

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

### Page 8

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.

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#176 | 22 Sep 2002 | janetd (GOLD)

Lilac, you're starting to look a little bronze, aren't you? And that elusive comfort seems to be coming your way, too (finally!!!). Glad to see it!

Regards, yqs, Janet

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#177 | 22 Sep 2002 | Lilac (Bronze)

Janet, thanks for this and your many other encouraging posts..  
Lilac

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#178 | 23 Sep 2002 | Pilar28(GOLD)

Dear newbie:

I've been off nicotine for over 3 months now and really the worst of it it's loooooong passed. I almost never think of smoking. The last time it happened was after a meal friday night when another friend stoop up to go outside to have a cig. But it wasn't even a strong craving, it was just a thought and it was gone almost immediately.

I think about smoking maybe twice a week now. I'm serious. I smoked for 20 years but you know what has made the difference? Freedom. I don't have any illusions about not being an addict or being able to enjoy it 'a little bit more', 'one more' or something. It's all or nothing. I read every day, keep myself aware and I'm doing great with the support here.

Pilar  
BRONZE.....

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#179 | 30 Sep 2002 | bestmorris

Hi. I don't think I have more than two or three cravings per day. Usually boredom makes me think about a cigarette in the following way: as I am bored would the cigarette help me to feel better. Strangely enough my answer is now: NO, it wouldn't.

Approximately 200 secs per day I could really physically feel that I missing a cigarette. I am coping very well with those cravings. Last week-end I didn't have any craving.

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF is the rule, and this will SET you FREE.

Quit for: 1 Week 3 Days 23 Hours 17 Minutes 42 Seconds.  
NOT smoked 197 cigarettes, for a savings of €51.44.  
Life Saved: 16 Hours 25 Minutes.

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#180 | 30 Sep 2002 | SammymnGOLD

Haven't been here for awhile, but used to read and reread this post during particularly "bad days." So, now at almost 3 months, I think about a cigarette a couple times a week for I'm guessing, 15-30 seconds total. It's usually a fleeting thought that goes skating by. I wanted one a couple weeks ago, but that's it. The wanting was quickly reality checked back into its corner by my pat responses.

Not smoking: It remains completely nonnegotiable.

Sam

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#181 | 11 Oct 2002 | candu2 Gold

Dear Newbie

On most days I never have a thought. On a stressful day I might start chewing on a straw and breathing deep and the thought may cross my mind for 5 seconds. That is when I tell myself that things will not be made better by having a cigarette. I have also realized that by handling my stressful situation then and there I get over it quicker and am not wasting time smoking 1 or 2 cigs. Still we must remain alert for sneaky triggers and always remember not to give in to addiction.

"Never take another puff"  
Dave 3M 3D

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#182 | 11 Oct 2002 | freefromit GOLD

Dear Newbie...I'm still a Newbie myself but I wanted to post to this topic because I couldn't believe how quickly the frequency of wanting a cigarette diminished. The first week, every day, every hour seemed to drag by sooooo slowly...maybe because I was so aware of making it through "One Day at a Time." By around 10 days into my quit, however, time had resumed it's normal pace. I come here and read every day so I am "thinking" about cigarettes and my Quit every day, but as for actually wanting one, I'd say less than 5 minutes a day, and almost always at the same time...on my way home from work or after dinner. The urge goes away very quickly..if it's a stubborn one I have some aromatherapy oil that I rub under my nose and do a little deep breathing...and voila! bye-bye pesky craving!

~~~Marie  
3 weeks 4 days

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#183 | 12 Oct 2002 | S Sweet

My husband and I were just talking about smoking and we both said almost in unison "i am so glad i don't smoke anymore".... we then started talking abt the past two years and how different things are now. i remember those days where a day wouldn't pass that i didn't want to smoke.... i remember the very first time i went a whole day without wanting to smoke.... i remember my first smoking dreams and how devastating they were to me..... and i remember even at 5 months or so having a night of brutal tears and "i wanna smoke so bad" cries. as time went by the thoughts were very rare.... stressful occasions still were my trigger for a while.

i can tell you now though.... just passing a 2 year mark and i NEVER think of smoking.... my hubby is abt to approach his 2 year mark and he agrees - he can't even remember the last time he thought of smoking.



quit...and I did A-OK. Had a fleeting moment of "I miss smoking" but it was not a "I need a cigarette" moment. The moment of missing smoking was VERY fleeting - my mind is very quick these days at the the math of: ONE PUFF = (yuck+yikes)\*INFINIUM

HealthyNow

After 20+ years of smoking - I have chosen not to smoke any cigarettes for 1M 1W 3D 8h. I have NOT smoked 620, for a savings of \$155.14. Life Saved: 2D 3h 40m.

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#189 | 23 Oct 2002 | Joel

For Patti:

If you have a printer and a lot of paper you may want to print this string out and pass it along to your doctor. Not only will he or she see that quitting is possible, but he or she will also see that living relatively comfortable without smoking is the way life will become if people just give themselves a chance to become really nicotine free. The way for all ex-smokers to get to the point that thoughts for smoking are sporadic to almost non-existent is to always remember just to never take another puff!

Joel

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#190 | 23 Oct 2002 | Geo (Gold)

I remember being told when I first joined Freedom that as time went by the cravings would subside and it would get a lot easier. I had a hard time believing that as I paced the floor, bit my nails, looked at my watch, argued with myself, posted a desperate message, etc. Now I can't believe how fast the time has gone by! It's been over 2 years now and I can honestly say that I have a slight craving maybe once every couple of months, and any I do have pass in about 5 seconds. I think that only happens because quite a few of my friends still smoke. So newbie, guard your quit and stay positive! You have a lot to look forward to!

Your quit brother Geo

Two years, four weeks, one day!

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#191 | 28 Oct 2002 | John (Gold)

With each passing year it gets a bit harder for me to determine if what I'm feeling is actually a "thought" of "want" or just a quick glimpse down memory lane. Let me try to explain. On May 15, 1999 I started this wonderful temporary journey of adjustment and healing. I experienced my glory week type crave episode at about day 60 and not long

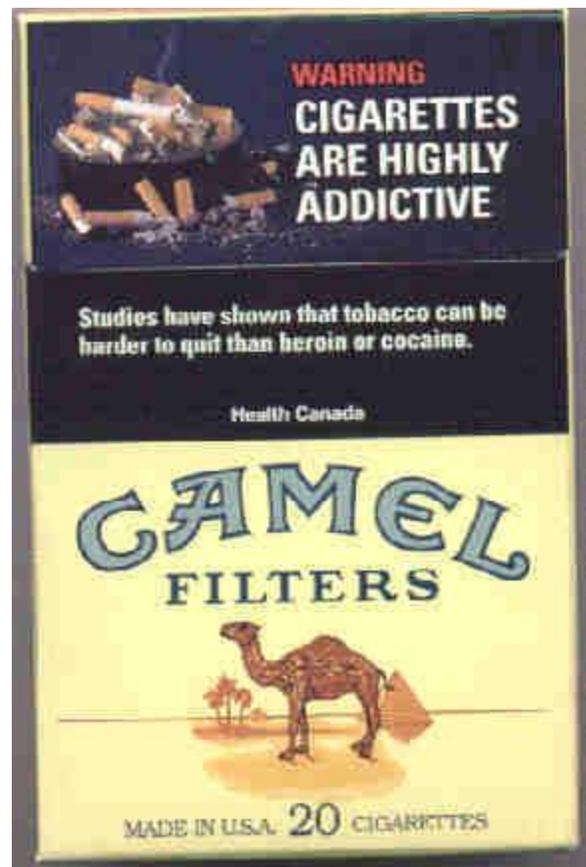
thereafter experienced my first day where I never once "thought" about "wanting" to smoke. Although I continued to experience many days where brief painless "thoughts" would enter my mind and remain for a matter of seconds, with each passing month the number of such "thoughts" became fewer and fewer, and before long I couldn't remember how many months it had been since my last such "thought."

In December of 2000 I had a "thought" of "wanting" to smoke and it had been so long that a recall being amazed even during the few seconds that the experience occurred. Don't get me wrong, working here at Freedom, not a smoking odor or a visual encounter with a single smoking smoker goes by where I don't try to study the situation, but noticing, looking, smelling, or wishing I could reach out and do something to help, is far different than "wanting" to smoke nicotine.

Well, from about the year and a half mark until just about a week ago there was no situation where I found myself wanting. It was then that a large care package arrived from Canada containing scores of empty Canadian cigarette packs and four unopened packs. The beauty of these packs was that they all contained large amazing warning labels and warning pictures that I was excited about sharing with smokers, glory seekers, and cessation workers here in South Carolina.

The label that most interests me is the addiction warning label. Sadly, it's a warning that children and teens here in the U.S. almost never read or hear. Three of the unopened packs carried that label. As I worked my way through them the smell from the box and empty packs grew pretty strong. Like a child at Christmas I read and then started scanning the packs. The first warning I tried to scan was on an unopened pack of Camels, a brand well recognized here in the States, but the fine print didn't seem to come through, I blamed it on glare, and pulled the band removing the new plastic wrapper before scanning it again.

The accompanying graphic is of the pack I scanned. Once done I opened it and looked inside under the foil at all the neatly lined-up little nicotine fixes that would never get to deliver their enslaving and deadly cargoes. It was then that it hit me. For just a few seconds my mouth actually tasted like it had at the end of a long day, or the next morning, after having sucked down an entire day's worth of mandatory feedings. Do you remember the foul taste, as if an entire army had



marched in mud through your mouth? A nasty replay!

Anyway, I'm still not sure if I rates up there as a brief "thought" of "wanting" to smoke but still it was a very vivid reminder of where I'd been and why I wouldn't ever want to return.

As I head toward four years of freedom and healing, it could be tomorrow or possibly months or even years before I get another few seconds of vivid reminder of my destructive past, but in a strange sort of way I look forward to it. I'm beginning to see such experiences as the trained and comfortable mind's subtle reminders that as far along as this oxygen rich body gets, it still remains just one puff of nicotine away from three packs a day and that to keep this rich sense of calmness I need only - NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

John - Three Years & Five Months of Healing!

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#192 | 01 Nov 2002 | Joel

Hope you don't mind Chris but I think your post also belongs here too. It will be seen by new people this way for as long as Freedom exists.

From: Tucker1949(Gold) (Original Message) Sent: 11/1/2002 2:29 AM

Posting my Stats. Waited up to do this.

Two years, 13 minutes and 41 seconds. 5110 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$968.36. Life saved: 2 weeks, 3 days, 17 hours, 50 minutes. Woo Hoo !!! Thank You Freedom!! Thank You ME!!! Patting myself on the back.

I have had a bad year with the loss on my Adoptive Mom , two months later my Dad. Having our house up for sale, holding open house 24/7. Not that it is a big deal but Martha does not live here, I am so glad , and it is mind boggeling how someone can show up to look just when I have trashed the place with a project. Then I have had troubles with skin cancer but on the mend now.

Through all of this I never once wanted a sickertette. I only think of how grateful I am that I do NOT smoke anymore. winter is comming on again. Right now it is about 18 degrees outside. Two years ago I would have been sneaking out there and shivering through the last smoke of the day.I am much happier to be sitting here warm and relaxed not even wanting a smoke.

No matter how hard it is to get through the quitting process just hang in there. If I can do it anyone can. It is so worth it in the end to feel this relaxed. I do know that I can never let myself take another puff. Total addiction is just a puff away. I have learned enough through Freedom to know I do not even want the puff. The Aah feeling has turned to

uck. There is no way I would put myself through quitting again for bad breath, poor health and an empty wallet.

Thank you again EVERYONE for supporting me through one of the most important things I have done in my life. Chris

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#193 | 01 Nov 2002 | Rickgoldx5

🙄 sorry the point was the stats right?

I'm grateful to be: Five months, four weeks, 3 hours, 54 minutes and 54 seconds. 14855 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$2,220.87. Life saved: 7 weeks, 2 days, 13 hours, 55 minutes.

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#194 | 02 Nov 2002 | second chance (green)

Dear Marie,

I have craved a cigarette today more than usual (3weeks, 48 hrs). It wasn't a particularly stressful day, either. Have had more sugar than usual, thought that might have something to do with the increase in cravings. Can you tell me what the name of the aromatherapy that you use? That sounds like a great idea!

Kristy

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#195 | 12 Nov 2002 | Nora (Gold)

Thanks John for posting my picture.

It sure portrays the life I lead now. Retired, taking it easy and never wanting another puff!

Nora at: Two years, three months, six days, 8 hours, 9 minutes and 17 seconds. 24850 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$2,845.49. Life saved: 12 weeks, 2 days, 6 hours, 50 minutes.

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#196 | 12 Nov 2002 | John (Gold)

Hey, we must be long lost twins Nora 😊

I couldn't agree more!

While being an active addict I never once stopped to



consider that we each expended a tremendous amount of energy in order to keep our blood serum nicotine level in that magic comfort zone, puff after puff, cigarette after cigarette, pack after pack, carton after carton, month after month, and year after butt sucking year!

By golly I've earned this rest and I'm darn well going to enjoy it

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#197 | 12 Nov 2002 | FruityPatti

Thanks Joel! I do have plenty of paper and a printer, so I printed this and will take it in to my doctor at my next scheduled appt. Thanks! Sorry it took this long, I did not see your post from the 23rd until today. Patti  
One month tomorrow.

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#198 | 13 Nov 2002 | OBob Gold

**Zero...** 🍵

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#199 | 13 Nov 2002 | ChrisQ (bronze)

Hey: I get an urge to smoke for about 30-60 seconds every day.

One month, two weeks, 13 hours, 12 minutes and 53 seconds. 668 cigarettes not smoked, saving \$100.33. Life saved: 2 days, 7 hours, 40 minutes.

Chris (green)

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#200 | 16 Nov 2002 | Joel

👍 There is a pretty good chance that we are going to be having a lot of people looking in on us over the next few weeks. John has contacted a number of newspapers about WhyQuit.com and Freedom, and I already has an interview with one of Chicago's major papers. I am hoping that we have a number of threads coming up over the next week that can really inspire confidence to new readers, just coming in on a lark but finding something hopeful that will inspire them to want to start a quit. This string is one that I think offers great hope that there is life after smoking and that it is a much more comfortable life than most people ever believe possible. I hope we can keep it coming up over the next week to get the message out that life does become more and more comfortable the longer a person keeps to his or her commitment to never take another puff!

Joel

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