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## "Please help me stop smoking for New Year's!"

New Year's is by far the biggest quit smoking time of the year. Sadly, alcohol use alone contributes to smoking relapse and defeat of up to 50% of New Year's stop smoking resolutions. We hope you'll continue reading until you become smarter than your addiction is strong. Knowledge is power!



**Question:** Each year I promise myself that this New Year's I'll stop smoking, but each year I fail. I've tried most quitting products without success. Could this year be different or am I hopeless? Please help!

Sincerely,

Losing Hope

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Dear Losing Hope:

You have no reason to believe what I'm about to tell you. In fact, smokers have been [lied to](#) by quitting product makers for so long that they have every right to be skeptical. But accepting three facts will dramatically increase your odds of success.

**Recovery Insight #1** - See yourself as a [real drug addict](#) in every sense. Your brain

dopamine pathways, your mind's priorities teacher, have been taken hostage. Your chemical dependency upon smoking nicotine is as real and permanent as alcoholism. While we can arrest our dependency and live comfortably on probation, we cannot kill it.

Chronic nicotine use desensitized dopamine pathway neurons causing growth of millions of extra nicotinic-type acetylcholine receptors, what's known as [up-regulation](#). Although quitting brings down-regulation, we remain permanently wired for nicotine and relapse. Like alcoholism, there's only one rule that if followed guarantees success: no nicotine today! But just one powerful puff, and like the alcoholic taking a sip, full and complete relapse is all but assured. It's called the "[Law of Addiction](#)."

**Recovery Insight #2** - Nicotine addiction is about living a lie. Taken hostage by an external chemical, your brain's priorities teacher has you falsely convinced that smoking nicotine gives you your edge, helps you cope, defines who you are and that life without it will be horrible. It's a massive lie. I wish you could spend five minutes experiencing the calm, quiet and comfort inside the average ex-smoker's mind. It's why ex-smokers seem so obnoxious. Quitting can be our greatest awakening ever. They simply can't believe how wrong they were.

Embrace coming home, don't fear it. What sense does it make to fear arriving at a day where we go entire days without once wanting to smoke nicotine? It's a wonderful thing not bad. Although almost impossible to believe right now, everything we did as smokers can be done as well as or better as us. Recovery is the process of reclaiming life, one activity, person, place and emotion at a time.

**Recovery Insight #3** - Fully accept now that it may take up to 72 hours for your body to become 100% nicotine-free and for you to experience peak withdrawal. After that, things will gradually begin to improve. Once nicotine use ends, your brain will work around-the-clock to down-regulate receptor counts and restore natural sensitivities. For some, getting to peak withdrawal may feel like an emotional train wreck. But within 2-3 weeks sensitivity restoration will be substantially complete.

To aid in moving beyond peak withdrawal, [do not skip any meals](#). If unable to concentrate or experiencing mind fog you've likely skipped a meal. If your diet permits, drink extra natural fruit juices but only for the first 3 days (cranberry is excellent). It will aid in helping stabilize blood sugar levels and speed nicotine's elimination from the bloodstream.

If a heavy caffeine drinker, be aware that ending nicotine use [doubles blood caffeine levels](#). If drinking twice your normal caffeine intake would make you feel anxious or edgy consider cutting your normal daily caffeine intake by up to one-half.

Also, be aware that [up to 50%](#) of all smoking relapses are associated with alcohol use. Allow yourself to move beyond peak withdrawal and begin sensing improvement before drinking alcohol. If unable to go three days without drinking alcohol you may be facing alcohol dependency issues too. If so, research suggests that arresting both chemical dependencies at the same time likely offers the best odds of success.

I strongly encourage you to visit and explore [WhyQuit](#). Download Joel Spitzer's free e-

book "[Never Take Another Puff](#)" or my e-book "[Freedom from Nicotine – The Journey Home](#)." Watch some of Joel's [64 free video quitting lessons](#), download a detailed [quitting tips list](#), meet [Bryan](#), [Noni](#), [Deb](#) and [Kim](#), and visit our [free online support group](#), Freedom.

Knowledge and understanding are key to a lasting recovery. Why quit afraid, alone and in darkness? Why not turn on the lights? Why try landing a plane without putting the wheels down? Once ready, the next few minutes will be all that matter and each will be do-able. Baby steps! No nicotine just one hour, challenge and day a time. Yes you can!

Breathe deep, hug hard, live long,

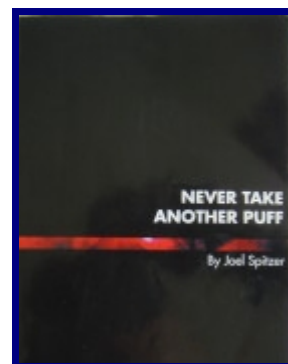
[John R. Polito](#)

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Editor [WhyQuit](#)

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## Have you read our free quitting e-books?



Read both and experience the **"POWER"** of knowledge!

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## Learn More About Stopping Smoking

- [Your 2011 New Year's Quit Smoking Resolution](#) - A short summary of quit smoking tips
- [New Year's Quitting Tips](#) - A short summary of quit smoking tips
- [WhyQuit.com](#) - the Internet's oldest forum devoted to the art, science and psychology of cold turkey quitting, the quitting method used by 80-90% of all successful long-term ex-smokers.

- ["Never Take Another Puff"](#) - a free 149 page quit smoking book in PDF format by Joel Spitzer of Chicago, the Internet's leading authority on cold turkey quitting and nicotine dependency recovery. Joel's free book is an insightful collection of almost 100 short quitting articles on almost every cessation topic imaginable.
- ["Freedom from Nicotine - The Journey Home"](#) - this link is to the free 240 page PDF version John R. Polito's new nicotine dependency recovery book. WhyQuit's 1999 founder and a former 30-year heavy smoker, John provides a comprehensive yet easy to follow road-map to freedom from nicotine.
- [Joel's Library](#) - Joel's Library is home to more than 100 original short articles by Joel Spitzer on every quitting topic imaginable, home to 64 video quitting lessons and home to daily lesson guides that walk new quitters through the first two weeks.
- [Nicotine Addiction 101](#) - WhyQuit's guide to nicotine dependency.
- [Freedom](#) - the Internet's only 100% nicotine-free peer messageboard support forum. Explore hundreds of thousands of archived member posts.
- [Nicotine Cessation Topic Index](#) - an alphabetical subject matter index to hundreds of nicotine cessation support group discussions at [Freedom](#).

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Created on December 14, 2009 and last updated December 06, 2010 by [John R. Polito](#).