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SMOKIN'!

Care for a cigarette?

Ask anyone that's a fan of old movies who they think was "cool" on screen, or who had an incredibly unforgettable presence, and chances are you'll get an answer that might include John Wayne, James Dean, Sean Connery as James Bond, Humphrey Bogart, or any member of the 1960's "rat pack," including Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., and the others.

The idea of a the strong, tough male was epitomized in these movies, acted out by the silent, brooding players who either wore cowboy boots, jeans and a white t-shirt, or amazingly crisp tuxedos. Men wanted to be them, and women wanted to be with them.

And when it comes to most movies and television series of the 1960's, there's one thing that these characters all seemed to have in common – they all smoked, and frequently. When they wanted to look pensive or thoughtful, or deep and silent, the men in particular would take a step back, slide a cigarette between their lips, and light up.

Smoking and sex appeal were soon linked, and audiences responded, both men and women alike. Who can't recall the unforgettable final scene in the American movie classic "Grease," where the formerly squeaky-clean character Sandy finally got in touch with her sexy side, suddenly appearing in black spandex pants, huge hoop earrings, and teased hair – and a cigarette between her lips.

Marlene Dietrich, inarguably one of the most legendary film actresses to have ever graced the screen, was known for her smoking, as was Audrey Hepburn, who made the cigarette holder a popular fashion accessory after her role in "Breakfast at Tiffany's."

Yes, these sexy film stars and the characters they portrayed were no doubt instrumental in propelling cigarette and cigar smoking into not just the public eyes, but into their thoughts and perceptions of what is sexy and attractive.

And in the 1960s in particular, smoking was seen as tough and rebellious, and just plain cool. Probably no one embodied the stereotypical rebellious teenager better than the late actor James Dean, whose portrayal of troubled high school kid Jim Stark in "Rebel Without a Cause" is still celebrated today, some fifty years later. As did James Dean, most actors and their characters who played the hip, cool, rebellious teen smoked openly and incessantly, as just another way to rebel against the more straight-laced and strict generation of their parents and grandparents.

Smoking as a diet aid.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the adage "thin is in" began to really take root, and suddenly everyone wanted to be as rail thin as the models and TV stars they saw every day. Icons like Twiggy and Jerry Hall made young girls envious of their height and lean looks.

Somewhere along the way, it became a hot rumor that smoking helped you stay thin, and suddenly teen girls were lighting up just as much as their male counterparts. This wasn't a rebellious act on their part, they simply felt it was the easiest way to substitute food and to keep their weight down. It also was a way to keep their hands busy when they felt an urge to snack.

Some studies have revealed that teenage girls with an obsession for models and pop stars are four times more likely to take up smoking, as a way to keep their tiny figures or to emulate their idols who usually make no attempts to hide their own smoking.

Time to quit.

If you grew up in the era of the '60s and were influenced by what you saw on the silver screen, or, for whatever reason took up smoking at some time in your life, you're no doubt ready to quit – after all, that's what this book is all about and why you are reading it now.

And that's commendable. In a later section we'll talk in more detail about the dangers associated with smoking, but for now, we might do well to consider just how it was that smoking began, since we know it wasn't the actors of the golden era of cinema who invented it. Just where and how did the practice evolve? How long has it been around? Let's discuss those questions next.

THE HISTORY OF SMOKING

Did you know that tobacco is native only to the continent of North America? It's thought by most that smoking tobacco was introduced to the Europeans by Columbus, who learned the practice from Native Americans.

Does this mean that Native Americans are then to blame for the problems we have today with smoking? Far from it. The practice of smoking refers to the inhaling of the fumes of any burning plant material; this can include plants such as marijuana or hashish.

The earliest histories of smoking date back to as early as 5000 B.C., and these records cover just about every major cultural group in the world. The smoking of cannabis in India has been recorded as early as 4000 B.C.

Smoke as part of religion.

Fire, burning items, and the resultant smoke have long had religious symbolism. Virtually every form of religion, both ancient and even modern, has attached some type of symbolism or mysticism to fire and smoke.

Ancient civilizations, such as the Babylonians, Indians and Chinese, burnt incense as a part of religious rituals, as did the Israelites and the later Catholic and Orthodox Christian churches. In Ancient Greece, smoke was used as healing practice, and the Oracle of Delphi made prophecies while intoxicated by inhaling natural gases from a natural bore hole. The Greek historian Herodotos also wrote that the Scythians used cannabis for ritual purposes and, to some degree, pleasure.

Because fire destroys things completely, and was also so necessary for human survival – keeping us warm, cooking our food, and scaring away predators – it's no wonder that it has such deep religious significance or that it was so enthralling especially to primitive peoples.

It may be from these religious rituals that the smoke from fires began to be inhaled by people, no doubt as a way of increasing the religious experience or to take a more personal part in it.

Additionally, because the smoke from some plants provided hallucinogenic experiences, these too were no doubt used to increase the religious experience.

Reports from the first European explorers and conquistadors to reach the Americas tell of rituals where native priests smoked themselves into such high degrees of intoxication that it is unlikely that the rituals were limited to just tobacco.

Smoking as pleasure.

Virtually any type of smoke from plants produces a psychotropic or mood-altering quality. It's no wonder then that smoking as a religious experience soon grew into smoking for relaxation and recreation.

Sharing a smoking experience no doubt became common. The oldest forms of smoking used a pipe, and even today many people are familiar with the Native American "peace pipe," or tobacco-filled pipe that was passed on to strangers as a welcoming gesture. It was also not unusual for the men of the nation to share a pipe during get-togethers or summits, when going to meet representatives of another nation, or as a way to relax after games or a hunt.

By the time Europeans arrived in the Americas in the late 15th century there was widespread use of tobacco smoking as a recreational activity. At the banquets of Aztec nobles, the meal would commence by passing out fragrant flowers and smoking tubes for the dinner guests. At the end of the feast, which would last all night, the remaining flowers, smoking tubes and food would be given as a kind of alms to old and poor people who had been invited to witness the social occasion, or it would be given as a reward to the servants.

Spreading to Europe and the world.

After the European exploration and subsequent colonization of the Americas in the 16th century, the smoking, cultivation and trading of tobacco quickly spread to all corners of the globe. By the mid-17th century every major civilization had been introduced to tobacco smoking.

According to Wikipedia, "a Frenchman named Jean Nicot (from whose name the word nicotine is derived) introduced tobacco to France in 1560. From France tobacco spread to England. The first report of a smoking Englishman is of a sailor in Bristol in 1556, seen "emitting smoke from his nostrils". Like tea, coffee and opium, tobacco was just one of many intoxicants that was originally used as a form of medicine.

Cannabis smoking was common in the Middle East before the arrival of tobacco, and was early on a common social activity that centered around the type of water pipe called a hookah. The pipes would often have several tubes from which more than one person could smoke at a time, or the nozzle would be passed around in the many smoking houses that functioned as social hubs in major centers of Muslim culture like Constantinople, Baghdad and Cairo. Smoking, especially after the introduction of tobacco, was an essential component of Muslim society and culture and became integrated with important traditions like weddings, funerals and was expressed in architecture, clothing, literature and poetry.

There is reference to tobacco in a Persian poem dating from before 1536. The next reliable eyewitness account of tobacco smoking is by a Spanish envoy in 1617, but by this time the practice was already deeply ingrained in Persian society. The water pipe called qalyan (or hookah) most likely originated in India, but it was in Safavid dynasty Persia that it became a refined smoking tool.

The pipes of the rich were made of finely crafted glass and precious metals while common people used coconuts with bamboo tubing, and these were used to smoke cannabis before the arrival of tobacco. The two substances in combination proved very popular and were also smoked in normal "dry" pipes, but the water pipe remained the most common smoking tool until the introduction of the cigarette in the 20th century.

Foreign visitors to the region often remarked that smoking was immensely popular among Persians; during Ramadan, the Muslim period of fasting when no food was to be eaten while the sun was up, among the first thing many Persians did after sunset was to light their pipes. Both sexes smoked, but for women it was a private affair enjoyed in the seclusion of private homes. In the 19th century Iran was one of the world's largest tobacco exporters and the habit had by then become something considered a national Iranian trait.

After the European discovery of the Americas, tobacco was spread to Asia, first by Spanish and Portuguese sailors and later by the Dutch and English. Spain and Portugal were active in Central and South America, where cigarettes and cigars were the smoking tools of choice, and their sailors

smoked mostly cigars. The English and Dutch had contact with the pipe smoking natives of North America, and took over their habits. While the southern Europeans began smoking earlier, it was the long-stemmed pipes of the northerners that became popular in East and Southeast Asia. Tobacco smoking arrived through expatriates in the Philippines and was introduced as early as the 1570s.

By the early 1600s the kiseru, a long-stemmed Japanese pipe inspired by Dutch clay pipes, was common enough to be mentioned in Buddhist text books for children. The practice of tobacco smoking evolved as a part of the Japanese tea ceremony by employing many of the traditional objects used to burn incense, for tobacco smoking. The kō-bon (the incense tray) became the tabako-bon, the incense burner evolved into a pot for tobacco embers and the incense pot became an ash tray.

During the Edo period weapons were frequently used as objects with which one could flaunt ones wealth and social status. Since only samurai were allowed to carry weapons, an elaborate kiseru slung from the waist would serve a similar purpose. After the Meiji restoration and the abolishment of the caste system, many craftsmen who previously had worked on decorating swords moved on to designing kiserus and buckles for tobacco pouches. Though mass-production of cigarettes began in the late 19th century, it was not until after World War II that the kiseru went of out style and became an object of tradition and relative obscurity.

In India.

Cannabis smoking in India has been known at least since 2000 BC and is first mentioned in the Atharvaveda which dates back a few hundred years BC.

Fumigation (dhupa) and fire offerings (homa) are prescribed in the Ayurveda for medical purposes and have been practiced for at least 3,000 years, while smoking, dhumapana (literally "drinking smoke"), has been practiced for at least 2,000 years.

Fumigation and fire offerings have been performed with various substances, including clarified butter (ghee), fish offal, dried snake skins and various pastes molded around incense sticks and lit to spread the smoke over wide areas. The practice of inhaling smoke has been employed as a remedy for many different ailments and has not been limited to just cannabis, but also various plants and medicinal concoctions, and is also recommended to be performed daily to promote general health.

Before modern times, smoking was done using pipes with stems of various lengths or chillums. Today dhumapana has been replaced almost entirely with cigarette smoking, but both dhupa and homa are still practiced. Beedi, a type of handrolled herbal cigarette consisting of cloves, ground betel nut, and tobacco, usually with rather low proportion of tobacco, is a modern descendant of the historical dhumapana.

In Indonesia, a specific type of cigarette which includes cloves called kretek was invented in the early 1880s as a way of delivering the therapeutic properties of clove oil, or eugenol, to the lungs. It quickly became a popular cough remedy and in the early 20th century kretek began to be marketed as a pre-rolled cigarette (rather than being mixed and rolled by consumers). In the 1960s and 70s, kretek took on the form of a national symbol, with tax breaks compared to "white" cigarettes and the production began to shift from traditional hand-rolling to machine-rolling.

The industrial method exceeded the hand-rolled type in numbers in the mid-1980s and today kretek dominates up to 90% of the Indonesian cigarette market. The production is one of the largest sources of income for the Indonesian government and the production, which is spread out on some 500 independent manufacturers, employs some 180,000 people directly and over 10 million indirectly.

Spread to Africa.

Cannabis smoking was introduced to Sub-Saharan Africa through Ethiopia and the east African coast by either Indian or Arab traders in the 13th century or earlier and spread on the same trade routes as those that carried coffee, which originated in the highlands of Ethiopia.

It was smoked in calabash water pipes with terracotta smoking bowls, apparently an Ethiopian invention which was later conveyed to eastern, southern and central Africa.

Tobacco was introduced around 1600 by French merchants in what today is modern-day Gambia and Senegal. At the same time caravans from Morocco brought tobacco to the areas around Timbuktu and the Portuguese brought the commodity (and the plant) to southern Africa, establishing the popularity of tobacco throughout all of Africa by the 1650s.

Both imported tobacco and tobacco pipes became prized and valuable trading goods and were both quickly absorbed into African cultural traditions, rituals and politics. A rich artistic tradition of decorated pipes of wood, ceramics

and, eventually, metal, developed and spawned an endless variety of themes and motifs of all shapes and sizes.

Tobacco and cannabis were used, much like elsewhere in the world, to confirm social relations, but also created entirely new ones. In what is today Congo, a society called Bena Diemba ("People of Cannabis") was organized in the late 19th century in Lubuko ("The Land of Friendship").

The Bena Diemba were collectivist pacifists who rejected alcohol and herbal medicines in favor of cannabis, and practiced ritual nudity, shaved their heads and bodies to break with their former social identities. They built large communal dwellings around a central plaza where cannabis would be smoked by the entire community through enormous water pipes made from gourds.

Certain other herbs have been and still are smoked by certain African communities. Tabwa shamans smoke lubowe (*Amaranthus dubius*), a plant that is said to aid the shamans in seeing invisible spirit sorcerers, even though there are no reports of the substance being hallucinogenic. Some groups, such as the Fang of Gabon consume eboga (*Tabernanthe iboga*), a mind-altering drug in religious rituals.

In modern Africa, smoking is in most areas considered to be modern and an expression of modernity, and many of the strong adverse opinions that prevail in the West receive much less attention.

What does this all mean?

That interesting and exhaustive history of smoking came from Wikipedia; but something that anyone studying it should remember – just because this practice has been around for centuries doesn't mean that the dangers aren't real. It's easy to say "Well, people have smoked for centuries, so what's the harm?"

But we know this would be very shortsighted. After all, many primitive people practiced a lot of things that we've gotten past – human sacrifice, bloodletting, and so on. And didn't primitive people believe that solar and lunar eclipses were caused because the gods were angry at them? Columbus wanted to set sail because he wanted to prove that the world wasn't flat, the way so many of his contemporaries believed.

Today of course we understand so many more things about nature, the earth, the solar system, and our own bodies. We know far more about

nutrition and the effect that drugs can have on our health than previous generations knew.

I'm quite sure that everyone now realizes that smoking is damaging to our health (doesn't it tell us that on every box now?) but many people just refuse to think about that, or fail to realize the extent of the damage that can be caused to their overall wellbeing and fitness.

Let's address now some of the health issues that we may have to contend with if we continue with this smoking habit.

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JUST HOW DAMAGING IS IT?

If you knew that someone was going to break into your home this evening, what would you do? You might call the police, but what if they couldn't come out and stand guard? Wouldn't you do that instead – keep a watch, with all your lights on, the doors and windows locked, and maybe a trusty baseball bat or golf club in your hand? No one is going to hurt you or your family, at least not without a fight!

It may be a somewhat simplistic or overly dramatic illustration, but you probably get the point. Protecting yourself and your family from harm is something that usually comes naturally to most of us. We teach our children to look both ways when crossing the street and to avoid talking to strangers, most people wear their seat belts and make sure their doors and windows are locked at night.

So why is it then that this protective mentality seems to go right out the window when it comes to the practice of smoking? This habit harms not only the person who engages in it, but all those around who are exposed to second-hand smoke.

But how bad is it, really? What kind of effect does it have on a person?

Here are some important facts and statistics about smoking:

The #1 killer.

Smoking has been identified as the #1 preventable killer worldwide. What this means is that of all the deaths around the world that could somehow be prevented, smoking is the most common. So of all the changes that a person could make to improve and protect their health – from losing weight, watching their diet, exercising, getting their shots, and so on – smoking is at the head of the list.

This is important to remember because of course there will always be diseases and illnesses, and many of them are simply genetic or unavoidable for whatever other reason. But as we just said a moment ago, if you knew someone was coming to harm you or your family, you'd do everything in your power to stop them. When it comes to smoking, however, people often let the practice right into their homes without any thought of it being the unwelcome intruder that it is - doing nothing but harm to them and their families.

Smoking in numbers.

Smoking-related diseases claim an estimated 438,000 American lives each year, including those affected indirectly, such as babies born prematurely due to prenatal maternal smoking and victims of "secondhand" exposure to tobacco's carcinogens. That means that almost half a million Americans alone die every year from smoking related diseases and causes. That's half the population of Rhode Island! Imagine half a state dying every year, from something that could be prevented! How bad is that?

Smoking costs the United States over \$167 billion each year in health-care costs including \$92 billion in mortality-related productivity losses and \$75 billion in direct medical expenditures, or an average of \$3,702 per adult smoker.

Ask yourself a quick question – do you have a spare \$3,702 in your pocket? Or your bank account? that you could easily and readily give up right now? And yet that's the cost every year for every smoker.

About 8.6 million people in the U.S. have at least one serious illness caused by smoking. That means that for every person who dies of a smoking-related disease, there are 20 more people who suffer from at least one serious illness associated with smoking.

So right now, think of 20 people you know. If you don't have 20 close friends or family members, think of 20 people where you work. Write down their names and really picture their faces. Now imagine that all these people are being made incredibly sick because of your smoking. This isn't a scare tactic; this is real.

Smoking is responsible for approximately 90% of lung cancer deaths, and over 80% of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases (COPD), such as emphysema and bronchitis. These conditions are extremely serious; emphysema is marked by a loss of elasticity of the structures of the lung and its surrounding structures. It's obviously very necessary for the lungs to be able to expand and



contract; imagine a rubber band that has lost its elasticity – it would be useless! In the same way, these incredibly serious lung diseases usually lead to the need to a transplant or even to death.

The makeup of cigarettes.

Cigarettes today are made up of more than just tobacco. Additional chemicals are usually mixed in to make the cigarette more addictive. As a matter of fact, there are over 599 additives to cigarettes, however, because the substance is burned and burning changes the chemical compound of any substance, there are over 4,000 chemical compounds that are created by cigarette smoking.

Carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrogen cyanide, formaldehyde, and ammonia are all present in cigarette smoke. Forty-three known carcinogens are in mainstream smoke, side stream smoke, or both.

Notice how many of the ingredients in cigarettes are used to make other common household objects, and then ask yourself if you would care to ingest any of these:

Mothballs contain naphthalenes, also found in cigarettes. This proven poison causes reproductive and brain breakdown.

The cadmium in batteries is extremely poisonous when found in cigarettes and results in kidney damage.

Tar is an ingredient found in roads and tires as well as cigarettes. A two pack a day smoker inhales one gram of tar a day. That is a quart of thick, gooey tar inhaled a year.

The toluene in glue and cigarettes is a toxic substance that produces euphoria and irritation of the air ways and lungs.

The arsenic used to kill rats is also found in cigarettes. It causes irritated lungs, abnormal heart beat, and a score of other symptoms.

Acetone is an ingredient found in nail polish remover as well as cigarettes. It is a harsh chemical which irritates your lungs and can lead to cancer.

The toxic phenol found in plastics and cigarettes can cause kidney and liver damage and reduced blood pressure, resulting in severe sickness and possibly death.

The ammonia in bleach speeds the delivery of nicotine to smokers and changes the reading of tar in cigarettes, making it seem lower.

So ask yourself, do you care to inhale the same ingredients found in nail polish remover, melted plastic, rat poison, batteries, and mothballs? And yet those are the same ingredients in every cigarette, not to mention tar, ammonia, nicotine, and other poisons.

What cigarettes actually harm.

Many people understand that cigarettes cause untold harm to the lungs and can connect cigarettes with lung cancer somewhat easily. But is this the only major disease caused by cigarette smoking?

Far from it. The poisons we've just mentioned in cigarettes spread quickly through the body and are absorbed into the bloodstream, traveling to virtually every pore, every cell.

Because these poisons settle in the bloodstream, they have a huge effect on the cardiovascular system, and smoking is thought to be one of the leading causes of heart attacks.

Incidence of impotence is approximately 85% higher in male smokers compared to non-smokers, and it is a key cause of erectile dysfunction (ED). Smoking causes impotence because it promotes arterial narrowing.

Other diseases linked to smoking tobacco cigarettes include:

- Cancer of the kidneys**
- Cancer of the larynx**
- Cancer of the head and neck**
- Breast cancer**
- Liver cancer**
- Cervical cancer**
- Strokes**
- Peripheral vascular disease**
- Bronchitis**
- Cataracts**
- Cognitive dysfunction**

There is also some evidence to suggest a connection between smoking and leukemia, early onset of Alzheimer's, and birth defects in children born to women who smoke while pregnant.

The cost in dollars and cents.

Cigarette smoking is also one of the most costly habits a person can have, and there are many on line calculators to show you just how much you spend per day, per week, and per year on smoking.

For example, notice the following numbers, assuming that cigarettes are \$3.50 per pack (U.S. dollars):

Cigarettes smoked per day	Money spent per week	Money spent per month	Money spent per year
6 (1/2 pack)	\$7.35	\$31.50	\$383.25
12 (pack)	\$14.70	\$62.10	\$766.50
24 (2 packs)	\$29.40	\$125.10	\$1,532.10

Again, think of all those dollars that could be better spent in reducing your mortgage or car payment, being put toward credit cards or your children's college fund, or just spending it on something that would be a lot more fun than just having it go up in smoke.

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Natural ways to quit.

So, hopefully, by now you are ready to walk away from your cigarettes for good. Chances are, you've probably tried to quit in the past. But like most smokers, you find yourself drawn back again and again to that "old friend," the cigarette.

There are many ways that your doctor or even a hypno-therapist can help you quit, but maybe you're not ready to go that route just yet. Here are some things you can do to help you quit on your own – and be successful this time?

Have you made up your mind yet? I just want to remind you here, that you'll never quit until YOU decide to do it.

Recognize it's a habit.

One of the reasons it's so hard to walk away from cigarette smoking is because it is a physical habit, and "old habits die hard" i.e. they are hard to break. For example, one woman spoke of how her mother always taught her to turn the lights out when leaving a room. If she didn't do this, her mother would make her go back and do it, and eventually she learned to just automatically reach for the light switch whenever she walked out of a room. Except that she would do that even when at work, in a public restroom, or when other people were still in the room! She would also often find herself reaching for the light switch even when the lights were already off.

This is obviously because this habit of reaching out when walking out of a room was so ingrained in her that there was no conscious thought on her part as to what she was doing. It's almost as if her arm was acting on its own, just grabbing at the switch whether she wanted it to or not.

So with smoking, you need to recognize how very difficult it is to just simply drop a physical habit that's been so ingrained in you. Think about the common times throughout the day when you reach for a cigarette without thinking about it, such as after eating, when driving to work in the morning, or even after sex. Chances are it's not that you really want that cigarette, you're just reacting to your habit.

It would be helpful right now to take out a sheet of paper and actually write out those times as a list. Also mention any social occasions when you find yourself lighting up, such as the weekly poker game with the guys or on Fridays when the girls go out for martinis. Leave nothing out.

Now that you've made a list, think of what things you can do to get yourself away from that immediate habit of reaching for a cigarette. For example, after eating, try to immediately get up from the table rather than linger with your coffee. If this is the time you spend with your spouse or family just talking, perhaps try going to another room. You'd be surprised how just a change of scenery can help break that habit.

If you light up in the car on the way to work, have something else to occupy your mind. Obviously you can't keep your hands busy in the car, but try a book on tape. If books aren't your thing, rent a tape of your favorite comedian. Keeping your mind occupied is the first step toward keeping your hands busy as well.

Go through your list of times when cigarettes are just a natural reaction and write out other things you can do to get away from that situation, keep your hands busy, or distract yourself. Think of magazines you can read, music to listen to, or chores that can be done around the house during some downtime.

Social occasions.

One of the most difficult times you'll encounter as you are in the process of quitting is when you're out with your friends and either they're smoking, or you're someplace that's filled with smoke such as a bar, restaurant, or nightclub. What to do?

Actually it's a good idea to enlist your friends' help at this point. Tell them honestly about your efforts to quit smoking, and how difficult it is to be around other people that are smoking. You're not asking them to quit too – although if they wanted to, that would be great for their health and you could definitely be there to help each other! But you can ask them to respect your decision as much as possible. Ask if they could refrain from lighting up when you're around. If they need to smoke, tell them to let you know and you can step out for a few minutes.

Perhaps your group would consider sitting in the non-smoking section of a restaurant, or would find a nightclub or bar with a non-smoking section.

When it comes to times like poker night or other occasions when it's just assumed that everyone else can relax and light up if they want, you may need to make some serious decisions. If this is at someone else's house, remember that you can certainly ask that these now be smoke-free, but it's not up to you to simply demand that this happen.

Unless of course you're the host or hostess of these events. If that is the case, it would be as well to let your guests know that your house is now smoke-free, and that they will need to go outside on the porch or balcony if they need to light up.

Expect some resistance, in fact, you can probably expect a lot of resistance from longtime smokers who are just so used to being able to kick back with a cigarette or cigar anywhere or anytime. Some friends may even begin avoiding you, or avoiding these events.

You may need to make some hard decisions here. Which is more important to you? your health and the health of your family, or this so-called friend? Remember, a real friend is someone who supports you in things you're trying to do that are good for you, so a real friend, no matter how long they've been smoking, will respect your decision and your home.

You might now need to think about what things you do socially and the places you go, and try to avoid those where everybody else is smoking. Consider switching nightclubs or bars, as we've mentioned, or finding other things to do. Drinking and smoking seem to just go hand-in-hand, and particularly when you're surrounded by other people doing the same, it becomes more of a problem for you.

However people are becoming more used to 'smoke free' public places as authorities start to take heed of the mounting evidence of the health risks and put more restrictions in place.

Exercising.

There cannot be enough said about the importance and the benefits of exercise when you're trying to quit smoking.

Exercise is a benefit for many reasons. One, it gets you out of situations where you're tempted to light up. As we said, if you're used to sitting around after dinner with a smoke, now is the time to start walking around the block. If you're used to having one last drag before you go to bed, make it a point

to do a household chore instead, such as washing dishes, putting away laundry, giving the bathroom a quick scrub, or something else that won't wear you out but that will keep you busy.

Another benefit of exercise is that it increases your lung capacity and blood flow. One of the functions of our blood is to bring nourishment to the cells of the body, but to also take away waste matter such as dead cells or other toxins.

Increased blood flow means that toxins are being flushed out of your system on a more regular basis. These poisons and addictive elements of cigarettes linger in your body long after your last smoke, so by exercising and increasing your blood circulation, you can get them out of your system much quicker.

Also, many people are hesitant to stop smoking because they're afraid of gaining weight. It is true that nicotine seems to speed up your metabolism, and then your metabolism naturally slows when you stop smoking. And of course there are the cravings! Filling up on food during times when you had previously smoked is a surefire way to add those extra pounds.

Exercise helps with this because it can get you out of the house and away from those tempting treats, and because it can help get your metabolism back to where it should be. The increased physical activity will of course help to keep your weight manageable, and therefore you'll be less likely to go back to cigarettes.

Watch your diet and nutrition.

Again, it's so tempting to reach for treats to replace those old friends. This can be a real downfall to anyone who's trying to quit, especially when the foods they start reaching for are loaded with fat and calories – salt chips, pretzels, popcorn, and sugary foods such as cookies and cupcakes are not going to do your health any more good than those cigarettes did!

So what is the solution? It's absolutely crucial at this point to watch what you eat when you're trying to quit. You can actually make these cravings work for you by loading up on healthy alternatives.

Make a list of foods you can keep around the house that will be a good "filler" for when you start craving again. Keep this list handy and make sure that your refrigerator or cupboards are always well-stocked.

Your list might include:

- Fruits of all kinds, but especially apples, pears, kiwi, watermelon, and citrus fruits. These foods are high in water content, which will help keep you feeling full.
- Vegetables you can eat plain, such as carrots or celery. Also consider having some low-fat or low-cal options for dips, such as Ranch salad dressing or hummus, and have broccoli, cauliflower, or other bite-size veggies.
- Sunflower seeds are a great filler and are also crunchy.
- Dried fruits, such as raisins, dried bananas, cranberries or apricots.
- Trail mix, either ready-made or something you've mixed yourself – just mix together peanuts, raisins, a few shreds of coconut, sunflower seeds, and anything else that will give you something crunchy and sweet together.
- Reduced-calorie popcorn, either for the microwave, or you might consider buying a small air popper. These are usually very inexpensive and can sit on the counter.

You might also want to rediscover some healthy meals and side dishes that will keep you in the best shape. For example, have a salad with every dinner. Water-based soups are very filling and nutritious. Switch your white bread to whole grain or whole wheat. Have eggs and toast for breakfast rather than that sugary pastry or muffin.

By being careful of what you eat and snack on, not only will you avoid any excess weight gain but you will just plain feel better all over, and this will only help encourage you to keep up with your new healthy habit of not smoking. So get out pen and paper and start on that list right now. Personalize it with your own preferences and choices, but make sure your snack and meal items are healthy and natural.

Make it a new habit to pack these things to have with you during the day. If you have a refrigerator at work, stock it with oranges and apples, and keep some trail mix in a desk drawer.

Try some new foods.

Many people who have smoked for years complain that foods just don't taste very good anymore, and this is no doubt because of the damage that cigarette smoke has done to their tongue and the inside of their mouths. Taste buds can get ruined by inhaling this smoke, and so of course foods are going to taste more bland. (You'll be amazed at just how good food will taste after you've kicked the smoking habit. It's worthwhile giving up smoking just so you can get the full flavor of food again.)

You need to resist the urge to compensate for this by adding salt and other unhealthy ingredients to your food. Instead, try some dishes that are hot and spicy, or that are new and exotic.

For example, add some hot sauce to a vegetarian chili dish, or to tacos. Try sushi, and add a dab of wasabi or ginger.

You may even need to step outside of your comfort zone, so to speak, and experiment with flavors that you've never tried before. Is there an Indian or Mediterranean restaurant nearby that you've never been to? How about Thai or Cantonese dishes? Or if you love Chinese food, ask that they prepare it a bit more spicy.

By trying these new things, you can give your taste bud a "zing" without sacrificing your health.

Other natural solutions.

When you're attempting to quit smoking, it's a good idea to keep drinking plenty of water and to keep yourself hydrated at all times. Smoking has constricted your blood vessels and caused untold damage to your circulatory system; plenty of water is the only way to fix this.

Additionally, smoking dries out every part of your body, since you can't get adequate oxygen to every part of your system. Water helps to repair this damage by re-hydrating your cells.

And this hydration helps to get toxins out of your body as quickly as possible. As we mentioned, the poisons and chemicals that made you crave cigarettes are still present in your system long after your last cigarette, so generous amounts of water will speed along the process of flushing out these wastes and conquering your cravings.

It's also recommended that you try Epsom salt baths, as the salt is said to draw the tar and nicotine from your system.

Yes, chewing gum is also very effective when you're trying to quit. Your mouth is busy and occupied, and so less likely to want a cigarette.

Also, try flavored gums such as hot cinnamon or peppermint. The extra zing will help cut down on the lingering taste of tobacco, and again will give your mouth a new and interesting flavor. Intensely hot breath mints may also do the trick! Altoids are a popular choice for many recovering smokers.

And many people report good results by chewing mint leaves the way you would gum. This is an all-natural remedy that not only keeps your mouth busy, it keeps your breath fresh as well!

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THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF SMOKING CESSATION.

Smoking is not just about a physical craving, virtually any smoker will tell you that. It's something of a stress reliever as well. It seems to calm and relax.

When someone doesn't learn good coping skills for their anxieties and concerns and uses cigarettes to calm them down, they then face the double problem of not only dealing with these anxieties when they quit, but in trying to deal with their incessant cravings, which only add to their restlessness.

Additionally, many people who begin smoking while still in school do so to try to be "cool" and to fit in with a certain crowd, and as we mentioned at the beginning, unfortunately many people buy into this thinking that when you smoke, you're cool or tough or to be admired.

So how does one get past these very strong holds that cigarettes have on them?

Trying to look cool.

If you are smoking because you think it looks cool or tough, it may be time to rethink your priorities.

Ask yourself what other things you thought in school about people, relationships, your goals in life, and what you felt was important. How much have you changed since you were a teenager? Staying out late was probably a daily pursuit; chances are, you now make it a plan to get a good night's sleep to get to work on time. You may have traded your "drinking buddies" for a family and children. That convertible or muscle car you lusted after may still be desirable, but chances are you've set aside that dream for something a bit more safe and reliable.

So it is with smoking. What makes you think people are “cool” or desirable friends today? What personality traits do you admire?

If you’re reading this book, that means you’ve already made a statement about how health and good habits are important to you, so maybe it’s time to think about how this translates into your own habits as well. Who do you look up to now, that unemployed dreamer or the person who works hard and is physically fit and active?

You may need to give some hard and fast thought to your friends now as well. Again, a real friend is someone who supports you and respects you and your decisions; if you have friends who smoke, they may not be ready to quit themselves, but what is their reaction to your decision? If they’re encouraging you to keep on smoking so that they don’t feel left out or don’t feel bad about their decision to keep smoking, is this person really a friend to you?

As an adult, it’s up to you to make a conscious choice about what you respect and admire, and about what type of person you want to be as an adult. A messy room and rowdy behavior may have been funny when you were a teenager, but few adults find that admirable. So, lighting up may have made you part of the “in” crowd or may have seemed tough and admirable when you were a child, but think seriously about it now as an adult. There’s nothing cool about cancer, about being in an iron lung, about not being able to laugh without hacking up pieces of your lungs, and about making the people around you sick.

Make a list.

It might be a good idea right now to make a list of all the things you have to be proud of and that make you “cool” and tough. The fact that you’re trying to quit smoking should be at the top of that list! What about just going to work every day, or taking care of the house, the kids, your parents, and so on? Do you pay your bills? Are you honest, hardworking, do you care about other people? Are you polite to strangers and people like the waiter or waitress? Do you have a good sense of humor, are you a good parent or son or daughter? Do you control your temper and refuse to gossip about people? Are you loyal, do you take care of animals? Are you active in a church, or a civic or volunteer group? Are you just fun to be around?

By realizing all the reasons you have right now to be proud and to have a good self-image, you won't need to rely on silly stereotypes of what ignorant people glamorize, and of what you thought was great when you were young and immature.

Controlling your emotions when quitting.

There is a scientific basis for feeling that smoking relaxes and calms you. Nicotine has this affect on you physically, and it's true that if your hands are busy, you're less likely to be anxious. The body can utilize activity to work off nervous tension.

If you've used smoking to alleviate anxiety, boredom, tension, or some other negative emotion, it's time to face these things head-on and learn new, healthier ways of coping. Here are some tips:

Make a plan.

You're done eating dinner and are suddenly overwhelmed with exhaustion from your day at work or dealing with the kids. Normally you would light up a cigarette while you take a few minutes to relax. Now that you want to quit, what will you do?

Or, you're heading into the office and have a few minutes in the car before you get there. You're anxious about your job – as everyone is – and usually have a cigarette on the way. Now what?

Go back to the list you made previously about where and when you light up and see how many times you've been smoking to relieve anxiety, boredom, frustration, or any other negative emotions. Now think about what you can do to get around these things while quitting.

For example, after dinner you'll go for that walk, or call a friend, read a few pages of your favorite novel, or soak in a hot bath. On the way to work, you'll use this time to mentally prepare yourself for the day – by being more prepared, you're less likely to be stressed.

Make a list.

What are some stress-relieving things that you enjoy doing or may be interested in learning? How about yoga or meditation? What are some

hobbies that maybe you've abandoned that you once enjoyed, such as painting, reading, knitting, needlepoint, carpentry, working on car engines, model building, scrapbooks, making your own jewelry, and the like?

Get some paper and a pen right now and write out all the things you can do to help you get through the times of tension and boredom that are just part of everyday life, and that you know are going to be aggravated when you stop smoking.

And don't worry about what other people might think of these things, such as if you want to take up knitting or model building. This is for you and your goals, not for other people to approve or disapprove of.

Reward yourself.

Quitting smoking is probably one of the hardest undertakings that anyone has or ever will attempt. Many people report that giving up cigarettes has been harder on them than giving up illegal drugs!

So when you have success in your program, it's important that you allow yourself some rewards along the way, to remind yourself of your accomplishment and to spur you to continue on.

While you have your pen and paper out, make a list of ways you can reward yourself, and be sure you include affordable ways and those that are a bit more indulgent as well. Correlate these to goals you have for smoking cessation.

For example, the first week is usually the hardest, so do something small every day. Your first full day without a cigarette, pick up a copy of a favorite magazine. On day two, rent a video, and so on.

After two weeks without smoking, get a long massage. After a month, buy yourself that new jacket you've had your eyes on.

By continuing to reward yourself you'll also realize why you have new reason to feel proud of yourself and your self-esteem will grow; this in turn will help with those negative emotions you're trying to control as well.

Controlling stress.

Stress is one of the leading precursors to smoking, and one of the most common reasons why people who've quit smoking, get back to it. Many report that they picked up cigarettes again during things such as exams, rushed projects at work, bad times in their marriage, and so on.

To help you in this regard, the first thing you can do is mentally prepare yourself for stressful situations. Many people undergoing trials often feel as if they're the only ones experiencing this, while everyone else's marriage is fine, everyone else is handling the workload at the office, and so on.

Stressful situations are part of our modern-day life, and there's virtually no one without them, so tell yourself that you're not alone and that these aren't unusual circumstances.

You can also make note of some more helpful ways to cope with your stress, and one is to deal with the situation directly rather than simply trying to bottle things up. For example, if you and your spouse are having serious problems, it may be time to call a marriage counselor. If you feel crushed under your responsibilities at the office, speak frankly to your boss or manager, and let him or her know that you're concerned for the company and the clients, rather than simply your own comfort level.

Other ways of coping with stress might be to call on your friends and talk honestly about what you're going through, or asking someone for guidance. Do you have a school counselor that can help you through exams, or a trusted older relative that always gives good advice?

Alleviating stress also means teaching yourself to relax, and this is key. Many people simply don't know how to relax and need to learn techniques, other than smoking. For example, yoga and meditation are two great ways of relaxing. So is exercising. Taking a hot bath, reading something engaging, or indulging in a hobby are also great tension relievers.

And it may sound strange, but when you're under stress, this is an opportune time to get involved with volunteer or charitable work. It helps to put your own problems in perspective when you see how many other people have things much worse than you do, and in addition, it can help you feel good about yourself and your accomplishments as well.

HERBAL AND HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES.

One of the biggest problems people have with smoking cessation is to get the tar and nicotine out of their systems, along with all the other poisons that continue to make one crave those nasty cigarettes.

We've mentioned some natural ways that you can do this on your own, but what about natural herbs and homeopathic remedies? Can any of these help, and if so, how do they work to not only rid your body of these toxins, but to encourage you to quit smoking as well?

Let's look at some of these here.

Improving mood.

Many homeopathic and herbal remedies work by improving your overall mood and outlook so as to be better prepared mentally and emotionally to give up cigarettes. Some of these include:

Hypericum and Scutellaria laterifolia are two herbs well known for their beneficial effects on mood and nervous system health.

While Hypericum helps to balance serotonin levels in the brain and ensure the healthy functioning of the entire nervous system, Scutellaria acts as a nervous system tonic and also prevents the insomnia and headaches usually associated with nicotine withdrawal.

Chromium is a naturally occurring trace mineral which helps the body to break down protein and fat. It is also known to assist with the efficient use of insulin, thereby helping the body to maintain normal blood sugar levels and prevent the sugar craving often associated with nicotine withdrawal.

It is also well known that low blood sugar levels (hypoglycemia) can cause irritability, which can make it more difficult to resist having a cigarette.

Other common ingredients found in smoking cessation products generally encourage calm and relieve restlessness, and typically are:

Arsenicum Album
Caladium Seguinum
Carbolicum Acidum
Daphne Indica
Eugenia Jambosa ·
Kali Phosphoricum ·
Lobelia Inflata ·
Nicotinum ·
Nux Vomica ·
Plantago Major ·
Saccharum Officinale ·
Staphysagria ·
Tabacum ·
Thuja Occidentalis

Detoxifiers.

If you can get those toxins and poisons out of your system as quickly as possible, not only will this help with your cigarette cravings, it will get you on the road to health that much sooner!

There are many homeopathic and herbal detoxifiers. Some of the most popular include:

- Nux Vomica helps stimulate intestines.
- Bryonia Alba provides overall digestive support.
- Lycopodium Clavatum supports the lymphatic system.
- Fumaria Officinalis prevents toxicity and purifies blood.
- Calcarea Phosphorica helps maintain a balanced metabolism.
- Natrum Sulphuricum improves the constitution and water retention.

- *Berberis Vulgaris* stimulates the kidneys and gallbladder.
- *Colocynthis* stimulates the body's natural process of elimination of toxins, both internally and externally.

Taraxacum officinalis (Dandelion) was commonly used in Native American medicine and is found in many parts of the world today. It contains bitter principles that have a stimulating effect on the liver and digestive system.

Foeniculum vulgare (Fennel) has been used since ancient times as a natural appetite suppressant and was traditionally used to prevent 'growling stomachs' during church services. Apart from its natural diuretic properties, Fennel also promotes routine liver, kidney and spleen health and is useful for acidic stomachs. More recently, Fennel has been shown to help alleviate stomach upsets and colic in particular.

Pelargonium reniforme is a medicinal plant known to generations of Khoi/San descendants and Xhosa traditional healers for its health-promoting properties. Also known as 'Umckaloabo', it is traditionally used for a range of therapeutic functions and is well known for its supportive capacity on liver functioning and as a digestive tonic.

Natural detox.

The body has its own systems in place for removing toxic chemicals and other such waste; oftentimes what is needed is just some help in moving this process along.

By avoiding giving our bodies toxic chemicals in the first place, we can greatly assist our own systems in cleansing. This means avoiding junk food, including processed food, deep-fried foods, and fast foods, as these usually have terrible additives.

And we can also help by giving our bodies the necessary tools it needs for this as well. This means adequate fiber, fruit, vegetables, and water.

There are tremendous benefits one can derive from taking care of the diet, and helping with the smoking cravings is just one of them. So whether you're interested in homeopathic remedies or simply want to try to get rid of these poisons on your own, there are many natural ways you can cleanse yourself of these terrible toxins.

SMOKING CESSATION MEDICATIONS.

There are some medicines and treatments available either over the counter at your local pharmacy or that can be prescribed by your doctor, that can help you stop smoking and that can also help with the cravings and other problems associated with smoking cessation.

Before you run down to the pharmacy or make an appointment with your physician, you would do well to review the following information regarding each of these options so that you can be better prepared to make the right choice for you.

Nicotine replacement therapies (NRT).

These are aids that are designed to gradually taper down the amount of nicotine in your system so that you can gradually get rid of your cravings.

Transdermal nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, sprays, and inhalers are all types of nicotine replacement therapies.

Why they work.

NRT delivers nicotine to the smoker's brain in a much slower way than cigarettes do. When a person inhales a cigarette, nicotine enters the lungs and then travels to the brain within seconds, delivering the "rush" that smokers come to crave.

It helps to taper down the urges to smoke that most smokers have in the early days and weeks after quitting, rather than remove them totally. By tapering the urges gradually, smokers are better able to handle them, rather than feeling an onslaught of cravings and other problems immediately.

Additionally, it's thought that the most dangerous aspect of cigarettes is not the nicotine itself, but the tar and other toxins that are added to cigarettes and that are created by the chemical reaction of burning.

NRT does not have these additives, the tar, or any of these other toxins, therefore a smoker is not only able to quit gradually but is allowing these toxins to be removed from their body immediately, which also helps stem their cravings.

The nasal spray and inhaler form of NRT are only available with a prescription, but patches and gum are typically available over the counter.

Another type of smoking cessation drug, bupropion (Zyban), also reduces craving and withdrawal symptoms, although it is not a nicotine replacement product. Bupropion is an antidepressant medication that is thought to help people stop smoking by mimicking some of the effects of tobacco on brain tissue. Bupropion can be used together with nicotine replacement products; several studies indicate that the combination helps more smokers quit than either method by itself.

Buspirone (BuSpar) is a tranquilizer that appears to be effective in helping smokers deal with feelings of anxiety resulting from tobacco withdrawal.

There are of course other medications and antidepressants that your doctor can prescribe that can help calm your anxiety and nervousness that's associated with smoking, and that can help with your particular cravings or other issues. It's important that you and your physician work together to find just the right solution for you and your situation.

When taking any of these medications or using these products, you must be careful to use the recommended dosage and follow all directions exactly.

Remember that nicotine gum should not be chewed like regular gum. It must be chewed very slowly until it has a slight taste or causes a slight tingling sensation in the mouth; then "parked" between the cheek and gum until the taste and tingling goes away; then chewed and parked in the same way for about 30 minutes. Nicotine patches and other products also must be used correctly to be effective. Some patches are meant to be worn only during the day and removed at night; others are worn 24 hours a day.

And of course, keep these products away from children and pets. Even a small amount of nicotine from any of these can harm young children especially; do not hesitate to call emergency services or Poison Control

immediately if you suspect that your child has ingested any of these products.

Combining products.

Some who have been heavy smokers for a long period of time may want to discuss with their doctor a combination of NRT products, for example, using the patch and the gum may help more than just one alone.

The nasal spray delivers nicotine very rapidly, and can be used to relieve intense cravings at times of the day when the smoker is accustomed to having a cigarette, while the patch delivers a smaller dosage of nicotine to the body at a steadier rate.

Be mindful of precautions.

When using NRT products, even those that are over-the-counter, you should be in touch with your physician regularly. He or she will check to make sure the medicine is working as it should and will watch for unwanted side effects.

Side effects of these medications could include:

- nausea
- vomiting
- severe pain in the stomach or abdomen
- severe diarrhea
- severe dizziness
- fainting
- convulsions (seizures)
- low blood pressure
- fast, weak, or irregular heartbeat
- hearing or vision problems
- severe breathing problems
- severe watering of the mouth or drooling

- cold sweat
- severe headache
- confusion
- severe weakness

Although some side effects may be mild, your doctor may want to prescribe other medications to help alleviate some of these symptoms if they are severe. Again, always be in touch with your doctor regularly and be honest about any side effects or other concerns you are having.

A special note for moms.

Nicotine in any form should not be used during pregnancy, as it may harm the fetus or cause miscarriage. Women who may become pregnant should use effective birth control while taking smoking cessation drugs. Women who become pregnant while taking this medicine should stop taking it immediately and check with their physicians.

Nicotine passes into breast milk and may cause problems for nursing babies. Women who are breastfeeding and want to use smoking cessation drugs may need to stop breastfeeding during treatment.

As always, stay in constant contact with your obstetrician or other doctor while breastfeeding and make sure you are following his or her recommendations completely.

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GETTING SUPPORT — AND MAKING SOME TOUGH DECISIONS.

One of the best things you can do to really help yourself quit smoking is to get some support.

Think seriously about your friends and family and what they can do to encourage you to keep from lighting up again.

How can your spouse or partner help?

For example, if one of your biggest obstacles is those few moments after dinner when you want to unwind with a cigarette, how can your spouse help you? Can he or she encourage you to get out for that walk, and better yet, come with you?

What about activities you might enjoy to keep yourself active and to keep your mind off the cigarettes? What can you two do together? If you've been a heavy smoker for years, chances are that a lot of physical activities have fallen by the wayside, as of course it's harder to be physically active when you smoke. So talk openly and candidly about your plans and what the two of you can do together. Make a list of some activities you enjoyed when you were younger or were first dating, or of things you'd like to try now.

For example:

- Horseback riding
- Hiking
- Golf
- Tennis
- Dancing
- Skating

- Don't be shy or self-conscious about these things. Remember, you don't need to be very good at these activities in order to enjoy them, so don't hesitate to sign up for dance lessons or strap on those skates.

Joining group activities.

Getting together with a group that's mindful of their own health and that's physically active can also be a great help. Investigate what leagues or teams there are that you can participate in. For example, does your company sponsor a softball game or bowling league? Are there establishments nearby where you can sign up?

Is there a community center near you that offers these leagues as well? Many are geared toward couples or singles, so whatever your situation, you can probably find something you'll enjoy.

Structured support.

There's nothing like the support you get from someone whose been in your same exact situation, and this is why today there is a support group for just about every problem or situation you could possibly face. If you're a parent whose child has died, or a child whose parent is an alcoholic, or you're a single parent trying to raise kids on your own, or have a loved one who is suffering from cancer, or whatever your situation, chances are there's a support group just for you.

Recovering smokers are no different. There are a variety of structured support groups to help you through the rough times and to give you advice and encouragement when needed.

Here is a list of some groups and internet forums you might find helpful during your recovery:

Nicotine Anonymous (NicA)

www.nicotine-anonymous.org/

A twelve-step program for those wishing to quit smoking and live nicotine free. NicA was founded around 1982 in Southern California by Alcoholics Anonymous members to focus specifically on quitting smoking. As of 1999 there were over 450 NicA groups in the United States.

American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking

www.lungusa.org/

A free on line smoking cessation program offering education and message board support.

QuitSmokingSupport

<http://www.network54.com/Forum/76750/>

A popular and long running bulletin board offering support for people who are in the process of quitting smoking.

Smoking Cessation Support Group

http://boards.webmd.com/topic.asp?topic_id=48

Message board on WebMD for those trying to quit smoking.

StopSmokingCenter

<http://www.stopsmokingcenter.net/support/>

A free on line smoking cessation program with quit smoking resources, success stories, public pledges, quitting tips, and a support community.

SMART Recovery

<http://www.smartrecovery.org/>

Offers local and on line self-help groups for individuals wanting to gain their independence from addictive and compulsive behaviors.

Supporting yourself.

You may not have anyone in particular that you can call on for support to help you through this difficult journey to become a 'non smoker'. If you don't, you will need to be strong and rely on your own willpower to get you through.

Here are a few things you can do to give yourself the encouragement needed to keep going when you feel cravings or urges, or are tempted to give up:

Make a list.

Note all the reasons you want to quit smoking. And don't be vague; instead of saying "for my health," list those health reasons. Are you currently having

problems with your breathing? Do you find it hard to laugh without coughing? Are you constantly winded?

Do you have a history of cancer in the family, or know someone that has died due to complications brought on by smoking, whether it was cancer or a heart attack or something else? Make a specific list of all the health reasons you have in mind.

Include in your list of reasons to quit any other reasons as well. Do you hate the smell of smoke, do you miss the taste of foods? Are you tired of spending all this money on cigarettes? Has it already caused problems in relationships with others who don't care for cigarette smoke? Write all these things down, and then keep this list with you at all times. Make copies if need be. Post copies in conspicuous places around your home or office. Really think about everything you've written out.

Make goals.

What are your goals when it comes to smoking cessation? Some try to go "cold turkey" and quit all at once, but will this work for you? If you are very determined and have made up your mind, then this may be the way to go.

Otherwise, write up a schedule for yourself of how you'll cut down gradually, reducing your number of daily cigarettes over the next few weeks and months?

Include in this schedule your goals, and also your rewards, as we've already discussed.

Turn your attention elsewhere.

When you crave a cigarette, often it seems like that's all you can think about. So now is the time to start filling your mind with other thoughts and filling your days with other activities. Here are some suggestions that other recovered smokers have shared:

- *Train for a triathlon. This may sound like a far-off goal, but many participants in triathlons started in worse shape than you are now – which is why they refer to it as training. Look on line for a local triathlon group or ask at your gym or community center. Talk to veteran tri-athletes and get their recommendations. Chances are they can give you a wealth of guidance on how to get started,*

regardless of what shape you're in. The reason this is recommended is because many tri-athletes report that finishing one of these marathons has been one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences in their lives, and they soon become hooked on wanting to improve their time and performance. The physical exercise needed is also a great tool for smoking cessation as well.

- *Do volunteer work. It doesn't matter where you live or what your situation is, there is a need for volunteer work that you can accomplish. Check with local churches, even if you're not a member, about soup kitchens and other opportunities. Go on line and do a quick search. Volunteer work does not need to take up much of your time and of course many organizations recognize that you may have limited resources, but there are still ways you can help. Sometimes you can even just stuff envelopes or work a booth for a fund raiser! Volunteering is not just a way to kill time but it gets you away from thinking only about your own cravings and desire for a cigarette.*
- *Pick a creative hobby. Not only will a good hobby get your mind off of things, but being creative gives you a great sense of accomplishment and personal fulfillment. This in turn makes you feel good about yourself and encourages you to keep up with your goals.*

The bottom line is that while it's good to have support systems in place, sooner or later you will be the one to deal with the cravings and other issues that come from your decision, so you need to learn ways to deal with this on your own.

Making tough decisions.

Getting good support around you during this difficult time is wonderful. However, while good support can help you with your goal, the opposite can be devastatingly true as well. Having poor associations around you can cause you to stumble and fail just as easily.

There's nothing to say that you need to drop your friends that you've had for decades or that you should divorce your spouse if he or she continues to smoke. However, again, there may need to be some tough decisions made.

For example, if you're constantly tempted to smoke at the weekly poker game with the guys, might you consider sitting out at least for awhile? Or if Saturday nights at the bar with the girls are tough because everyone is

smoking, can you consider dropping out of this weekly ritual, at least for a little while?

Your friends certainly have the right to choose whether or not they will continue to smoke, but you might also find that you need to make a decision as to whether or not you can always be around them, especially in situations that seem to encourage smoking more than not.

Many people also find it difficult to be in certain establishments where smoking is prevalent, such as bars and nightclubs, or bowling alleys. It may be tough, but you might need to find some new "hangouts" for yourself, especially in the beginning when cravings are at their worst. Think of other places you can go or other places you can spend your time that are smoke-free, such as movie theaters, smoke-free restaurants, museums, and the like.

Again, these are tough decisions to make but in the end, they'll be worth it if it means success at quitting smoking.

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YOUR 10 STEP PLAN TO QUITTING.

So you've decided that it's time to quit, and for you, there's no turning back. You've read all the information about the health risks – or maybe some news from your doctor is all the information you need – and you know it's the right thing to do.

Now what?

Actually, making the decision to quit is half the battle, as they say. Many people who are smokers want to quit and often times talk about it, but never make the decision to go through with it. So congratulate yourself on getting this far.

But to make it to the finish line, more is needed than just the decision. And here's where we can help. Next are 10 steps you should take to make sure you'll be successful in your plan to quit.

Step #1: Make a list of reasons.

If you haven't already done that as we've instructed, do it now. Take out paper and pen and write out those reasons, and be as detailed as possible. If you're concerned about secondhand smoke affecting your kids, write that down, and use their names to make it more personal.

If you're concerned about your health, list those health risks that are associated with smoking. Write out all the cancers that are associated with smoking, not just lung cancer. Here are some reminders:

- **Cancers of the oral cavity, oesophagus and larynx.** Heavy smokers have a laryngeal cancer mortality risk 20 to 30 times greater than that of non-smokers. In men, approximately 57% of cancers of the oral cavity and pharynx, 54% of cancers of the

esophagus and 73% of cancers of the larynx can be attributed to smoking.

- **Cancer of the bladder.** Forty-three percent of male and 36% of female bladder cancers can be attributed to smoking.
- **Cancer of the kidney.** Cigarette smoking is at least a contributory factor and possibly a causal factor in development of cancers of the parenchyma and pelvis of the kidney.
- **Cancer of the pancreas.** It is estimated that 24% of pancreatic cancer in males and 19% in females is attributable to smoking.(4)
- **Cancer of the stomach.** It is estimated that 14% of stomach cancer in men and 11% in women can be attributed to smoking.(4)
- **Cancers of the uterine cervix and vulva.** Women who smoke cigarettes have a greater risk of developing cancers of the cervix and vulva.
- **Cancer of the penis.** It is estimated that 30% of cancers of the penis are caused by cigarette smoking.
- **Cancer of the anus.** Overall, 48% of anal cancer in males and 41% in females is caused by smoking.
- **Cancers of the blood (leukemia and multiple myeloma).** Since the mid 1980s, research has increasingly linked smoking with certain types of leukemia.
- **Cancer of the liver.** Research is increasingly suggesting that smoking may be an independent risk factor for liver cancer.
- **Prostate cancer.** Although smoking has not been shown to be responsible for the development of prostate cancer, smokers may be at greater risk for more aggressive disease, or cancer that advances more rapidly. A recent study found higher death rates from prostate cancer in current cigarette smokers.

In your list of reasons, you should also include those around you who are affected by your smoking. Do you have children that are breathing in your secondhand smoke? Even your pets are affected by this, so mention them and their health too!

Write out how much money you spend on cigarettes that could be better spent elsewhere.

Do you hate being a victim of big corporations and their slick advertising and marketing campaigns? Does it bother you that the tobacco industry lied for years about the dangerous and harmful effects of smoking? Does it bother you that your money is going to these greedy liars, as opposed to your child's college fund, your retirement plan, or toward that new set of jet skis or vacation cabin you've always wanted? Don't be shy about writing this out.

Step #2: Set up a bank account, or just get a piggy bank.

The amount of money you spend on smoking is no small matter, and seeing how much you save when you quit smoking is a great encouragement. However, it's usually not enough to just tell yourself that you're saving money. Instead, take the money you would normally spend on cigarettes and set it aside in a special account, so that you can see just how quickly it actually grows.

If you normally buy your cigarettes once per week, then every week you'll make that deposit in the bank. If you stock up monthly, then make a monthly payment, and so on. If you just typically buy a pack whenever you run out, sit down right now and calculate how much you smoke and how much that costs you every day or every week, and set that money aside with each paycheck you receive.

Once the money has really grown you can then of course decide what you want to do with that account or that piggy bank, but the point is that you should definitely get that visual in your head, especially when you're first starting out, in order to encourage yourself to continue on.

And if you and your spouse are quitting together, or you and a friend, then have them do this as well. You and your spouse can open a joint account while you and your friend might just compare notes. You can also use this money toward your reward system for when you reach certain goals or milestones – go shopping together, or out to eat, or do something else that's special for the two of you.

Step #3: Set a date.

Just wanting to quit isn't quite enough. You need a set plan to get you moving on your goal, and setting a date is very important.

Some people wait for important dates, such as New Year's Day or their birthday or what have you, however, don't make the mistake of putting off your decision indefinitely.

Right now you're probably enthused or determined about your decision, so putting it off is only going to allow that determination to wear away. And, if you give yourself too much time, chances are you'll start finding all sorts of excuses to keep on smoking – you're too old, it's not that bad, everyone does it, and so on. Don't let this happen to you!

Get out your calendar right now and pick the date that you want to start living your life the way you've determined to. How about next Sunday? Or the first of next month? What about three days from now? To-day, RIGHT NOW?

Your quit date should also be celebrated as each year passes without a cigarette, just as you would any other anniversary. Send yourself a card, go out to dinner with your family, go away for the weekend, do something very special for yourself to mark this important day. But whatever you do, don't put it off.

Step #4: Make your list of substitutes.

What are you going to do to fill your time on your way to work in the morning? How about when you want to relax and unwind after dinner, or over your morning coffee on Saturdays, or whenever your most difficult time is?

Have you made your list of substitute activities for these difficult moments? If not, now is the time. Write out some easy but fulfilling things you'll do to keep your mind – and your hands – busy. Are you going to go for a walk around the block? Are you saving the dishes that need to be washed for this time? Have you bought some copies of your favorite magazine or set aside some room in the garage to work?

What about those hobbies you're going to indulge in, such as knitting or carpentry? Do you have your materials all lined up? If it's model or miniature building, do you have a spot in the den set aside?

Don't leave these things to chance, but make an actual plan right now of what you'll be doing.

Step #5: Have those conversations.

Tell your spouse, your friends, your coworkers, your other family members, your kids, and anyone else you can about your plans. For those that are close to you, speak to them honestly about what you're trying to do and how you need their help.

For friends and family, you may need to bring up some changes that you're going to be making, whether it's sitting out the weekly poker game or no longer allowing smoking in your own home.

For your spouse, this discussion may need some time as the two of you work out some new arrangements when it comes to activities you both want to enjoy or other adjustments.

And remember, you're asking people for their support of your new decision, not demanding what they're going to do to change themselves. Remind them that any changes you need to make are only about the smoking; you're not "ditching" them as a friend, you're not suddenly too good to be around them, and so on. Make sure you're spending time with them as much as possible when you can, in situations where you won't be tempted to smoke.

Step #6: Get your support in place.

Have you done that yet? Are you familiar with their philosophies, their mission statements?

Have you read accounts of others who have been successful at quitting to see what they've shared?

If not, why not? It's much better to have support in place before you need it rather than wait until you're feeling desperate to start scrambling. Go on line, bookmark those pages, and start introducing yourself. Let them know the date you've chosen and everything else you've accomplished so far.

This is also the time to talk with your doctor, or with a homeopath who can help you with either medications or some herbal treatments as well. He or she can monitor your health and also recommend some specific diet and activity changes you should make to support your decision.

And remember, if you're a mom who's breastfeeding or are expecting to get pregnant, you must definitely speak with your doctor as well. As we've said, many nicotine replacement therapies should not be used by breastfeeding women, and if you're pregnant, you owe it to yourself and your baby to be a non-smoker. You won't believe how much better you'll soon feel!

Support also means support that you're providing for yourself. What are you now going to do to face your stress and anxiety? Are you ready to talk to your boss about your crushing workload, or a school guidance counselor about those exams you have coming up?

Are you right now learning some new ways to fight off boredom, depression, loneliness, and the like? Remember, these things are not going to get any easier to face when you add the difficulty that you're certain to have when you're trying to quit smoking. So, get that support in place now, before you begin.

Step #7: Start those new activities.

What decisions have you made about new physical activities that are going to keep you occupied and provide you with necessary exercise? Have you looked into your local community center or gym? Or softball or basketball league?

Again, don't wait until after you've quit and are facing cravings to start doing your homework. Also, there may be fees or dues that are necessary to join, equipment to buy, and things such as these, and you may need to work these into your budget.

Remember to consider volunteer work during this time as well. Whether you're driving for Meals on Wheels or serving at a local soup kitchen, or doing anything else, this will help you to get your mind off of your cravings for cigarettes. It will also help build your self-esteem and make you feel good about the work you're doing, and this will encourage you to continue with your goals.

Do these things now, before you quit, so that you won't feel overwhelmed or frustrated when trying to find a local organization while dealing with your cravings for cigarettes at the same time.

Step #8: Shop.

Once those cravings kick in, you're going to be reaching for virtually anything and everything to put into your mouth.

You absolutely should have healthy alternatives on hand immediately before you quit so that you won't be tempted by junk. Skip the salty and sugary snacks and opt for the healthy alternatives. Fill up your fridge a day or two before your quit date so that everything is fresh and ready.

And when you go grocery shopping, make sure you use a list there as well. It's all too tempting when cruising the supermarket aisles to just grab whatever catches your eye. Write out your list and stick to it, and don't forget to include snacks and items you can take to the office or keep with you throughout the day.

Don't forget items like gum or mint leaves, or Altoids, or whatever your options are for chewing when you feel cravings.

And if you're going to try a nicotine replacement therapy such as the patch or nicotine gum, get some of that as well. You want to have everything on hand and ready to go when your quit date arrives. Be sure you've read the instructions and are clear on how to use everything – don't assume. Again, nicotine gums are not the same as regular chewing gums. Some patches are left on all day, some are just used at night or just during the day. Make sure you understand all the directions and follow them completely, and have a place to store your supplies that are away from your children and pets.

Step #9: Wash and purge.

Do you know someone who lives in a high-traffic area that no longer hears the noise? Or whose house has a certain odor – pets, poor hygiene, and so on – that they no longer notice?

It's surprising how quickly people become acclimatized or used to certain sensory input, such as sights, sounds or odors. This is actually a natural reaction from our bodies that serves as a protection. If we had to acknowledge every single thing that our senses took in – the feeling of our shoes on our feet for 16 hours per day, or of our back leaning against the chair, or the hum of the refrigerator, or that traffic – we'd probably literally go insane from sensory overload.

But this protection backfires when it comes to habits such as smoking. If you smoke in your home, chances are that everything around you, including your clothes, your furniture, your drapes, your linens, and everything else, smells like smoke whether you notice it or not.

The day before your quit date, take some time to wash everything that you can, including your bed and bath linens, and your clothes. If you can, steam clean your drapes, carpet, and furniture.

Once you've quit, you'll be surprised at how much you notice the clean smell. Conversely, if you keep your things unwashed, that lingering smell of cigarette smoke can only spark your old cravings all over again.

Cleaning house also includes getting rid of all your smoking materials and paraphernalia. The last day before your quit day, flush all your cigarettes down the toilet (so that you won't be tempted to fish them out of the trash!) and get rid of all ashtrays and anything else you use for smoking. This also goes for your office, your car, and anywhere else you might have a "stash" of cigarettes or an ashtray. You're starting a new life, and these things no longer have a place.

This small ritual of saying goodbye to your old friends can help you make the transition as well, and by not having ashtrays or lighters or anything else in your house or car, you're less tempted to go back to your old ways.

Step #10: Quit!

The morning of your quit day, remind yourself that you're no longer a smoker. Either a person smokes or they don't, and you don't. Period.

Be prepared for times when your enthusiasm is very low, when you start to hear that little voice in your head telling you that just one won't hurt, or that this is useless, or that you're just going to fail, or whatever it may say.

Quitting smoking is a lot like losing weight – people want the results but downplay how hard it is to get there.

When you're going through the difficult times, be prepared. Understand beforehand that you will be frustrated and angry and anxious, and that the cravings will be very intense.

But don't give in, no matter what! Go back to your list of reasons why you want to quit. Throw yourself into those new hobbies and goals you want to reach. Call a trusted friend and tell him or her that you're tempted. Call your support group. Get out of the house and go for a walk.

By reminding yourself ahead of time that it will be difficult, then you'll be better prepared to keep on with your goals until you're successful.

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ONE LAST WORD ABOUT QUITTING.

“Never quit quitting.”

Most smokers aren't completely successful their first time trying to quit.

Some last a few days and then go right back to where they started. Others are successful for quite some time, but then because of a stressful time, or just because they suddenly had a tremendously strong craving, gave in for a few days or a short period of time.

There are those who just make up their minds, finish the last cigarette in the box, and that's it. So, it can be done, and there is no reason why you can't do it too.

If you're someone who has tried to quit on more than one occasion, there's no need to get discouraged. There's no need to feel like a failure, or to think that it just won't happen for you.

Most people that are successful in their smoking cessation goals have tried to quit at least once or twice before, some many more times than that – which just means that you're perfectly normal if you're not completely successful in your first attempt to quit.

As we've said, smoking is a habit and it's a physical addiction. Both of these things are hard enough to overcome on their own, but the two together can make a mighty foe!

But it can be done. Why can we say that with such certainty? Because every year some 2,000,000 people successfully quit smoking. Two million! That's a pretty big number, and you can be one of them.

So if this is your first time trying to quit, or your hundredth, don't give up. Don't throw in the towel just yet. You can do it, you can be successful.

By utilizing the tips we've outlined in this book, and keeping it close at hand for when times get tough, you can be one of those people who can honestly say, "I'm a nonsmoker." That is, as long as you never quit quitting.

Good luck!! You'll be so glad you did!

Just one more tip: It is most important to have your mindset right. See yourself as having accomplished your goal – tell yourself frequently that you are a winner and 'smoke-free'. Never doubt that you can 'beat it'.

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Just **QUIT IT**

**The 10 Step Master Plan
For Giving Up Smoking**