

## *Joel's Quit Smoking Library*

**NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

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### *Thoughts that seem worse than urges experienced the first few days*

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The urges that happen weeks or months after initial quitting can catch you much more off guard than the urges encountered during the first few days. When you had an urge at 10:00 am the day you quit smoking, it was no big deal. You likely had one at 9:55 am just before it. In fact, the first few days if you went too long without an urge you would have felt something was wrong. Although, some people just have one urge that first day. It hits them when they wake up, goes away when they go to sleep, at which point they dream about smoking all night. In essence, it was chronic.

When you start to get more time under your belt not smoking, the triggers become more sporadic. At first separated by minutes, then hours, eventually days and weeks. But they still happen. When they occur after a long period of time they catch you much more off guard.

Also, in the beginning, when your guard is up and urges are frequent, you are constantly talking yourself through them. You are then basically reinforcing your resolve over and over again all day long. When you stop having chronic urges, you naturally stop reinforcing your resolve throughout the day. Then when the trigger hits, not having talked yourself through it very recently, you sometimes have a harder time mustering up the initial motivation for quitting and ammunition for staying off.

One other factor happens with time making urges feel stronger. You start to forget smoking but still remember the "good" cigarettes. You forget the ones you smoked automatically, paying no real attention to even as you smoked them. You forget the nasty

one you despised as you smoked them. You forget all the associated annoyances that went with being a smoker. Then you start to remember the best cigarette you ever had in your life. If you focus on this cigarette without recalling all the others and the problems that went with the others, it is hard to not want it.

But that "one" cigarette concept is a fantasy. Not smoking will never be as good as that fantasy, but smoking will not be like that fantasy either. Smoking is what it was at the end, the day you quit-not what it was like early on when it initially hooked you. At the end, smoking was annoying enough to make you want to quit, even though you were going through a horrid withdrawal and psychological readjustment process to do it. You then understood that smoking was making life complicated, ruining your health and basically slowly killing you. Well, cigarettes haven't changed. Just your memories of them have.

Remember cigarettes as they really were, not how you wished they were. Then when the urge is triggered, you will have the ammunition to squelch it. You will recognize that you were just having a bad moment, when you were quitting you were having "bad days." When you were smoking you were a slave to a product that was killing you. You fought long and hard to overcome that control and you never want to relinquish your freedom of choice over such a deadly product again. To keep the control, remember, when the urge is triggered - Never Take Another Puff!

*Joel*

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