

Yes, You Can Quit Smoking!



Brought to you by: Erat Picken

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION..... 4

CHAPTER 1 5

 SMOKING – A GLOBAL AFFAIR 5

Why Do People Begin to Smoke?..... 8

CHAPTER 2 10

 MAKING THE DECISION..... 10

Letting Everybody Know..... 10

A Matter of Life and Death 11

Myth Busting 12

Withdrawal Symptoms 12

CHAPTER 3 14

 GETTING PREPARED..... 14

This Is An Important Step – Take It Seriously 14

Finding A Replacement..... 15

Meditation..... 15

Breathing Exercises 16

Stay Away From Temptation..... 17

Set A Date 18

Go Ahead – Admit that You’re Addicted..... 18

All Cigarettes Are Bad..... 18

CHAPTER 4 19

 JUST DO IT – THE PROCESS OF QUITTING..... 19

Talk to Your Doctor 19

Counseling 21

You Save Money!..... 22

You Can’t Gradually Quit..... 22

CHAPTER 5	23
CHANGING YOUR LIFESTYLE.....	23
<i>Find A New Hobby</i>	24
<i>Change Your Diet</i>	24
<i>Bedtime</i>	26
<i>The Pain And The Relief</i>	27
<i>How Not To Go Back</i>	29
<i>Coping With Lapses</i>	30

Introduction

Smoking: for many people it's a nasty habit that is just a part of their life. Many people may have considered quitting and probably have even tried a couple of times, but when it comes down to it, it is a habit that is hard to break. This is especially true if you have been smoking for not just several years, but a few decades.

Most people know they need to quit, but bad habits die hard. If you have been doing something since you were thirteen years old and you are forty years old trying to quit, it's not going to come easy. It also makes it more difficult when you look at some person on TV who has lived to be ninety years old and has lit a cigarette every day of their adult lives. Those people are just part of life's little mysteries – one of the accidents that statistics will cause from time to time. But it can make it that much harder for other people to quit when older people seem to have never had a smoking related problem in their life.

Deep down inside every smoker is a little voice that cries out that you need to quit every time you light one up. There is always a little voice following you around and for many people those voices are also very real and in the form of their spouse or children. The problem here is that even though you *know* you need to quit, it is something that is very difficult to *do*.

So, if you have decided that it is time to *do* what you *know*, then congratulations. This ebook is the first step in doing something that you have known you need to do for a very long time. This ebook is designed to show you what to do to quit smoking in a manner that is targeted to help you quit and begin living a life that is free from any restraints – such as that cigarette in your hand. Hurry! Put it out now!

Chapter 1

Smoking – A Global Affair

For several years, the World Health Organization has been studying smoking trends around the world. They have developed a variety of statistics that should definitely help you put that cigarette down.

We all know that smoking is not limited to just men or just women, it's something that is practiced by both genders. It is also something that is practiced by all nationalities. However, a good deal of variation exists throughout the world when it comes to smoking trends. In Eastern Europe, more women smoke. In East Asia and the Pacific Region that figure is a lot less. Eastern Europe has one of the highest smoking rates, with 59% of adult males being smokers.

Tobacco use also varies in frequency by social class, historical era and culture. This is not unique because the same is true with other substances such as cocaine and alcohol. Historically, smoking was a pastime of the rich. It was the English royalty who loved Colonial America's tobacco so much that they practically funded the tobacco plantations of the South. This trend, however, has changed quite dramatically in the past century. Now, the rich are smoking less and the poor are smoking more. And, the more education you've had, the less likely you are to smoke.

Smokers also begin at young ages. Most are younger than 25 when they begin smoking. The majority of smokers began as teenagers. However a decline in smoking in this age group has been observed throughout the world. Perhaps all of those school programs about not smoking are finally paying off.

If you want to quit, but haven't done it yet, then you are not alone. People all over the world are trying to quit smoking. There is even a correlation between education and success in those people who have quit. The more informed people are about smoking, the more likely they are to quit. So keep on reading.

There are over 1 billion people across the world that smoke. In fact, about 1 in every 3 people smoke. Most of the smokers reside in countries that are on the low to middle end of economic spectrum. About 80% of these people live in low to moderate-income countries.

Even though the majority of smokers live in these low-income countries, the fact of the matter is that the US has its fair share as well. According to the National Health Interview Survey, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Center for Health Statistics, there are an estimated 25.6 million men and 22.6 million women in the USA who smoke.

- Among whites that are 18 years and older, about 25.1% of men smoke and 21.7% of women smoke.
- Among African Americans, 27.6% of men and 18% of women are smokers.
- Latinos and Hispanics we see 23.2% of men and 12.5% of women.
- American Indians and Alaska Natives, 32% of men smoke and 36.9% of women smoke.
- Asians, 21.3% of men and 6.9% of women.

Education seems to have a lot to do with the number of people who smoke in the US as well. With statistics showing:

- **9-11 Years of Education:** 35.4%
- **People with more than 16 years:** 11.6%
- **People living in poverty:** 33.3%

As stated previously, we all hear about those people who are smokers and have been for about 80 years of their life. For many smokers, that simple fact is a good enough reason not to stop smoking. They think that they should be able to live just as long. However, everybody's body is different. Some people may be able to live and cope with 50 years of smoking, but others cannot deal with 5 to 10 years and may suffer health effects from it. Remember, the reason you hear about those real old smokers is because they are unusual – just like if someone wins the lottery in your city, you are going to hear about it. Does that mean you have a great chance of winning the lottery? No way.

Tobacco has been linked to a variety of health conditions and one out of every five deaths is caused by smoking. Tobacco can be blamed for several conditions including:

- Pulmonary disease
- Cardiovascular disease
- Lung cancer
- Trachea cancer
- Bronchial cancer
- Larynx cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Pancreas cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Bladder cancer
- Cervix cancer
- Impotency due to reduced blood flow

It is estimated that some 85,000 deaths per year are caused by pulmonary disease, obstructive pulmonary disease and pneumonia. The longer you smoke, the worse the respiratory diseases become.

Smoking has been linked to deaths in other ways as well. The babies of pregnant women who smoke are at risk for a variety of conditions and even prenatal deaths. Check out these statistics:

- 5-6% higher prenatal deaths
- 17-26% higher low-birth weights
- 7-10% higher pre-term deliveries
- Increased risk of miscarriage
- Increased risk of fetal growth retardation

There are also a lot of fire related deaths with about 25% being from residential fires, 1,000 deaths and 3,300 fire injuries every year.

Why Do People Begin To Smoke?

While some people used to decide to become a smoker, this is rare these days. Nobody really decides one day that they are going to aspire to become a chain smoker, it just doesn't work like that. The fact is that people will usually try things at least once and so many smokers are smokers from simple experimentation.

Many people are offered a cigarette as a teenager or are pressured into it by their friends. Others begin smoking because it's "cool." Sure, it sounds cheesy, but if you are a smoker reading this ebook then you know that these are reasons that people begin smoking. You probably just didn't go out one day and decide to buy a pack of cigarettes. You also probably remember the person who offered you your first smoke as well as the moment you realized you were hooked on them. The bottom line is that once you tried it and you did it a few more times, you were hooked to the feeling. You were addicted to nicotine. They say you

have to do something 30 times in a row for it to become a habit, but because of the addiction factor, you don't need to smoke that many cigarettes.

So, you probably already know a lot of this information. Because of this, we are not going to go through the excuses of why you smoke. All smokers know why they smoke and they also know that there are no good excuses to continue doing it except for the fact that they are addicted. It's time to get down to how you quit smoking, so put all those excuses away, put that cigarette out if you haven't already, because here we go.

Chapter 2

Making The Decision

You may want to quit, but there are millions of smokers who want to quit. The first step, and the key step, is to make the *decision* to quit. You have probably wanted to quit for years, but making the commitment to do so is a hard one, especially when you feel that nicotine craving coming on.

Before you come to the real decision you will probably need to do some serious thinking. The decision to quit smoking is one that will conjure up a lot of feelings. You will need to think about it for about ten minutes. It shouldn't take you long to figure out that it is better for your health, better for your children, your spouse, etc.

Also, you need to realize that the "feel good" feeling that you get when you smoke a cigarette is not a real feeling. It is a fake feeling caused by the nicotine withdrawal that you were feeling right before you lit the cigarette. Non-smokers don't have nicotine withdrawal. They feel good all of the time! You may feel horrible while you are trying to quit, but you will feel much better in the long run and you will live much longer.

Letting Everybody Know

Quitting smoking is kind of like quitting drinking. When you quit drinking you have to tell people that you quit so they won't be tempting you with a beer, glass of wine, or shot of liquor. The same is true with smoking. When people know you smoke and they smoke as well, it is natural to offer you a smoke or suggest you go outside for a smoke or sit in smoking at the restaurant. Because of this, you need to let them know that you have quit and that you would appreciate it if

they would do everything they can to help you out. It's not an easy task to quit and you need the support from all those that you love and like.

Letting everybody know that you quit can help you more ways than one. It actually makes you more accountable for sticking to your decision to quit. You are accountable to yourself and your friends and family. Everybody around you knowing that you are quitting will also be able to offer support and keep you busy. This will help to keep you focused and your mind off of the cravings. It is also easier to keep public promises than private promises. Nobody knows if you break the private promises, but your whole world knows if you break the public ones.

The next thing to do is let your family know and then make a written promise to them. Write up a contract for yourself about your decision to quit and then sign it. Then, hang it on the refrigerator so you have to see it everyday. In this way, you are holding yourself accountable with your whole family.

It is also good if you can get a couple of friends to quit smoking with you. This way you don't feel like the odd man out and it's easier to reach goals such as these in small groups, similar to losing weight. If your spouse or partner smokes as well, quitting together can be a great goal for the both of you and you have each other to back and encourage.

A Matter Of Life And Death

Nobody ever said quitting was easy, and for some people it is one of the most difficult tasks they have ever faced. Most people underestimate how intense it can be to quit smoking. Remember, your enemy may be small, but it packs a big punch and a deadly one at that. Just keep thinking about how you're not going to become one of those statistics you read all of the time. Fight this battle to win it, as it is a matter of life and death.

Myth Busting

Many smokers believe that they could quit whenever they want. This is not true and it's not reality. The fact is that they can't do that; they just like to say it because it makes them feel better. The decision to quit is something that is not controlled just by the brain. The body controls the ease of quitting, not the brain. You only control yourself for a few days with your brain; the body takes over the task later. With the decision to quit, there comes an even bigger battle....

Withdrawal Symptoms

Those smokers who think they can quit whenever they want have never gone through withdrawals. This is the stage where people realize that, "Yes, I am addicted." They realize this because they feel feelings they have never felt before.

This is also the stage where many people who try to quit, go back to smoking. This is because they think these symptoms are much more important and permanent than they really are. There are similarities between many symptoms that are associated with substance abuse. However, each type of substance has symptoms that are unique unto it. For example, heroin addicts crave chocolate as a withdrawal symptom. Alcoholics crave sugar as well, but they also have hallucinations and possibly seizures depending on the severity of their symptoms.

So whether you smoke, drink or abuse another substance, your body adjusts to that substance. The brain alters its chemical components and then requires the chemicals that you are adding to your body chemistry in order to maintain function. It does not take long for your body to make this adjustment and for you to become addicted. When the body does not receive this required substance, it goes out of whack and it has to start adjusting itself all over again.

This is when you begin to feel the symptoms of withdrawal. Most people begin to feel a little jittery and uneasy at first. They really begin to crave a cigarette and they know that one good draw will make them feel better. But, you're quitting – right? You can't have that and so you work through that feeling. It will only last 90 seconds max (time it if you don't believe me). There are few more symptoms that may appear in some cases including:

- Sweating
- Tremors
- Irritability
- Nausea
- Constipation

Most people do not get all of these. The list is not exhaustive and may vary from person to person. These are the symptoms that you are may have to deal with and this is the main reason that people who are unsuccessful at quitting are unsuccessful – they are unable to cope with these feelings, even though they know that the feelings will only last a short time.

If you can make it through this period, then your body will have readjusted itself. It doesn't need the external substance that you were giving it, but it does need time to make the necessary adjustments. All you have to do to be successful is to have the will power to make it through these adjustments and give the brain and body time.

Yes, this is a lot easier said than done, but it can be done. Stay strong.

Chapter 3

Getting Prepared

Preparation is key in being successful at quitting smoking. As we said, a part of this step is to let everybody know that you are quitting; you can't do this alone.

This Is An Important Step – Take It Seriously

Quitting is not something you want to joke about. This is a very serious decision you are making. You need to begin by preparing yourself mentally, emotionally and physically. Some people visit their doctors for advice and possibly ask for medication that can help them through this process.

After you feel that you have your body prepared as best you can, you need to prepare your surroundings. You want to get rid of anything and everything that reminds you of smoking. Throw away your ashtrays and cigarettes. Some people also put up signs to help keep them motivated such as:

“Only the Brave Hearts can quit smoking.”

“I say no to the killer smoke”

“Smoke has 5 letters... so does death.”

“I want to live on like an oak.”

These may sound cheesy, but we all need a little cheese once in awhile and they are actually very useful.

Finding A Replacement

You have to find something healthy to replace your smoking with. Usually, these replacements also need to be something that can help you relieve stress as that is why many people smoke. Depending on your lifestyle, you might be interested in a variety of new hobbies or just simple things like music and meditation.

Music is an excellent stress reliever and it can help to take your mind off of things as well. If you normally smoke after a meal, consider grabbing your iPod and hitting the sidewalks for a leisurely stroll with your dog. Not only are you doing something healthy by getting a little exercise, but you are de-stressing yourself as well. If you are at work, you can probably play music with headphones as well. This can help you to make it through that smoke break that everyone else takes.

Meditation

Meditation can really help you take control over your own mind and it may help you deal with any withdrawal symptoms that you are having. Anybody can learn to meditate and you may also be interested in learning more about how your mind can help control your body through meditation.

The simplest form of meditation is to sit back and relax. Close your eyes and allow your mind to drift. Gradually you will learn to focus and blend in with the world around you. Don't shut the whole world out, but just listen to the hum of the refrigerator, air conditioner, etc without thinking about it. If you are outside, listen to the wind in the trees, birds and maybe even the traffic. Your goal is to become one with the world around you and then to listen to yourself breathing. When you are able to hear your own breathing, then you have arrived at a meditative state. This is a simple form of meditation and, no, you don't have to sit cross-legged on the floor humming mantras.

Breathing Exercises

Breathing exercises are also useful in controlling cravings. The body takes in a lot of toxins, other than the ones you have been smoking. Our air, water and food all have some sort of toxin. There are also various toxins that we release on a regular basis.

One of the best ways to help your body release the toxins is to exhale while breathing. One funny thing about people is that we don't really breathe properly. We breathe in, but we don't really use all of our lungs, nor do we use our diaphragm effectively. It is very important that we make an honest effort in learning to breathe properly and then doing it properly.

To start, you need to ensure that the air you are breathing is not polluted. The best time to do this is in the morning when the pollution levels are low. Then, you want to sit comfortably with no strain on your body. You may or may not close your eyes, that is up to you but many people find that it aids in the effectiveness of the exercise.

Now, breathe in deeply and slowing. Feel the air fill your lungs until you can't breathe in anymore. Next, conjure up images of the air flowing throughout your body. Think of bathing your body in oxygen. Hold your breath for a few seconds and then very slowly exhale and let out all of the bad air.

Now imagine all of the toxins being released from your body. Imagine every cell your body being cleansed. Pause for a couple of seconds and the breathe in again. Allow your lungs to fill up with good, clean air. Repeat this process about ten times. Don't rush through this though, it's supposed to be relaxing and refreshing.

The second part of this process is to sit with your eyes closed, but hold one nostril closed with your finger. Hold the right nostril first with the right index

finger. Breathe in deeply through the left nostril. Hold the air for a couple of seconds and then release it through the right nostril and breathe out through it. Repeat this process with the left nostril as well. This breathing exercise can easily become a substitute for smoking and can help you deal with your nicotine cravings.

Stay Away From Temptation

When you are trying to quit smoking you may find that you need to have something in your mouth. Chewing gum is a good substitute for this. Some people use candy or peppermints, but it's best to choose something sugar-free. Some people like to use gum that has a strong menthol, mint or spice flavor. Try to suck on these things and let them linger. Don't swallow them immediately.

Next, make a list of smokers that you need to stay away from. While you are trying to quit, there is nothing worse than the temptation of those smoking around you. Unless they are trying to quit as well, you will want to stay a good distance away from them until you become strong in your ability to resist that temptation. You only have to do this for a few weeks.

If your spouse or someone else that you live with smokes and does not want to quit with you, you need to ask for their support just the same. You should do this before you stop. Try to negotiate that they will not smoke in the house, and that they will support you through any withdrawal symptoms without ever telling you that you should start smoking again. You may have to make some concessions: agree to do an extra chore, or whatever.

Do not make anybody responsible for your success by having them police you.

Set A Date

The next thing you need to do is set the date that you are going to start quitting. Write this date down on the calendar or on your contract. Today is just as good as any to quit, so don't procrastinate. At the same time, you need to make a list of the reasons you failed any other times that you tried to quit before. What can you do to avoid the same situation this time around? Keep this list handy so that you will be able to recognize your pitfalls and avoid them next time.

Go Ahead – Admit That You're Addicted

This is a difficult realization to come to. If you can do that much then the battle is almost won, except for the physical ailments of quitting. Many smokers never really admit that they are addicted. They keep telling themselves that they can quit without ever really doing. They try to fool themselves into thinking that they are not addicted when they are. Remember, you can't just quit whenever you want to; cigarettes have a greater hold on you than that.

All Cigarettes Are Bad

Many smokers think that they can just start smoking mediums or lights. The bottom line is that these cigarettes are real bad for you too. They may have less nicotine, but more of the other stuff that they load into cigarettes. It doesn't matter what they're called, they're all bad.

Chapter 4

Just Do It – The Process Of Quitting

When it comes down to actually quitting there are a few things to consider. First of all, don't be afraid to look for help. There are several changes that are going to be occurring to your body and it's okay to look for assistance elsewhere. In fact, if you do then you have a better chance of quitting and being successful.

Talk To Your Doctor

Your doctor will be all about you quitting smoking. They will be supportive, give you a pat on the back and ask how they can help. Nicotine is more powerful than most smokers realize and medical help is often very useful. Your doctor will be able to guide you through the process and provide you with useful information on how to deal with quitting and coping with the withdrawals. One of the most common changes that people go through is mood swings and depression. Most doctors will provide you with an anti-depressant to help you through this if you need it. There are five medications that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration. These are:

- Bupropio SR (Zyban or Wellbutrin)
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Inhaler
- Nicotine Nasal Spray
- Nicotine Patch

These medicines will help you to increase your success rate by 80%. It is recommended that you consult your doctor before beginning any over the

counter product. The inhaler, nasal spray and Bupropio SR are available by prescription only.

Zyban has a fairly high success rate. A person begins taking this drug while they are still smoking. Their quit date is 7 days after they begin. The patient then continues to take the drug for 7 to 10 days after they quit. Many patients have reported that their withdrawals were markedly reduced. Like any other treatment, this only affects the strength of the withdrawals: the desire to quit must come from within.

Zyban affects the brain chemistry and gives quitters the feeling of a greater sense of well-being as well as more energized. The drug also aids in reducing depression while the person quits smoking. Zyban is safe for long-term use if it is difficult for the person to make significant smoking changes. If the person does not quit by week 10, then it is unlikely that the person will be successful. This does not necessarily have anything to do with the medication, but the will power of the person that is quitting.

There have been a few side effects noted including:

- Insomnia
- Dry mouth

People with the following conditions should not use the drug:

- History of seizures
- Eating disorders
- Cirrhosis of the liver

The nicotine patch has also been successful and it has been popular. This plan is unique in that the person wears a patch on the skin. The patch releases small

doses of nicotine throughout the day. The patch allows the body to absorb nicotine without the bad effects of smoking. Zyban is different in that it provides no nicotine to the body, and does not prolong the addiction or dependency on nicotine.

Many people who use the patch have been successful, while others have reported that they still had urges to smoke when they would normally smoke, such as after meals. This is because of their ingrained association with smoking and other behaviors. The patches do help to eliminate cravings. The patches do need to be used with care. For example, the patch should be removed at night. This is when you would not normally smoke and if you do not remove the patch you may suffer from insomnia and nightmares. Some people are allergic to the patch itself: the skin may become red and itchy after wearing the patch and may cause discomfort during the day.

The patch is designed to be used in stages, as is the nicotine gum. These are designed to gradually wean the body from its dependence. Those with the strong desire to quit smoking and who are committed to not smoking often succeed with this method. They are also able to deal with the behavioral changes better because they are passively receiving nicotine.

After the treatment is over, there are still temptations that you will want to avoid. This is no different than if you were to quit cold turkey. You may have to avoid people you used to smoke with for a while and of course you have to avoid grabbing a cigarette to help you deal with stress. This part of treatment is no different than any other in this respect.

Counseling

Counseling is another way to aid yourself in quitting. Whether you go to a professional counselor or therapist or group therapy, you will be able to benefit from what counseling has to offer. Group counseling is helpful because you are

able to realize that you are not the only person trying to quit. You are also able to compare symptoms, feelings and advice on quitting.

You Save Money!

Boy do you save money. The price of cigarettes goes up every year. In some states they are \$5 a pack. If you smoke a pack a day that's \$5 dollars a day you are saving. This may not sound like much, but imagine if you put away that \$5 each day. Think of how much money you would have saved up.

If you do decide to put away that \$5 a day, there could be a great reward waiting for you at the end of a year. What if you promised your kids you would go to Disney World with that money? I bet you would have support every day of that year! Or, what if you took your spouse on a second honeymoon? Or, what if you bought a new car? The longer you save that \$5, the more you will have when it's time to reward yourself. The best part about that is that it's a reward to yourself for a great accomplishment.

You Can't Gradually Quit

This is another common misconception. You can't simply gradually taper off smoking. This is something that has to be done all at once. You are only prolonging the inevitable and one day you will have to stop smoking all together, so why procrastinate? If you are serious about this you have to quit once and for all. If you try to cut back, it won't take much for that number of cigarettes a day to spike back up again, so it's best to quit all at once.

Chapter 5

Changing Your Lifestyle

When you do plan to quit, it's time to make some lifestyle adjustments as well. Look at everything around you and see what patterns you follow on a daily basis. If you get up and have a cigarette first thing in the morning, you are not going to know what to do so you're going to have to make some changes to your daily routine.

It's time to make things feel new and different. For example, if you sat in the same recliner everyday and enjoyed a cigarette, then perhaps you should have that chair reupholstered or buy yourself a new one. Not only will it be new, but it will smell new as well. After you quit smoking you will begin to smell the smoke that has been lingering in your home for as long as you have been smoking. If you didn't smoke inside, then you may not have this problem. Many people move because of that, but moving is not realistic for everyone. So, you may decide it's time for some new paint on the walls and to have the carpet and furniture professionally cleaned.

You will also need to set some new daily routines. Instead of having a morning cigarette, perhaps you should take your dog on a morning walk instead. Or, perhaps you should join a gym and start working out. There are various things that are much healthier than smoking that you can do in the mornings. Whatever you choose to do in the mornings, ensure that it demands your full attention. It's too easy to crave a cigarette when you are sitting in front of the television or reading the morning paper. Do everything you can to keep your mind preoccupied.

Another thing to do is to stay away from anything that causes stress. Many people smoked to relieve stress and the moment they are stressed out, they start

smoking again. There are a hundred other ways that you can deal with stress, so look towards those for assistance. Listen to music, do breathing exercises or use a little stress ball.

Find A New Hobby

Many people think, "I don't know what I'd do with my time if I didn't smoke." Well, if you really think you spend that much time smoking, then a new hobby is for you. Think about things you are interested in or things you have always wanted to do, but have just never gotten around to. Those are great interests to invest your time in.

If you come home from work and you usually have a cigarette, then come home from work and work on your garden. Maybe you have wanted to start drawing or painting. Maybe you like to volunteer or help others. Maybe you have wanted to take an exercise class. These are all great things that you can do with your time and you can de-stress while you do them.

The advantage of finding something new to be interested in is that you may be able to meet new people and friends as well take away all of the obsession you may have over smoking when you are trying to stop. You have to keep your mind preoccupied in some manner and a new interest or hobby is a great way to do this.

Change Your Diet

When you stop smoking you will see a lot of change in your eating habits. Many smokers begin to eat more and gain weight. This is a temporary phase that you will go through and the best way to avoid weight gain is to eat a proper diet. We all need to watch what eat anyways, so why not start now?

If you are a smoker, then you probably have odd eating habits. Many smokers skip breakfast, which is really not a good way to start your day. Breakfast provides your body with energy to run on all day long. By eating breakfast you are doing yourself a lot of good. You will also eat less throughout the day because you won't be starving come lunchtime.

Coffee is not breakfast, contrary to popular belief, and for smokers it is actually better if they have tea instead of coffee in the mornings. If you can't do without the coffee, then cut yourself down to one cup instead of two or three. At the same time, enjoy some good juice, a bowl of cereal, toast or an egg.

Have a good lunch at noon. This is when your body needs its second dose of nourishment. Coffee and cigarettes are not lunch, so look for something that is solid. Have yourself a sandwich or go out to eat with friends who don't smoke.

Breaks at work can be heck for smokers. Most smokers are wondering how the non-smokers spend their breaks; well, this is your chance to find out! This is a good time to do those breathing exercises if you are really wanting to go smoke. If you work in a relatively nice area, you may even want to go for a short stroll or play a game of cards with your coworkers in the break room. Remember, you have to keep your mind preoccupied during these stressful times.

As for dinner, this meal might not be such a hard one to get through. If you are relatively free in the evenings you might take your family out to dinner. You may also want to cook a nice dinner. If you are too exhausted to cook in the evenings, then look for easy to fix dinners that are not fried and greasy, but fresh and healthy. Your body will thank you for all the vitamins and nutrients you are giving it.

While you are quitting, you will also want to drink a lot of fluids. Drink 12 to 15 glasses of water per day. Don't drown yourself in soda, as it will only dehydrate

you. Also, drink as much juice as you can. Many people who quit smoking will find that constipation can be a symptom at first. You can fend this off by ensuring that you drink a lot of fluids.

Throughout the day you are also going to want a few snacks. You may also have a mouth fixation thing going on, so your urge will be to eat to keep your mouth busy. This is one thing that leads to people gaining weight after they quit. You may also be tempted to eat while you watch television if you smoked and watched television before.

You can avoid the extra weight gain by nourishing your body with good snacks. Keep a lot of healthy snacks on hand like celery, carrots, broccoli, tomatoes, cucumbers and a myriad of fruit choices that you have. Candy and gum can be good to keep your mouth busy while you are at work, etc. but these can make you gain weight as well. Sugar free varieties are a good option if you must use these. To fight the excess pounds use these methods sparingly. Because you will be tempted to eat more, you want the snacks you grab to be of the fruit and veggie variety. Try to stay away from high calorie snacks and excess carbohydrates.

Bedtime

Bedtime is when most smokers have a couple of cigarettes before going to sleep. If you are used to smoking a couple of “goodnighters” then your brain may have trouble adjusting for sleep. The bad thing about smoking right before you go to bed is that you are craving a cigarette when you get up in the morning. Smoking actually increases your bad nights of sleep.

Adults need about 8 hours of good sleep to be functional throughout the day. If you can't get 8 then you need at least 7. Anything lower is not good and you

won't be able to function properly. There are a few things you can do to ensure that you sleep good including:

- 1. Set A Bedtime:** Go to bed at the same time each night religiously. Even on the weekends, you should go to bed at the same time. You can break this routine up on occasion, but it is best to go to bed on a regular bedtime.
- 2. Go To Bed Early:** For some people, midnight is going to bed early. But, remember you need 8 hours of sleep each night so adjust this time accordingly. If you need to get up at 8 in the morning then you need to go to bed by midnight or 1am.
- 3. Don't Eat 2 Hours Before You Go To Bed:** Did you know that by eating and then sleeping you have an increased chance of having nightmares? Also, if you eat and then go to bed you will most likely have a hard time sleeping and you may gain weight as well.
- 4. Have A Nice Glass of Milk 30 Minutes Before Bedtime:** Milk contains tryptophan and this is a natural substance that makes you tired. It's the same stuff that's in turkey that makes you want to take a nap after Thanksgiving dinner.
- 5. Don't Read In Bed Or Watch TV:** It's too easy to get caught up in the story. You won't sleep well because you are thinking about what's going to happen next.

The Pain And The Relief

When you first quit you will feel really good about yourself. You may not even really have any cravings and only feel sort of jittery on occasion. As the day

progresses, however, you will probably be watching the time tick by and feeling achy as well. You may also begin feeling depressed and thinking odd thoughts. You will also think about going back to smoking, but fight these urges.

There are a variety of symptoms that may begin to kick in. You may feel as though you are in a dark tunnel and someone is slowly squeezing you to death. You will feel all sorts of things you have never felt before and you may just feel absolutely exhausted. Tell yourself that all of these feelings are just temporary. As soon as you lie down and take a break, the feelings will begin to go away.

After those horrid feelings go away you will feel refreshed and clean. Everything will seem brighter and you will be so happy that you quit smoking. It will be as if there is new life in everything that you see and you will wonder why you ever started such a nasty habit.

Now, expect these moments to come and go. One minute you'll feel horrible, but the next minute you will feel fantastic. Your moods may go up and down as well, but remember deep down inside that it's all for the better. You're giving your body a second chance and you are going to be so happy when it's over.

Your life will be better in a variety of ways and you will be so glad that you have stopped smoking. Heck, if anything you will be glad that you don't wake up in the mornings hacking and coughing up a lung. This is one of the best benefits that many ex-smokers really realize. It may not be immediate because the lungs need time to clean themselves out. But pretty soon the wheeziness will disappear, you'll breathe fuller, and your food will even taste better. It's like you're a whole new you.

How Not To Go Back

Once you have quit, you will not want to go back. That would be the worst thing you could do, especially after you went through all that you went through to stop the first time. One of the best motivators of staying away from cigarettes is to remember all of the benefits that you can reap from it such as:

- The first 20 minutes after you quit, your blood pressure returns to normal.
- 8 hours after you quit, excess carbon dioxide is eliminated from your body.
- 3 months after quitting, your lung capacity increases by 30%.
- 1 year later, your risk for heart attack is half that of a smoker.
- 5 years later, your risk of stroke is normal.
- 10 years later your risk for lung cancer is cut in half.

These are some amazing benefits and they should be motivators for you to quit right now. You will reap these benefits no matter when you choose to quit smoking. Also your life expectancy increases and your quality of living increases and your bank account increases as well.

The best way to stay a non-smoker is to avoid all of those temptations that made you start in the first place. Identify those situations that once caused you to reach for a cigarette and stay away from them all together. For many people, this may also mean that they quit going to bars and they quit drinking as well. If you are a casual drinker and only do it on occasion, then look for non-smoking bars. However, some people will still crave a cigarette while they drink. Hence, the reason to quit drinking also.

Keep your moral support behind you as well. If you feel like smoking, call somebody or do something else. Keep your mind preoccupied and de-stress yourself through the various relaxation techniques you have learned. Remember why you quit smoking and who benefits from you not smoking as well.

Coping With Lapses

The urge to smoke is very strong throughout the quitting process. You may succumb to these lapses, but you can deal with them if you know what to do. If you find yourself smoking, stop. Many people will pick up a cigarette without thinking about it. They may also take one without thinking about it when they are offered one. This is a bad habit to break, so if you find yourself smoking – drop it.

Throw out all cigarettes that you may have. Don't leave these temptations lying around your house. If you do lapse, you can overcome it by renewing your vow to quit. Think of all the reasons you quit in the first place and make it your personal commitment to continue your fight to living smoke free.

Yes, You Can Quit Smoking!