



The \$1000 Big Mac

by Matt T.

Growing up, I loved Big Macs. I can still picture my brother and his girlfriend rattling off that famous jingle — “two all beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, on a sesame seed bun” — both forward and backward, just to win free Big Macs. It’s a good memory.

Even today, I still enjoy having a Big Mac every so often. But let’s be honest: I’d never pay \$1,000 for one. Why would anyone? It’s not that a Big Mac is bad. It’s just not worth \$1,000.

I’ve found this is actually a great analogy for understanding my addiction — and for helping the people I sponsor in recovery. It’s easy to label that first drink, that hit, that sexual high as simply *bad* or *evil*, and tell myself that’s why I shouldn’t do it. But that never stuck very well for me. What’s helped me far more is to see it as a **trade-off**.

There’s nothing wrong with a Big Mac in moderation. But paying \$1,000 for it? That’s just a terrible deal. It’s the same with my addiction. Whenever I acted out, I was buying that momentary high — that escape or thrill — for a ridiculously high price. And it wasn’t just \$1,000. It cost me peace of mind, wrecked my sense of self, damaged my relationships, fueled my depression, drained my energy, and sometimes even risked my freedom.

In the end, it’s simply not worth it. That Big Mac might taste good for a few minutes, but the price I pay as an addict is devastating. Remembering this — that it’s not about something being inherently “bad,” but about how much it truly costs me — helps me keep my priorities clear. It helps me stay sober, live honestly, and keep building a life I don’t need to escape from.