

Joel's Reinforcement Library

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

Fixating on a Cigarette

What happens to some people is that when they are off smoking for a certain time period they start fixating on a cigarette. By that I mean they forget all the bad cigarettes they ever smoked, they forget the ones they smoked without ever really thinking about them even at the time they were being smoked, and they start to remember and focus on one good cigarette. It may be one they smoked 20 years earlier but it was a good one and they now want one again.

It's a common tactic for the ex-smokers to try and tell themselves that they do not really want that "good" cigarette. Well, the problem is, at that moment they really do want it. An internal debate erupts, "I want one, no I don't, one sounds great, no it doesn't, oh just one, not just one!" The problem is that if the ex-smoker's focus is on just "one" cigarette then there is no clear-cut winning side to the debate. The ex-smoker needs to change the internal discussion.

Don't say that you don't want one when you do, rather acknowledge the desire but ask yourself, "Do I want all the other cigarettes that go with it." Then, "do I want the package deal that goes with the others? The expense, social stigma, smell, health effects, possible loss of life. Do I want to go back to smoking, full-fledged, until it cripples and kills me?"

Stated like this it normally is not a back and forth debate. The answer will normally be, "No, I don't want to smoke under these terms," and those are the only terms that a cigarette comes with.

Normally if viewed like this the debate is over almost immediately after being pulled into focus. Again, if the focus is only one, you can drive yourself nuts throughout the entire day. If you focus on the whole package deal, you will walk away from the moment relieved to still be smoke free and sufficiently reinforced to **NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

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