

Joel's Reinforcement Library

NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

Reasons People Want to Quit Smoking

During my almost 30 years of being involved with smoking cessation education, smokers have given a multitude of reasons for wanting to stop smoking. Many needed to stop for medical purposes. This isn't surprising considering that over 400,000 Americans die every year from diseases caused by cigarettes. Among the more common ailments directly caused by smoking are: heart disease, cancers, strokes, peripheral vascular diseases, emphysema, bronchitis, ulcers and others. In addition, treatment of preexisting conditions can be complicated by smoking. Risk of anesthesia and post-operative complications are increased by use of cigarettes.

Social pressure is another major reason for quitting. Smoking is now viewed as smelly, offensive and disgusting by non-smokers as well as by many of the over 50 million ex-smokers in our country. While smoking was once thought to be sophisticated, people who smoke today are scorned by many of their peers. Some smokers now feel that they appear lacking in self control and looked down upon for not having the intelligence to quit. Some wish to quit smoking to set a positive example for their children.

The expense of smoking is another major reason. Many remember saying, "If cigarettes ever reach \$1.00 a pack, I will quit!" Now cigarettes are approaching triple that amount and these same people have continued to smoke. A smoking couple can be motivated to quit when realizing they are spending in excess of \$3,000 a year to maintain their addiction. Besides, smokers burn holes in their clothes, car, furniture and carpeting. One past clinic participant even burned a hole in a bride's wedding gown. Not only can costly burns result, but accidental fires can be started. In fact, over half of the fire deaths in our country are caused by cigarette smoking.

Many of my clinic participants have quit smoking previously for a substantial period of time and returned to smoking. When they were free from cigarettes they felt healthier, calmer, and happier. But lack of understanding allowed them to tempt a

puff. This resulted in reinforcement of their full fledged addiction. They come to the clinic ready to reestablish their lifestyle as an ex-smoker.

While people come to us for a variety of reasons, most have one basic motivation in common. They need help to quit smoking. They know the dangers, hassles, and expense but still cannot stop.

Cigarette smoking is an addiction. It is imperative to remember that once you are an addict, you are always an addict. Once you are off smoking for a short period of time, staying off is relatively easy. You will have occasional thoughts for a cigarette, but they are nothing compared to the urges encountered from withdrawal during the early quitting process. But you must always keep in mind that one puff will put you back to a state of full fledged dependency. Then you will either have to go back to smoking or once again go through quitting. Those are both lousy options. Think of both of them whenever you consider taking a puff. Stick with the winners and - NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!

Joel

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Page last updated by [Joel Spitzer](#) on August 25, 2003

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