

Joel's Reinforcement Library

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

Why Do I Smoke?

Most smokers spend countless hours during their smoking careers trying to satisfactorily answer this most perplexing question. Typically, answers they come up with are that they smoke because they are unhappy, unsatisfied, nervous, bored, anxious, lonely, tired or just frustrated without their cigarettes. Other reasons often quoted are that cigarettes keep them thin, make them better able to think, or that they are more sociable while smoking. Some claim that they smoke to celebrate the joyful times of life. Food, drink, fun and games, and even sex all seem to lose their appeal without an accompanying cigarette. After hearing all of these wonderful qualities attributed to cigarette smoking, I find myself amazed that millions and millions of earth's inhabitants have successfully given up smoking.

What in the world is wrong with these ex-smokers? I can understand people who never smoked. They never knew or believed all of these wonderful benefits derived from smoking. What you never had you'll never miss. But these ex-smokers, having given up such a marvelous chemical addiction with so many benefits, must be crazy.

The fact is ex-smokers are not crazy. To the contrary, it was their ability to be rational which enabled them to successfully break free from cigarettes. They had the foresight to put themselves through the pain and agony encountered during the initial withdrawal from the nicotine addiction. It is both a powerful physical and psychological addiction which creates many irrational beliefs as defense mechanisms in order to perpetuate the smoking behavior. Most of the reasons mentioned above of why smokers claim they smoke are such drug induced beliefs.

All ex-smokers should be applauded for their great accomplishment in overcoming the many obstacles created by their addiction. Encountering the initial quitting process creates a state of emotional insecurity and self doubt. Will they ever be able to survive in our complicated world without their cigarettes? Once they become totally free of the grip which cigarettes exert upon them, they will be able to get a clear perspective

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of how many misconceptions they had about the benefits they thought they derived from smoking. Being drug free after years of enslavement brings a sense of relief and accomplishment that the smoker never anticipated. To their pleasant surprise, they discover the marvelous fact that there is life after smoking. It is a healthier, calmer and more pleasant life. They now have a choice as to whether or not they ever wish to smoke again. If they look honestly and objectively at the advantages and disadvantages, the logical choice is to remain ex-smokers.

Unfortunately, some don't remember all of the consequences associated with their now arrested dependency, but only recall the infrequent good times they believe they had with their cigarettes. They think that they could once again enjoy just a few cigarettes. What must be understood by all ex-smokers is that they only have two options. They can smoke nothing or they can smoke at their previous level of consumption. There is no in-between. They are wasting their time contemplating how nice it would be to be an occasional social smoker. They can never again have that luxury.

All ex-smokers must consider both options. Then if they choose to smoke, all they need do is take their first cigarette and again become trapped in the nicotine addiction. If they choose to remain free, all they need is to follow the simple practice - **NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

Joel

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