

Joel's Reinforcement Library

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

"Quitting Smoking" A Fate Worse than Death?

People sitting in at smoking clinics are amazed at how resistant smokers are to giving up cigarettes. Even smokers will sit and listen to horror stories of other participants in sheer disbelief. Some smokers have had multiple heart attacks, circulatory conditions resulting in amputations, cancers, emphysema and a host of other disabling and deadly diseases. How in the world could these people have continued smoking after all that? Some of these smokers are fully aware that smoking is crippling and killing them, but continue to smoke anyway. A legitimate question asked by any sane smoker or nonsmoker is, "why?"

The answer to such a complex issue is really quite simple. The smoker often has cigarettes so tied into his lifestyle that he feels when he gives up smoking he will give up all activities associated with cigarettes. Considering these activities include almost everything he does from the time he awakes to the time he goes to sleep, life seems like it will not be worth living as an ex-smoker. The smoker is also afraid he will experience the painful withdrawal symptoms from not smoking as long as he deprives himself of cigarettes. Considering all this, quitting smoking creates a greater fear than dying from smoking.

If the smoker were correct in all his assumptions of what life as an ex-smoker were like, then maybe it would not be worth it to quit. But all these assumptions are wrong. There is life after smoking, and withdrawal does not last forever. Trying to convince the smoker of this, though, is quite an uphill battle. These beliefs are deeply ingrained and are conditioned from the false positive effects experienced from cigarettes.

The smoker often feels that he needs a cigarette in order to get out of bed in the morning. Typically, when he awakes he feels a slight headache, tired, irritable, depressed and disoriented. He is under the belief that all people awake feeling this way. He is fortunate though, because he has a way to stop these horrible feelings. He

smokes a cigarette or two. Then he begins waking up and feels human again. Once he is awake, he feels he needs cigarettes to give him energy to make it through the day. When he is under stress and nervous, the cigarettes calm him down. Giving up this wonder drug seems ludicrous to him.

But if he quits smoking he will be pleasantly surprised to find out that he will feel better and be able to cope with life more efficiently than when he was a smoker. When he wakes up in the morning, he will feel tremendously better than when he awoke as a smoker. No longer will he drag out of bed feeling horrible. Now he will wake up feeling well rested and refreshed. In general, he will be calmer than when he smoked. Even when under stress, he normally will not experience the panic reactions he used to feel whenever his nicotine level fell below acceptable levels. The belief that cigarettes were needed for energy is one of the most deceptive of all. Almost any ex-smoker will attest that he has more strength, endurance, and energy than he ever did as a smoker. And the fear of prolonged withdrawal also had no merit, for withdrawal symptoms would peak within three days, and totally subside within two weeks.

If any smoker just gives himself the chance to really feel how nice not smoking is, he will no longer have the irrational fears which keeps him maintaining his deadly addiction. He will find life will become simpler, happier, cleaner, and most importantly healthier, than when he was a smoker. His only fear will now be in relapsing to smoking and all he has to do to prevent this is - NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

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