger) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming unfriendly (cynical)</li> <li>• Becoming hateful (malicious)</li> <li>• Becoming harsh (cruel and brutal)</li> <li>• Becoming sarcastic (caustic)</li> <li>• Having a quick temper</li> </ul>	<p><b>___ Become self-assured (self-confident) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on myself instead of God</li> <li>• Becoming proud (haughty)</li> <li>• Becoming egocentric (acting pompous)</li> <li>• Bragging (being boastful)</li> <li>• Becoming arrogant (cocky)</li> <li>• Having a superior attitude (saying in effect: “I must be right” or “I must always win” or “I must always be the best.”)</li> <li>• Pretending like I know it all</li> <li>• Becoming conceited (smug)</li> <li>• Having difficulty asking for help</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become self-righteous (self-justifying) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming defensive</li> <li>• Making excuses (rationalize)</li> <li>• Covering up and hiding mistakes</li> <li>• Assuming I am never the problem</li> <li>• Pointing to someone or something else as the problem</li> <li>• Avoiding taking responsibility for failure or problems</li> <li>• Becoming critical of others (blaming others)</li> <li>• Having difficulty either admitting I was wrong or apologizing or asking for forgiveness or expressing gratitude</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become tense (nervous and agitated) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding it hard to relax</li> <li>• Becoming impatient</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming restless (high strung)</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become emotionally insulated by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping people at a distance</li> <li>• Becoming inhibited (battling up emotions)</li> <li>• Avoiding intimacy</li> <li>• Denying feelings having difficulty expressing feelings and opinions openly and honestly</li> <li>• Becoming unable to express loving a meaningful way</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Deny reality by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignoring problems and hoping they will go away</li> <li>• Denying anything is bad or wrong</li> <li>• Lying (giving misleading or partial information)</li> <li>• Deceiving others and myself</li> <li>• Exaggerating (overstate matters)</li> <li>• Playing “mind games” to hide real intent</li> <li>• Conning people to get what I want</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Hold a grudge (being resentful) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming moody (sulking)</li> <li>• Harboring bitterness</li> <li>• Becoming unforgiving</li> <li>• Keeping a scorecard of wrongs done to me or by me</li> <li>• Trying to get even (seeking revenge)</li> <li>• Wanting others to fail or get hurt</li> <li>• Punishing myself or others</li> </ul>	<p><b>___ “Fight” unfairly (cheap shots) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming slanderous (misrepresenting the actual situation)</li> <li>• Gossiping (talking behind other’s backs)</li> <li>• Engaging in passive-aggressive behaviour (ie. using humour to hide real feelings, becoming sarcastic, refusing to communicate, becoming passive, forgetting things, procrastinating, being late, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Put up a front (can’t be real) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faking it (hiding what I really think and feel)</li> <li>• Putting on a show (performing) to get attention and to impress others</li> <li>• Becoming pretentious (phony, unreal)</li> <li>• Becoming superficial (plastic)</li> <li>• Becoming gushy (too sentimental)</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Lack compassion, kindness, understanding, gentleness, and love</b></p> <p><b>Live by my feelings by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming too subjective (believing that truth is only what I feel)</li> <li>• Believing I’m ok only when I feel okay</li> <li>• Becoming too sensitive to criticism</li> <li>• Becoming hypersensitive</li> <li>• Taking things too personally</li> <li>• Reading in rejection when it isn’t there, or setting things up to bring about rejections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming touchy (irritable)</li> <li>• Being controlled by anger, doubts, emotions, fear, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become a people pleaser by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trying to be all things to all people</li> <li>• Trying to do the “proper” or “correct” thing</li> <li>• Trying to keep everyone happy</li> <li>• Trying to keep peace at all costs</li> <li>• Avoiding conflict at all costs</li> <li>• Becoming a doormat (letting others take advantage of me)</li> <li>• Expressing to others what I think they want to hear</li> <li>• Giving into others too easily</li> <li>• Becoming controlled by others</li> <li>• Having difficulty saying no, setting boundaries or standing up for myself</li> <li>• Becoming overly compliant</li> <li>• Becoming too submissive</li> </ul> <p><b>___ Become passive (lack initiative) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quitting too easily (giving up)</li> <li>• Not taking chances</li> <li>• Playing it safe (pulling back and waiting)</li> <li>• Waiting for someone to tell me what to do and how to think</li> <li>• Depending on others instead of God</li> <li>• Vacillating (becoming too changeable)</li> <li>• Becoming indecisive (not making decisions)</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wanting someone else to make the decision for me</li> <li>• Avoiding failure at all costs</li> <li>• Procrastinating (putting things off)</li> <li>• Becoming irresponsible (becoming unreliable)</li> <li>• Becoming lazy, apathetic, lethargic</li> </ul> <p><b>____ Become self-depreciating (self-condemning/self-critical) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assuming I am always the problem</li> <li>• Becoming overly apologetic</li> <li>• Becoming too hard on myself</li> <li>• Having difficulty receiving love, complements, forgiveness or forgiving myself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinging (becoming a “leach”) to those who finally accept me</li> <li>• Becoming uncomfortable with success</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b>____ Become a caretaker (rescuer) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming overprotective</li> <li>• Taking responsibility for other’s feelings (becoming overly responsible)</li> <li>• Making decisions for others</li> <li>• Giving unsolicited advice</li> <li>• Trying to prevent other’s failure</li> <li>• Becoming possessive (selfish)</li> <li>• Becoming a busybody (becoming too involved in other’s affairs)</li> <li>• Becoming preachy (lecturing others when they haven’t asked for your advice)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trying to find someone who needs me and who I can rescue</li> <li>• Nagging (continually reminding someone of something they need to do when they already know)</li> <li>• Talking too much and listening poorly</li> </ul> <p><b>____ Become too intense (overly serious) by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming stoical (unemotional)</li> <li>• Having trouble dealing with feelings</li> <li>• Becoming overly analytical</li> <li>• Becoming stern (solemn or formal)</li> <li>• Lacking joy for life</li> <li>• Not being fun to be with</li> </ul>
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