

Tell a newbie how many seconds a day do you still want a cigarette

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Remember the first few days after you quit smoking? Remember worrying that the urges, wanting and craves would never end? Here's your chance to reach out and tell both smokers and new quitters what it's like now. Below are 33 pages of comments written by hundreds of former smokers who had successfully quit smoking for days, weeks, month, years and some even over a decade, sharing what it was like for them at these different points in time to be nicotine free.

If a cold turkey quitter, please [email us](#) and share with visiting newbies both how long you've been 100% nicotine-free (paste your [quit meter stats](#) if possible) and how many seconds each day you spend wanting a cigarette. We'll then add your response to the below "[Tell a newbie ...](#)" parade which [Joel started](#) back in 2001 in our original support group Freedom.

#51 | 12 Jul 2001 | Joel

In the middle of my round of smoking clinic calls and I got the impression a number of my participants are reading at www.whyquit.com and here so I wanted to bring this one up to a point of prominence. It is so important that people in the first days of a quit recognize that the physical feelings they are experiencing are temporary reactions and not what it feels like forever being an ex-smoker. This string gets that point across very well. Thanks to everyone who participated here.

Joel

#52 | 12 Jul 2001 | Joel

This was posted by Tommo yesterday in its own string but I thought it would be good here too for longer term use.

From: Tommo (Green) (Original Message) Sent: 7/11/2001 3:54 PM

Hello Everyone. I know I've gone back to lurking but I still come here to read what is going on. I remember reading that we should celebrate being a twobie so here I am. To everyone that posts on here, thank you for your support in this great journey.

To lurkers and newbies, it really is much easier now and I now deal with most situations without a problem. Yes, I still get thoughts but they are only thoughts and last about 30 seconds. If you are thinking "Will it ever get better" then I was there too and it does get better, much better.

Tommo

2 months, 2 weeks, 2 days, 22 hours, 2 minutes and 2 seconds. 1947 cigarettes not smoked, saving £375.96. Life saved: 6 days, 18 hours, 15 minutes.

#53 | 12 Jul 2001 | GrumpyOMrsS (Gold)

And adding yet another to this thread.

From: tavonem (green) Sent: 7/12/2001 9:08 AM

Hi Tommo.....congratulations....nice to meet you. It must be that time of the year for lurkers to turn to posters, i came out of the closet yesterday and posted for the first time. I also have quit for two months + and your sooooo right about it getting easier.....all the newbies who happen across this....please please please stick with it, those bad feelings do pass.....truly and honestly they do.

Two months four days of freedom.

#54 | 13 Jul 2001 | S Sweet

Thought I would add my 2 cents :) Its been 9 months, 1 week and 5 days and I can honestly say I never imagined being an ex smoker would be so wonderful. In the beginning I thought about smoking all the time ... now I go DAYS ... even WEEKS and it doesn't even cross my mind! Things DO get easier!!!

#55 | 13 Jul 2001 | Abu

Hi all, Mahdi here with the truth about my non-smoking stats. I quit hammering those nails into the coffin on March 12, 2001. I am without a puff for 4 months..19 hours..15 minutes..15 seconds. I haven't smoked 1,719 cigarettes. I have saved \$335.14. I have added 5 days.. 23 hours.. and 15 minutes to my life.

To tell the truth, most days I don't think about smoking at all. On those rare occasions that I do happen to think about it, the thought only last for a few seconds. Then I remember how long I have gone without one, and realize how good it feels to not smoke. Never Take Another Puff!

Mahdi

#56 | 13 Jul 2001 | wilma nc (GOLD)

Hi. This is my first post since I turned SILVER!!!! But to answer your question, I seldom think about SMOKING a cigarette, but sometimes I think, "This is one of the times when I would have smoked". I waited a long time for it to get this tolerable, and I will certainly NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF.

Wilma_nc

Six months, two days, 22 hours, 28 minutes and 57 seconds. 7357 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$606.85. Life saved: 3 weeks, 4 days, 13 hours, 5 minutes.

#57 | 14 Jul 2001 | Rhiny (Gold)

Joel, this string's a nice idea. It would be interesting to see a chart of the results, with the X axis being the number of days since quitting and the Y axis being the range of smoking desire. I guess I'd split physical withdrawal craves from situational triggers to show how the desire changes (and lessens in intensity) over time.

I'm at 9 days. I have perhaps five low- to medium-intensity urges per day that seem like they MIGHT be physical. In fact these urges may have nothing to do with smoking/nicotine; it may just be job stress. If that's the case the urge is just my workday job stress situational trigger (if stressed, smoke.) These urges last from 2 to 20 seconds - taking a few deep breaths and remembering that I'm happy to be not smoking pretty much makes them go away.

I really think the important work for me now is relearning how to live as a non-smoker --- learning what to do with myself during the everyday situations in which I used to smoke. I think for someone in the second week like me, this relearning and the frustrations (what do I do with myself in THIS situation) that can accompany it may be the biggest

challenges and the greatest risk of relapse. Caring for one's quit by reading information and remembering reasons why has been the way I've overcome those risks and succeeded in staying nicotine free.

Chris

Nicotine free for 1 Week 2 Days 3 Hours 51 Minutes 47 Seconds.

"Dance like no one's watching, love like it's never going to hurt, sing like no one's listening, live like it's heaven on earth." --Guy Clark

#58 | 14 Jul 2001 | John (Gold)

Chris you sound like a math teacher! We'd love to see this thread plotted! That would be interesting! Stay strong! You're looking good :))

#59 | 14 Jul 2001 | Joel

Hello everyone. I just got home from my meeting and see that there are a number of posts from people experiencing both physical (blood sugar type) and psychological (various forms of depression and anger) symptoms. I just wanted to bring this thread up to clarify that these reactions are temporary, not what it is like to be a long term ex-smoker, but more what it is like to be a smoker in the early stages of a quit. I will bring up some posts on these issues but just want to make sure that everyone realizes that these effects are temporary, and if you spend a little time reading through this entire thread you will see the overall ease that not smoking will become with a little patience, time and experience. I'll try to spend a little time tomorrow addressing individual issues raised here. Until then, focus on the importance of making it through the day, or night here in America. Keep your focus on a day at a time and remember for now that your goal is to never take another puff!

Joel

#60 | 17 Jul 2001, | John (Gold)



This ash free journey to comfort is filled with a bumper crop of healing, the highest quality air that has fueled our lungs in years, and even a few extra coins in our pockets. Contrary to your fears and the message of early withdrawal, recovery rewards each of us with our very own permanent rainbow. Remember, it is vastly easier staying clean than getting here. Still just one rule ... none today!

Breathe deep, hug hard, live long,

John (Zep)

#61 | 17 Jul 2001 | Susanne

How often do I still want a cigarette? Good question.

It's been a long, long time since I last wanted one - months, I suppose. The cigarettes, urges, craves, have simply vanished out of my life. I stay prepared, and with the knowledge gained in here I'll always be ready for an urge, but the truth is, I think it's over now.

I don't want cigarettes any more, that's all there is to it.

Thank you, Freedom!

Susanne

One year, 14 hours, 48 minutes and 1 second. 7312 cigarettes not smoked, saving ATS 14.624,67. Life saved: 3 weeks, 4 days, 9 hours, 20 minutes.

#62 | 17 Jul 2001 | Jenni (green)

Hi everyone. Even though I have 'only' been nicotine free for 1 month, 1 week, and 1 day, I have not wanted a cigarette for weeks. I have occasionally wanted a something ... a I don't know what ... but I knew it was not really a cigarette I wanted. And I breathed ... and I read some more ... And I posted, and vented ... And the antsy, got-to-fill-this-black-hole-inside-me feeling went away. As my addiction realised I was not going to even consider having a cigarette s/he weakened and went away quicker and quicker and quicker, and I got stronger and stronger and stronger.

And I am so glad I am a non-smoker, and addiction-free, and I found this site. Thanks to everyone for being there. Love Jenni xxx

#63 | 25 Jul 2001 | Joel

In case any of John's new clinic participants are looking in today, or if any new lurker are stopping by too. This string is really important, everyone needs to know that what ever they are experiencing now does get better with time and experience. Things will get better and better as long as you know to never take another puff!

Joel

#64 | 26 Jul 2001 | JERGOLD1

I posted to this thread exactly a month ago. Just read my post and have to say it is amazing how fast things change. I am not the same person 30 days later. No longer have any craves. I think about a cigarette only a few times a day now, much less than before. The thoughts now are no longer threatning. I do not have any real desire for a cigarette any longer. Just little things remind me of smoking here and there. That is it.

John

Two months, 1 hour, 38 minutes and 25 seconds. 1221 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$283.97. Life saved: 4 days, 5 hours, 45 minutes.

#65 | 28 Jul 2001 | daniw911(green)

I've been sitting here thinking about the question;"How many times a day do I want a cigarette?" The answer is: I don't want one. It comes to mind but only because it's something I have done for years.If I stop and think, feel my body and my needs, I find out that I don't want a cigarette. As you all know my husband is stationed in Kuwait. Today was a bad day, I missed him terribly. He finally got through on the phone and we

talked for awhile. Then I felt a tremendous craving coming on. I stopped for a second and figured it out. I didn't want to smoke, I wanted to cry because I missed him so much. That is what I did. After some time I was fine and felt much better. I need to learn not to cover up my feelings with nicotine. It's different, strange, and exciting. I am finally going to be the person I was suppose to be all along. BTW I ran on the treadmill again today. My husband and I are talking about running together when he gets back.

Daniela

1 week, 22 hours, and whatever else

#66 | 28 Jul 2001 | pheonix(SILVER)

Maybe just maybe, I think about a smoke once in a fortnight. I wouldn't call it a crave. Just a thought. I LOVE being a non smoker. I would like the whole word to join me. WOW I'm making progress in my world.

pheonix

#67 | 29 Jul 2001 | nomadfaerie gold

Gosh - What a fantastic idea! How often have you thought "oh my God - How long will this misery last??!" Will there EVER be a time when I don't need to smoke - when I don't want it?

I will offer this: Wanting cigarettes is not a matter of seconds or any amount of time per day for me now. If I were to assign a time element, it would be seconds per week or month at MOST! And often - not even that. Really!!!

Understand this: The danger I still feel is that when I am partying, I sometimes think - vaguely - "having a smoke right now would be fun".

But, no matter how hard I'm partying, it's not hard to remember how that line of thought works out. What it did to me, what it cost me. What it will cost me if I fall back into that junkie thinking! What I took back, by getting out from under nicofool!!

Light some incense. It works like a charm, no lie! Please, don't ever take another puff. You've got it made now! Keep that good quit!

Peace, love & bubblegum

nomadfaerie

refusing to be seduced by the enemy for 9 Months 4 Weeks 1 days, 0:59 minutes ,
12,080 cigs not smoked, \$2,416.00 saved, 1m 1w 4d 22:40 life saved

#68 | 03 Aug 2001 | SecretSquirrel

This should stay near the top. I can't remember the last time I thought about having a cigarette. It must have been a month or two back and the thought lasted about three seconds.

The only bad thing about not thinking about it is that I rarely visit this community and rarely look at my quit stats. It's unbelievable that I would have puffed my way through over 6,000 sticks since my quit. Man, that's a whole lot of rancid tar that my body hasn't had to deal with.

Nine months, two weeks, 33 minutes and 44 seconds. 6314 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$1,262.90. Life saved: 3 weeks, 22 hours, 10 minutes.

#69 | 06 Aug 2001 | Surprise Quitter(Gold)

I was a lurker for almost 6 weeks before I came into Freedom. So there truly are us lurkers out there watching everyone and reading, reading. I was Green when I came in. I had alot of your support with me already but was beginning to have those big doubts. I find I don't think cigarette anymore but spearmint gum. When I use to say cigarette now gum. It is at most 3 times a day. But usually less. MY Stats are: One month, two weeks, 16 hours, 17 minutes and 54 seconds. 982 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$172.01. Life saved: 3 days, 9 hours, 50 minutes.

I know a couple of lurkers who stayed true to this board and are beyond Bronze. So a big Thank you from them!!!! Carolyn

#70 | 14 Aug 2001 | churninern.ffn

GREAT POST!!! Listen all, I don't think many people remember me, but the beginning stages of MY quit were full of all the cravings and doubts that I have seen echoed time and again. I am proud to say that I have recently completed one full trip around the sun, SMOKEFREE, and just want to add to what Joel has posted.

The cravings DO disappear. The smokefree life becomes a welcome blessing. Your world doesn't come to an end. You are not ostracised by you friends, peers or cohorts. Life is great in the nonsmoking section of society.

Hang tough; stick it out; it's worth it. Ppeace'

ernie

One year, one week, three days

#71 | 15 Aug 2001 | Freebird

Well, I just read this post for the first time and it sure is encouraging! I've been nico-free for 2 weeks, 1 day and now only have 4 or 5 urges each day. This is a definite improvement over the constant craves of the first 3 days! I know I have to be patient ... and also try to enjoy each victory over every urge that I defeat! I want to come back to this post when I am GREEN and tell you how I'm doing! I know it'll just get better every day!

Judy

#72 | 16 Aug 2001 | Treese (Silver)

The last time I posted here, I was only 10 days into my quit and I felt I was doing pretty good then. Today it is 7 weeks 3 days and I can honestly say that I do not crave cigs at all anymore. I still have thoughts of them if doing something that I used to associate smoking with but from all the education here, it is only thoughts. It does not go any further than that. I have conquered several triggers in these last few weeks and keep my guard up at all times. My last trigger situation happened yesterday at the main office where I'm employed where I was sitting in the breakroom and another employee came in to have her "smoke" this was the first time I've had this situation at work because I do work at another branch with all nonsmokers and I was working at another office that day. Well, I passed with flying colors. The smoke did not smell at all appealing like it once used to and my eyes, nose and throat were all burning by the time the cig was extinguished. My only thoughts going thru my mind was that I'm sooo glad I don't do that anymore. I keep telling myself i can't believe i did that for 31 years!!! It's the education, attitude and determination that will get you there!!! So you newbies out there, it does get better every day. Oh, by the way, there was another employee there too who also is a smoker and mentioned she would like to quit. You can bet i gave her this website address!!!!

Treese

#73 | 24 Aug 2001 | Patticake (Gold)

In all the threads I've seen started at Freedom in the seven months, 6 days, minutes and seconds, six thousand, five-hundred and forty-seven cigarettes I have not smoked, this is one of my favorites. It has been exactly two months since I've replied, and like others, things do continue to change.

I'm one of those aggravating people who for some reason think everything has to be analyzed. Why do I do this, why do I do that, what if the sun doesn't come up, what if the sky falls on my head. Well, who knows, who cares. In addition to not lighting up I 'am also learning to lighten up. I have finally come to the realization and acceptance that smoking is no longer an issue in my life. Maintaining my quit is of course but the smoking issue itself no longer has the ability to take precedence over my other thoughts. For those of you who are unfortunate to be like me you can understand how scary it is to let go of something you have really worked hard at worrying about. Suddenly I find myself functioning in a capacity I like to think is normal, without worrying if nicodemon is going to tackle me to the ground. I find myself walking as tall as anyone who is five foot four can without continually hunching over anticipating a jab from the back from old nic. Like we've all read here, yea, we let go of something, but like everything else in life we've lost, the pain does gradually fade and all we have left is the memory, and it isn't even a fond one.

So here I am seven months later, the sky hasn't fallen on my head and the sun keeps coming up every day. And I am learning to live with the fact that I have really done something worthwhile in my life and that it is a good thing. And of course I still have the occasional thought, good grief, except for breathing in and out there's nothing else I've done for 40+ consecutive years. Just because my smoking habit is gradually fading doesn't mean my memory is. Just as I said in my original post to this thread, I still keep my smoking issue filed away in the 'things not so important to think about' file. However, the lessons I learned here are ever present and available at a moment's notice to draw on, it becomes a natural part of day to day coping skills. I 've learned a valuable lesson here, one certainly not to be forgotten. I love the place in time I live in and I want to continue to have this freedom I have worked so hard for.

Newbies it does in fact get easier and easier. Suddenly you discover you are on auto pilot. Being smoke free becomes a way of life so enjoy it. Let's call it our 'new habit', it is a guaranteed good one.

Antonia

#74 | 24 Aug 2001 | Glynda (Gold)

Hi Everyone! This is a good thread to keep at the top. It's has helped me a lot. I'm into my quit for over 10 days now and I still think about it a few times an hour for a few seconds.

BUT....I'm mostly thinking about how I don't smoke anymore! Very simple! Maybe once a day, I get blind-sided with a very strong and powerful thought of "I have to have a cigarette, NOW!" My responding thought is "But, I don't smoke anymore" and it's GONE! HAHAAHA The "gotta smoke" thoughts are getting rather wimpy! There seems to be absolutely NOTHING behind them! It's a beautiful thing :)

When I'm in situations where I know I'll be in a smoke-free environment for a few hours, I remember when I smoked how those situations would cause me to panic because I wouldn't be able to smoke. Now...it's great, because I think "Can't smoke for a few hours?...so what! I don't smoke anymore"

My biggest problems are episodes of feeling a little disoriented or dizzy or fuzzy. I haven't had this much clean oxygen in over 20 years!

Glynda - Going on Quit Day 11

#75 | 28 Aug 2001 | MMzMarg (Green)

I went shopping with my daughter yesterday. We were shopping and shopping for hours (off to college shopping) and after about 2 hours of non-stop shop till you drop, she looked at me and smiled and said "Isn't it nice to spend time together without wondering, even once, how to sneak out for a cigarette" and it sure was! I didn't realize how much cigarettes had deprived me of the ability to enjoy the moment. I was always looking for the next fix moment instead of feeling the pleasure of the moment at hand. Freedom is a joyous thing. After being nicotine free for one month + 4 hrs how often do I miss cigs... not nearly as much as I thought I would. Do I still want a cigarette? not nearly as often as I thought I would. Do I treasure my freedom. Every second of the day!

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Page created January 3, 2018 and last updated on January 3, 2018 by [John R. Polito](#)