

## *Joel's Reinforcement Library*

**NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

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# *"Why Did I Start Smoking? Why Did I Quit?"*

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It is pretty funny. People often try to reflect on when and why they started smoking as if thinking that it would answer the daunting question of why they continue to smoke. In reality, the reason you start and the reasons you continue are not the same.

Some people start because of peer pressure. But in society today, if peer pressure were going to be the influencing factor, it would be making people quit smoking, not continue to smoke.

Some people took up smoking to look older and more mature. How many people in their 30's, 40's, 50's or 60's or beyond want to do everything in their power to look older than they already do?

Others take up smoking out of a sense of rebellion. Their parents, teachers, doctors and other adults told them they couldn't smoke. So to show them who was in control, they smoked anyway. Well, how many 60-year-old smokers are there who are smoking today so that they can snub their nose at their 80 to 90 year old parents saying, "you see, you still can't tell me not to smoke."

People start for a variety of reasons, but they continue for just one: they became drug addicts, the drug -- nicotine. It is interesting though because the same thing happens when the smoker quits. The initial reason that people quit smoking often become secondary in importance to reasons they eventually stay off.

Some people quit to make others happy, or because of non-smoking policies issued at a place of employment. But after quitting, they find they feel better than ever, are calmer, have more energy, have more money, overall are happier and in more control of their own life. Their new reasons may have little bearing to their initial quit reason. In many ways they are better reasons and more lasting. Or, some people who quit for

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medical risks alone start to realize that not smoking is just a nicer way of life. Sometimes the quality of life becomes more important to them than the concept of length of life.

Whatever your initial reason for quitting was, it is still valid. On top of that there are numerous benefits you may have noticed and some you haven't even thought of yet which are still to be noticed. Some you will never think of but are real anyway. Keep focused on every good reason not to smoke. This becomes your ammunition to stay the course, and to ride out those annoying craves or thoughts that can pop out of nowhere.

Whether or not you ever accurately remember why you started to smoke, as long as you remember why you quit and why you desire to stay free, you will keep your resolve strong enough to **NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

Joel

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