

Joel's Reinforcement Library

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

I Will Quit When...

"I will quit when my doctor tells me I have to." "I can't quit now it's tax season."
"Maybe I will quit on vacation." "School is starting and I'm too nervous to quit." "I will quit in the summer when I can exercise more." "When conditions improve at work, I will stop." "Quit now, during midterm, you must be nuts!" "Maybe after my daughter's wedding." "My father is in the hospital. I can't quit now." "If I quit now, it will spoil the whole trip." "The doctor says I need surgery. I'm too nervous to try now." "When I lose 15 pounds, I will stop." "I am making too many other changes to stop now." "I have smoked for years and feel fine, why should I stop smoking now?" "I'm in the process of moving, and it's a real headache. I can't stop now." "It is too soon after my new promotion, when things settle down I will stop." "When we have a verifiable bilateral disarmament agreement, I will consider quitting." "It is too late. I'm as good as dead now."

Amazing, isn't it, how so many people can come up with so many excuses not to stop smoking? If any of these were valid reasons why now is not a good time to quit, when did 33,000,000 ex-smokers in our country stop? They must have been experiencing at least one of these situations during the initial quitting process. The only difference between successful ex-smokers and the smokers making these statements is that the ex-smokers were bright enough to recognize that smoking was not really necessary to deal with any of these situations.

The best time to quit is NOW. No matter when now is. In fact, many of the times specifically stated as bad times to quit may be the best. I actually prefer that people quit when experiencing some degree of emotional stress. In most cases, the more stress the better. This may sound harsh, but in the long run it will vastly improve the chances of long term success in abstaining from cigarettes.

When people quit at an easy time in their lives, they begin to feel comfortable as ex-smokers as long as no problems surface. But there is always the fear that when things get difficult they will not be able to cope without cigarettes. Many, when facing their first real catastrophe, return to smoking because they were not equipped to deal with

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real stress as ex-smokers.

If, on the other hand, they had quit during a difficult time, they would have realized that even under severe emotional stress life goes on without smoking. They will be secure in the knowledge that they can deal with crisis, any crisis, as non-smokers.

Once they overcame the initial quitting process they found they were able to deal with stress better. They were able to meet the physical and emotional demands in their lives more efficiently than when they were smokers. They were truly better equipped for survival in our complicated world without the "help" of cigarettes.

So, no matter what is going on in your life, quit smoking. When things get tough - show yourself how tough you are. And once off smoking, deal with all future problems in as constructive a manner as you possibly can, always keeping one essential stress management technique foremost in your mind - NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

Joel

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