

# Quit Easy

The Smoking Cessation Specialists

## Quit While You're Ahead

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### Jim Trimmer

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## **How did I come to be a Smoking Cessation Thearapist?**

Although both my parents smoked, they were very keen that I should not, so I did not start smoking regularly until leaving school at 18. In the year that followed, before going up to Liverpool University, I worked in London. In those days, there were no restrictions on smoking in the office. I was hooked within weeks, and was a regular 20-plus a day smoker for the next 30-plus years.

After graduating in 1965, I worked for most of my life in journalism and PR. A good deal of my spare time was spent performing in front of audiences as, variously, a jazz and rock singer, and as a performer in dramatic and musical amateur theatre.

I had made unsuccessful attempts to quit smoking at various times, but could never keep it up for more than a few weeks. When challenged, I would defend my habit by claiming the right to choose what I breathe: the "right to smoke" argument made sense to me in those days.

In 1991, my father died from smoking-related diseases. I managed to avoid making the obvious connection with my own smoking. Then at an Allen Carr's Easy Way to Stop Smoking session in June 1992, I saw the light - that tobacco dependency is a psychological problem with a physical trigger - and have been a non-smoker ever since. I walked away feeling positive and excited at the prospect of never having to smoke again.

It's the best thing I ever did, and it led to a series of extremely positive changes in my life, as I started to use strengths I never knew I had.

I applied to the Carr organization to become an Easy Way practitioner, and took up a franchise in South Wales. Over the next two years, I saw hundreds of smokers in groups of up to a dozen, basing my session on the script provided by Easy Way and achieving success in probably 30-40 percent of cases.

By this time, having grasped the underlying principles of Easy Way, I had adapted the basic script to better suit my own ideas and style of delivery. At the same time, I set about learning more about hypnosis and cognitive therapy and how they can be used in a complementary way to produce a uniquely powerful mechanism for bringing about fundamental change to attitudes and beliefs.

What came out of this process is the Quit While You're Ahead programme. It is based on my own experience of being a smoker and of quitting for good, and that of several hundred other smokers I have helped over the past five years or so. It draws also on my background as a creative communicator and performer.

With first-hand knowledge of what it is like to be a smoker over many years, the research I have done into the psychology of the smoker, my experience as a communicator and performer in general and in particular in helping hundreds of smokers, I believe I am as well qualified as anybody to help others escape from the tobacco trap.

I can't tell you what a relief it is to be finally free of the need to smoke. It's like putting down a heavy load that can only get heavier the longer you have to carry it.

*Jim Trimmer*  
*October 2002*

## Chapter One

# Through The Looking Glass

Every smoker would rather be a non-smoker. But that isn't always an easy thing to admit.

If you've ever tried to quit and failed, you may have come away with the strong impression that it just isn't going to be possible for you to give up. A lot of smokers come to that conclusion, and subconsciously decide to make the best of it.

After all, what's the point of wanting something you know you can't have? It's easier and more comfortable to claim that you enjoy it, and don't want to give up anyway.

But you have accepted that you would be better off as a non-smoker - and you haven't given up the dream. That's very important.

If you have tried before and not quite made it - or found the whole experience a complete nightmare - it was probably a case of applying your willpower to the problem.

At first glance, that seems to make sense: all you have to do is tough it out until the cravings go away, and that will be it. But it didn't turn out like that, did it?

It's a strange fact that when you become a smoker, you go through the looking glass into a world where things don't make sense.

As soon as you found out that smoking causes cancer, common sense would tell you to stop doing it. But just the opposite happens. The more frightening things you discover about what smoking does to your health, the more quickly you will reach for a cigarette. Look at the pile of butts outside any hospital entrance.

In fact, fear has a lot to do with why you continue to smoke against your better judgement.

To put it simply, you are afraid of what might happen if you can't have a cigarette when you need one. And the more you think about stopping, the harder it is to contemplate actually doing it.

For one thing, there is a strong sense of deprivation and self-denial. How are you going to manage without that familiar crutch?

But the more you concentrate on the reasons for stopping, the more you are going to miss the point. Because it's the justifications you find for smoking that are the real problem.

You probably want to stop because you're worried about the long-term effect on your health, or you are fed up with the smell on your clothes, your hair, your breath, or maybe people around you are making it clear that they don't like it.

Or perhaps it's the thought of throwing good money after bad, or the feeling of being a member of a persecuted minority.

All perfectly good reasons for quitting, but as long as you cling on to the idea that smoking helps you to relax or handle stress, then you have a problem.

Right away, you're fighting yourself. You're struggling to deny yourself something really important, and all the good reasons in the world are no match for that.

Whereas if you can see that all those benefits are nothing more than myths you have unconsciously bought into to give yourself an excuse for lighting up, then it becomes obvious that there's nothing to fight about.

## Chapter Two

# Cutting The Problem Down To Size

The heart of the problem is nicotine, a substance that is both poisonous and addictive.

If it were just poisonous, like the Japanese puffer fish, you could take it or leave it. You'd probably leave it.

If it were just addictive, you could go on happily using the stuff all your life and no harm done.

But it's both. Of course, the people who sell it have known that for years. In the past few years, the tobacco industry has been exposed as deceitful and manipulative.

For years they have been spending millions of dollars to trap young people and keep them trapped. It's the only way they can keep renewing their market.

Why is it that you almost never hear of an adult starting? How is it that, all over the world, intelligent, together adults find themselves powerless against a paper tube of dried leaves.

That's the big question - why do we smoke?

### *REASONS TO QUIT*

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTRASTE

### *REASONS TO SMOKE*

RELAXATION  
CONCENTRATION  
HANDLING STRESS  
TASTE  
SOCIABILITY

That just about sums up the smoker's frame of mind: plenty of good reasons for quitting, but just as many for carrying on.

Stalemate? Not really. Once we start to look at each of those factors in detail, the basic imbalance will become clear.

## Chapter Three

# So, What Is Smoking For, Actually?

Every smoker who ever lived has walked into the same trap, usually by the age of 15. Of course, it doesn't look like a trap at the time, but then it wouldn't be much of a trap if it did.

What happens? Right from childhood, you get used to seeing smoking as one of those things that grown-ups do. Then, one fine day or at a party, one of your friends offers you a cigarette, and you think - why not?

**Some occupations are themselves associated with smoking. Nursing is an interesting case in point. The overwhelming majority of the nurses I have seen started smoking relatively late in life - at 19 or 20, rather than the usual 15. I put that down to the fact that what motivates a young person to take up nursing is a keen awareness of health and a desire to help. This is usually enough to get through the vulnerable early teen years, but once the trainee nurse is in the thick of it, old cultural patterns take over. The myth that smoking a cigarette helps to deal with stress is just as widespread among health professionals as anyone else.**

If it makes you really ill, you may decide to drop the idea there and then. But if you're determined to look cool, you get over your body's natural resistance and your own distaste.

The idea of getting hooked never enters your mind. Why should it? Who looks even five years ahead at that age?

So, with grit and determination, otherwise known as willpower, you persevere. You come to tolerate the disgusting taste and smell. You learn to smoke. And the next thing you know, you're having to have cigarettes regularly, every day, several times a day.

What would induce an intelligent adult to do that? What is it that keeps millions of sane and sensible people spending good money day after day on risking hideous diseases, making themselves old before their time, and stinking the place out wherever they go?



It's drug addiction, of course: what else could it be?

The tobacco companies have known for years that nicotine addiction is what keeps their customers coming back for more. Most smokers know it too, but would rather not think about it - so we willingly put on that pair of blinkers that comes free with every packet of cigarettes.

Now it is time to take the blinkers off, and face some facts.

***REASONS TO QUIT***

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTASTE

***REASONS TO SMOKE***

RELAXATION  
CONCENTRATION  
HANDLING STRESS  
TASTE  
SOCIABILITY  
**ADDICTION**

Deep down, you've known all along what is the basis of your cigarette habit. What you may not be aware of is that, on the drug addiction front, there's good news and bad news.

The bad news is that nicotine is not like heroin, where the main danger comes from the unpredictable purity of the drug or the risk of infection from a dirty needle.

With nicotine, the delivery system is inherently dirty - tobacco is stuffed full of impurities, and so it can't help but do you harm. Every cigarette you smoke is just like a dirty needle.

The good news is that, on its own, nicotine addiction is quite easy to kick.

If you've ever had the experience of struggling with cravings day after day, you'll find that a bit hard to believe. But it is true.

Nicotine can only last for about 48 hours in your body. Give your body another couple of days to get used to the idea, and physically speaking, it's all over.

Imagine for a moment that you were due to fly off on a fabulous tropical holiday in five days' time.

Having all your shots in one go might make you feel a little groggy for a while, but you'd have no problem coping with that, because you would know what was happening in your body, and you would know that it was only a temporary thing.

In any case, you'd be too busy concentrating on the big adventure to worry about a little thing like that. That's where we are right now, on the brink of the big adventure.

Another interesting point about nicotine is that it's not like any other drug, where a fairly big dose lasts you best part of a day or even more. Heroin users, for example, commonly go 36 hours between fixes.


Nicotine, though, has to be taken in small doses, because it is short-acting and very poisonous. So you find yourself topping up 10, 20, 30 times right through the day - as though you were taking medication to keep the symptoms at bay. Which in a sense is all you are doing.


That's how it becomes an inseparable part of your daily life and enables you to believe that you just can't do without it.

You come to recognize the signals that say it's time for a smoke - starting or finishing a task, taking a break, the natural companion to a drink or the finishing touch to a meal, or the aftermath of a bad moment or a bad day. But they are just excuses you give yourself for doing what you have to do anyway, and that is feed your addiction.

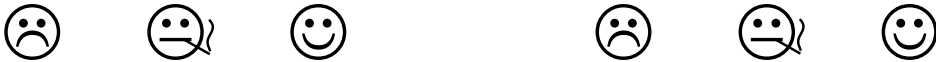
Over the years, you get used to a repeated pattern of events.

You feel a bit down, a bit tense, 

so you smoke a cigarette 

and it makes you feel better. 

Every day, the same pattern.



But just think for a moment. How did that pattern start - with a bad feeling, or with a cigarette?

Look at what is really happening:



Every time you smoke a cigarette, it ends up making you feel bad. It's rather like scratching a mosquito bite. The itch goes away for a little while, but it comes back stronger.

That is precisely what you are doing by feeding small scraps of nicotine to your addiction: keeping it quiet for a little while, but ensuring that it will be back.

Of course, you have got used to interpreting that experience as pleasure, relaxation, relief and all the other self-protective beliefs that continue to give you an excuse for smoking - that you can't handle stress, or enjoy a good night out, or even just function as a human being.

Once you can see all that as pure nonsense, you will find to your amazement that you won't miss them at all, and you have all the positive benefits of being a non-smoker!

- You'll have more energy, more self-respect
- You can stop worrying about your chest or your heart
- You'll have more money in your pocket
- You will look better, smell better, taste better

And **ALL** without making any sort of sacrifice!

So we have two things to do. We have to give you the simple and painless means of breaking the physical addiction. But that will only work once you have seen the light and rid yourself of all those self-protective beliefs.

## Chapter Four

# See Yourself Out

Smokers tend to get hung up on the idea of willpower. This is understandable, given that the first experience of trying to quit by willpower is usually such a nightmare.

But willpower is not the key to getting off the hook. The way to do that is to understand how you got here in the first place. To understand how the trap works.

Like a lot of cunning devices, it looks complicated from the outside. But once you know the secret, it's simple. Think of a combination lock. You can beat your fists against it as long as you like and you'll only hurt your fists. What you need is the combination.

Any method that tries to beat smoking at its own game, with brute force, is unlikely to succeed. The secret is to outsmart it, to use your intelligence instead.

The brute force way is to concentrate on all the negatives about smoking and decide that, however bad it gets, you are going to battle it out until one of you - you or smoking - has had enough.

The assumption is that sooner or later, something's got to give.

Unfortunately, that's usually you, the smoker.

So we are going about it the other way around. Instead of throwing the cigarettes away, and then getting to grips with the monster, the first thing we need to do is dispose of all those myths that we have all built up over the years to give ourselves reasons for smoking.

So that by the time you finish this book, you are thinking straight again - thinking like a non-smoker. Cigarettes have lost their power over you. And that's a great feeling - the feeling that you're back in charge of your own life.

## Chapter Five

### How It All Begins

Nobody consciously makes a commitment to a lifetime of smoking. If we could have seen the trap and realized what was at stake, maybe we would have thought twice. But we already half believed the myths about pleasure, relaxation and all the rest of it. And the biggest lie of all: you can stop any time you want to.

What you don't realize is that once you start smoking, sooner or later you let nicotine into your body. It's as though you plant a seed, like the tiny egg of a parasite, that grows inside you. A parasite that eats nicotine.

A few days or weeks after coughing and spluttering over your first cigarette, you find yourself buying them from time to time. Then every day. Then you realize that you just have to have cigarettes around all the time. And that's it - the trap has closed behind you.

Going through that unpleasant process of learning to put up with the horrible taste and smell means that you can now go on feeding that thing with its nicotine, day after day, for the rest of your life.

You really are taking medication, several times a day, just to control the symptoms of nicotine addiction. Nothing very glamorous about that, is there?

One day, though, you realize the danger you have put yourself in. The prospect of smoking for the rest of your life is frightening.

But what's even more frightening is the prospect of not smoking for the rest of your life.

So suddenly it's a tug of war - and you're the rope.

When he came to me, Gareth had been smoking for nearly 20 years. Yet by the end of the consultation, he was able to look back with disbelief to 1982, when he landed on the Falkland Islands as a private in the Welsh Guards. Nobody knew how long they would have to live on that bleak island, or how quickly they might have to move. Every man took basic equipment and rations to last several weeks. In Gareth's case, that included 14000 cigarettes. That's how powerful the fear of running out can get.

But are the two teams as evenly matched as they seem to be? When you think about the disadvantages of smoking, they are very real: the health problems, the inconvenience, the sense of being controlled.

On the other hand, just what is it that's so frightening about not smoking? You don't know. And that's exactly the point. It's fear of the unknown, fear of the dark.

So what we have to do is turn the lights on, so that you can see that what you were afraid of was nothing more than shadows.

Then you can reclaim your life and live it to the full, free of being constantly torn between the fear of smoking and the fear of not smoking.

## Chapter Six

# The Real Point About Smoking And Health

You probably know plenty about the way smoking compromises your health. We do not want to go over familiar ground again, but there is more to it than you may realize.

Everybody knows about the big serial killers like lung cancer and heart disease. And the really horrible humiliating things like chronic bronchitis and emphysema. But it's possible to push those out of your mind, or convince yourself that it's an acceptable risk.

What no smoker can avoid is the gradual, bit by bit erosion of your general physical condition. It's not just about your chest getting clogged up with tar, making you tired and wheezy.

Every time you smoke, along with the nicotine, you're putting all sorts of poisonous chemicals into your bloodstream. So you're constantly starving every organ and muscle in your body of oxygen and other things it needs.

Your skin, your eyes, and your hair are all ageing more quickly. You're growing old before your time: smoking is linked with premature menopause and with impotence. If you hurt yourself it takes longer for the wound to heal.

On top of that, you're laying yourself more open to any other disease that might come along. You're more prone to skin cancer, diabetes, varicose veins, eyesight problems, fertility problems - even tooth decay.

Of course, all this is rather remote. Lots of smokers just can't - or won't - see what it is doing to them with every day that passes. I used to kid myself that as long as I kept my lungs working by singing, I would get away with it. Of course, all that deep breathing just made it worse.

I fell for all the usual stories at first. I couldn't see any real difference between my capabilities and those of the non-smokers around me.



We all hear about people smoking all their lives without apparently suffering any ill effects. And we all manage to keep the really bad news at a distance.

It worked pretty well for me: I ignored the problem, and it really did seem to go away. But of course it wasn't going away. It was there all the time, gradually eating away at me.

That is a very important point to understand: that smoking isn't a game of chance, that lighting a cigarette isn't playing Russian Roulette with the possibility of lung cancer or a heart attack, it is self-harming behaviour, repeated several times a day, thousands of times a year.

When you stop smoking, the improvements happen gradually too, almost imperceptibly.

But just let somebody else notice after a couple of weeks how much better you're looking, and it will become obvious to you too.

At that point, once you're out of the woods, you can safely look back and remember how you used to feel, how you used to look, and finally realise what it must have been doing to you all those years. And feel the joy of knowing that those days are over for good.

## Chapter Seven

# The Grand Illusion

If that is the reality of smoking, how do we come to see it in such a different light?

How do we come to accept what the tobacco companies want us to believe - that cigarettes are cool, that smoking is a pleasure, part of being a normal adult, something that carries certain health risks, that some people find distasteful, but above all is nobody else's business?

How is it that smokers who are forced to accept restrictions on where and when they can smoke put the blame on the restrictions rather than the obligation to smoke? Don't they realize that, when it comes to smoking, choice is an illusion?

It's all part of the conditioning that's grown up over the years, partly by accident and partly deliberately.

Three hundred years ago, the only thing to be said against smoking was that it was smelly. But since it was a man's thing and men ruled the roost, and life was smelly anyway, that argument didn't cut much ice. When cigarettes began to take the place of pipes and cigars, things moved on significantly.

The cigarette is a highly efficient drug delivery system - as the manufacturers acknowledge, in private - so more people became more addicted to tobacco.

But still it was mostly men, and it was mostly done in the company of other men - in smoky bars and pubs, and in the smoking rooms of exclusive clubs, at smoking concerts, after the ladies had withdrawn, and all that.

There was no inkling of a serious threat to health. And meanwhile, the associations were building up - first with leisure and relaxation, later with the relief of stress.

So that by the 20th century, it was simply accepted that smoking tobacco was a positively beneficial thing to do. In both world wars, cigarettes were issued free to the troops of both sides. Millions more became addicted, and these powerful myths were taking root.

In plays, films and stories, later on TV and in advertising, the cigarette came to represent all sorts of things - manliness, maturity, sexiness, sophistication, rebelliousness, you name it.

**Media types are suckers for the "cigarettes help with stress" myth. On top of that, they tend to see themselves as outsiders, not subject to the rules that ordinary people have to live by but actually licensed to behave badly. Smoking has always been part of the image of the hard-bitten journalist or the creative person. I have cured several who, once they do see the light, can't wait to tell everybody else!**

Even in real life, famous people, powerful and successful people, let it be known that they were smokers. It became the thing to do. Smoking came to be accepted as normal.

The tobacco companies depend on this great illusion, and they do everything they can to keep up. All the millions of dollars they spend on advertising and promotion is aimed at maintaining the impression that smoking is part of being an adult. It certainly isn't about promoting one brand over another, however much it looks that way.

The key message is that smoking is normal. So that we grow up seeing it as just one of the things that grown-ups do.

What the tobacco companies do to maintain that impression is to get cigarettes seen in the right company, whether that's on a race car or in a blockbuster movie. That's no accident - that is tobacco industry money, all going to keep up the impression that cigarettes are as normal and necessary to life as food and drink.

It's a lie - one of the biggest ever perpetrated. Once you see through it, you can never fall for it again.

## Chapter Eight

# Don't Kid Yourself

Most official anti-smoking policies are based on a basic misconception: that cigarettes give smokers some benefits, which have to be sacrificed. They attempt to counter that by repeating all the reasons for stopping. But nagging and telling smokers things they've known all their lives just makes it harder.

Because the more you take all that on board and still continue to smoke, the more you're forced to conclude that you're dealing with something that's stronger than you are. Otherwise you would have stopped by now.

So that approach obviously has limitation. Let's turn it on its head, and take a close look at the self-protective delusions that smokers create out of the basic lie. They are always about some kind of benefit - pleasure, relaxation, the ability to handle stress, or whatever.

For example, you might say that you enjoy smoking a cigarette - that is, the process of getting nicotine into your body.

If you'd been carrying a heavy trunk around for an hour, you'd enjoy the sensation of putting it down. But to get that pleasure, you first have to endure the discomfort.

What you're really trying to experience is how it would feel to be somebody who doesn't have to drag that heavy load around all the time. The feeling of being a non-smoker.

And the trouble is that every time you relieve the discomfort, you are ensuring that it will come back again later - the way that scratching a mosquito bite helps. For a few minutes, anyway.



On top of that, drug addiction tends to be progressive. As your body builds up tolerance, the drug's effect diminishes and you have to increase the dose. So the best you can ever do is control the symptoms. They will never go away for long, because the thing's appetite is insatiable. It just wants more and more, all the time.

What stops every smoker becoming a chain smoker? Among other things it's the sheer unpleasantness of having a terrible taste in your mouth all the time instead of just some of the time. That is the taste of the acid that cigarette smoke produces in your saliva. Even that doesn't stop some people.

A chain smoker is the extreme example of somebody caught in the middle of a tug of war, as the sheer distaste battles with the insatiable need for nicotine. It's what's potentially in store for every smoker.

You can see how a chain smoker really is a slave. But every smoker is a chain smoker - the only difference is the length of the links in the chain. Every smoker is trapped, physically and psychologically.

The physical component of the trap becomes apparent as soon as you become aware of the physical erosion that has been going on unnoticed ever since you started smoking.

Maybe you develop a really painful or persistent cough, or find yourself getting out of breath.

That's often a cue to try and quit.

The first attempt usually ends in failure. And that failure reveals the other part of the trap. You realize that you're not quite the person you thought you were, in charge of your own life.

You have to come to terms with what you really are - a slave to something that you know is doing you no good. That is a depressing feeling.

And knowing that you are free is a fabulous feeling.

## Chapter Nine

### This Doesn't Make Sense!

How do cigarettes come to become such a familiar feature of your everyday life? As we said before, you have to top up your nicotine at regular intervals. During the course of an average day, there are going to be good moments and bad moments. And you can bet that you'll be about ready for a cigarette when they occur.

A bad moment gives you that edgy feeling in the pit of the stomach, just like the feeling of needing a cigarette, so that association forms and becomes a cue to smoke.

Good moments - moments of relaxation - also offer an opportunity to have a smoke, and feed the parasite the nicotine it demands. So the association develops between smoking and enjoyment.

Stress and relaxation, boredom and concentration - a cigarette seems to be the answer to everything.

But wait a minute - those are completely opposite states of mind: how can one substance have such different effects, all on the same day? It doesn't make sense. And if this substance can't do all of those things, how can it do any of them?

It can't. All you're doing is feeding the addiction, which will go on regardless of what you happen to be doing or how you happen to be feeling. So there's no real connection between smoking and the things that happen in your life. The good days, the bad days - they will happen anyway. And so will the need to feed your nicotine addiction. The fact that they tend to coincide is just that - pure coincidence.

What it comes down to is that cigarettes do absolutely nothing for you. Not a thing. So for whose benefit are you smoking them? That slimy little parasite has taken over your life, and taken away a large part of your free will as well as conned you into believing that every time you light up, you're doing yourself some good.

## Chapter Ten

# Demolishing The Myths

A lot of smokers are convinced that smoking helps them to relax.

The association between taking a ten-minute break for a cup of coffee, or sitting down with a drink in the evening, and having a cigarette is very strong.

The more you have been looking forward to it - that is, the longer those withdrawal symptoms have been building up - the stronger the feeling of relaxation when you take the first puff.

But it is only an impression of relaxation. If the underlying discomfort were not there in the first place, there would be nothing to relieve.

It's that heavy trunk again. Putting it down is the smoker's attempt to recapture the feeling of being a non-smoker for a few minutes. But only for a few minutes. Whereas a non-smoker is able to relax fully, at any time.

### *REASONS TO QUIT*

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTASTE

### *REASONS TO SMOKE*

CONCENTRATION  
HANDLING STRESS  
TASTE  
SOCIABILITY  
**ADDICTION**

Do you believe that smoking a cigarette helps you to handle stress? So it does - the stress of coping with nicotine. That's the only kind of stress it can relieve.

The trouble is that when you are feeling under pressure, every little bit helps. It's easier to believe that the relief you feel has actually eased the situation. But if you were not a smoker, you would not have that source of stress in the first place.

***REASONS TO QUIT***

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTASTE  
HANDLING STRESS

***REASONS TO SMOKE***

CONCENTRATION  
TASTE  
SOCIABILITY  
**ADDICTION**

How about concentration? It's much the same story. If you are going to concentrate, you don't need distractions. So to keep that nicotine-dependent parasite inside you from interrupting while you are trying to concentrate, you feed it before you start the task, and you keep on feeding it.

And finally you look up and see how many butts are piled in the ash-tray. That's what your concentration has cost you.

If you did not have that parasite to cope with, there would be nothing to wreck your concentration every few minutes. So that one can come off the list too.

***REASONS TO QUIT***

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTASTE  
HANDLING STRESS  
CONCENTRATION

***REASONS TO SMOKE***

TASTE  
SOCIABILITY  
**ADDICTION**



There's also a strong association between smoking and food & drink. Not because cigarette smoke makes food or drink taste better - on the contrary!

**Pete was unusual among his friends. Self-employed and a keen cook, he had married a woman who had always found kitchen duties a chore, so Pete took over the main responsibility for the family's meals. The only problem was that everybody else found that he seriously overdid the seasonings. Pete couldn't see it at all: as a smoker, his sense of taste had become dulled over the years. But within a couple of weeks of stopping, he found that the family had been right all along. Now Pete can taste what everybody else can taste - and it tastes good!**

Can you imagine picking up a glass without a cigarette between your fingers? Or not lighting up at the end of a meal?

But think about it for a moment. A break can be an enjoyable experience in its own right. Non-smokers like to take it easy every so often too.

And nobody pretends that tobacco smoke makes things taste better.

Remember that a coffee break, or the end of a meal, is an ideal opportunity to top up the nicotine, especially if it hasn't been possible for a little while. So you have a build-up of withdrawal feelings, and consequently a stronger feeling of relief when you do.

And remember too that cigarette smoke literally turns your saliva to acid. So if you're washing that away with food or drink, at least you're avoiding the nasty taste that builds up in your mouth. It works a little like an anaesthetic, dulling an unpleasant sensation. The experience of smoking those cigarettes is less distasteful than normal.

And one of the most enjoyable things about being a non-smoker is to be able to taste and smell the world properly again.

***REASONS TO QUIT***

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTASTE  
HANDLING STRESS  
CONCENTRATION  
TASTE

***REASONS TO SMOKE***

SOCIABILITY  
**ADDICTION**

That just leaves one delusion - the idea that smoking is a sociable activity. That may have been true once, but it's less and less true nowadays.

Understandably, more and more people would rather not breathe air polluted with tobacco smoke. But there is no reason in principle why smokers and non-smokers should not coexist. Friendship - or love - should be stronger than that.

***REASONS TO QUIT***

HEALTH  
MONEY  
CONTROL  
PRESSURE  
DISTASTE  
HANDLING STRESS  
CONCENTRATION  
TASTE  
SOCIABILITY

***REASONS TO SMOKE***

**ADDICTION**

A teacher in his forties who had smoked since his teens, Des had succeeded in giving up by sheer force of willpower. It was hard, but Des was harder. For eight years, he was smoke-free. Then, at a wedding, he found himself together with old friends and family members he had not seen for years. A combination of heightened emotion, reminiscence and a few drinks produced a feeling something like *deja vu*. For a crucial few moments, in his head, Des was still a smoker, so when somebody offered the cigarettes round, Des took one, without a second thought. Within days, he was buying them again, as hooked as ever!

So you can see how ingenious we become as smokers at putting a gloss on something that is just a simple process of taking medication. Talking about pleasure and satisfaction when all we're really doing is attempting to control the uncomfortable symptoms of nicotine addiction.

## Chapter Eleven

### Still See Some Point In Smoking?

However many years you have spent with that fear of the dark, once the light goes on and the shadows melt away, you can see clearly all the benefits of not having to smoke any more.

Life just has to be more fun because you've got more energy and more self-respect.

You have broken the chain that kept you enslaved.

You have taken back control of your own life and reclaimed the right to make your own choices.

So let's go back to the original question: why do we smoke?

It isn't pleasure - that's just an illusion, like the relief when you put down a heavy load.

It isn't any help in dealing with problems, because it is a problem in itself.

It does not relieve stress - it is a source of stress.

It's simply feeding a physical addiction. And that addiction is a very small thing, once you take away its army of shadows - all those self-protective delusions that kept you in the dark for so long.

So now it's time to look at what to do about it.

## Chapter Twelve

### Way to go!

There is only one way to go now. No more putting it off, no half measures, no more kidding yourself.

One myth we can dispose of right away is the one about a safe - or even a safer - cigarette. It is true that the tobacco companies could put a cigarette on the market with enough nicotine to satisfy the addiction, but a lower level of tar.

However, to sell it as safer would mean admitting that the standard product is less safe. And that is something they will never do. So forget the idea of a safe cigarette. It's a contradiction in terms.

Filters don't stop anything getting into your body, they just protect your smoking fingers from unsightly tar stains.

Light brands are more likely to do harm than good, because you will probably light more cigarettes, puff on them more often, and draw more deeply. Since the only reason you are only smoking is in order to get a dose of nicotine into your body, you will keep smoking until you've got it.

Cutting down offers no kind of answer - as you will know if you ever tried it.

It doesn't do anything to diminish the physical addiction. Everyone knows that the body develops tolerance, and needs more of the drug, not less: you can't keep an alligator happy by reducing his rations - all that will do is make him bad-tempered.

Nor does it begin to tackle the myths. On the contrary, it will reinforce them, and keep you believing you're making a sacrifice.

And of course it wastes an awful lot of time. In fact cutting down is less than no good - it actually makes the problem worse.

Think back to the two big myths about stress relief and enjoyment.

When you are feeding your parasite on demand, you are keeping your withdrawal symptoms more or less under control.

But if you are going to cut down from, say, 20 a day to 10, which cigarettes are you going to do without?

Not the "best" ones of the day. So your day is built round waiting for coffee time, or lunchtime, or evening drink time. And the longer you have to wait, the greater the anticipation and - surprise, surprise - the "pleasure".

If your day is spent waiting for the next cigarette, those withdrawal symptoms are going to build up. When you do finally light up, the sense of relief is enormous, reinforcing the illusion that cigarettes relieve stress.



If you have ever fancied the idea of being a social or casual smoker, forget that too. Most social smokers are addicts in the making. Although most smokers become addicted in the first few weeks, some people can take years.

**Nicotine addiction usually develops within a few days or weeks of the first few cigarettes. But not always. Pamela had been smoking other people's cigarettes since her teens, in the pub or at parties. She was in her late forties before it suddenly dawned one evening that since there were no other smokers around, she was going to have to pay a visit to the vending machine. Luckily, she came to me before the addiction fully seized hold of her, and we were able to nip it in the bud. But it was a close call!**

You are already addicted. Every time you light a cigarette, you are committing yourself to lighting another one pretty soon. The chain could go on forever.

So there can be no half-measures. That chain must be broken.

Most smokers' first experience of trying to quit involves taking it head-on in a battle of wills.

It is universally believed that quitting smoking is one of the hardest things you can do. Everybody tells you so - smokers, ex-smokers, non-smokers.

Smokers who haven't yet accepted that it's better to be a non-smoker do their best to make it hard, and it all feeds into this conviction that you're making the biggest sacrifice imaginable.

Just what it is that's being sacrificed is never very clear, but you're convinced that during good times and bad times, cigarettes are a necessity, like food and drink.

So instead of seeing smoking as it really is - something nasty, expensive, risky and inconvenient, to be gotten rid of as quickly as possible - you get all nostalgic about it. It's why people talk about giving up. As if cigarettes provided some real treat or emotional support.

But as we now know, all they do is create and perpetuate a peculiar form of discomfort, so that relieving it comes to be felt as pleasure, like putting down a heavy load or scratching a mosquito bite.

You know that now: however, to a smoker who has just decided that the time has come to quit, all this is still a closed book. All you know is that it's going to be hard, but it has to be done.

Now, one of the lessons you've learned as a smoker is that when things go wrong, you can always have a cigarette.



If you approach this first attempt to quit with a feeling of dread and apprehension, that little switch trips immediately, and a sneaky little

voice says, "this is going to be tough - you'd better have a cigarette". And the other little voice says, "I can't: I'm trying to quit". Right away, you've just doubled that feeling of deprivation - not only trying to do something really hard, but trying to do it alone.

So instead of looking forward to being free, it feels more like walking into the lions' den. No wonder peoples' experience of trying to quit by willpower is almost always bad.

**Taking a coffee break in the market cafe, livestock trader Michael took out the nicotine inhaler that was supposed to help in the latest attempt to beat his tobacco problem. He was spotted by one of my recent clients, who introduced himself and recommended that Michael give me a try. Two weeks later, one consultation is all it took to wipe out 15 years of regular cigarette smoking.**

Still, if you've got the determination to get through the first couple of days, climb over the first fence, and start to feel some benefit from no longer choking yourself a couple of dozen times a day, you will probably feel like congratulating yourself.

But beware: if you're depending on thoughts of lung cancer and other health problems, thoughts of horrible tastes and smells and dirty looks, to provide your motivation, what happens as those problems begin to recede?

What do you do when your motivation starts to disappear, like the Cheshire Cat, leaving just a sinister grin? That's your next test, when you are going to be most vulnerable to the sneaky voice of the grinning parasite:

"I'll just have one to get me through this bad patch, then I'll be OK."  
"I can't just go cold turkey - it'll be better to ease myself off."

"I've done well - I deserve a reward!"

Just the one. There is no such thing as just one cigarette. If you get only one thing out of this book, let it be that. One cigarette is merely



the visible part of the chain.

In any case, it is always more than just a cigarette. It's a significant change in your attitude. You've gone from wanting to be a non-smoker to hankering after the idea of being an occasional smoker. So you allow yourself a cigarette - or maybe take a puff of somebody else's.

And what happens next? Sooner or later, you've got to have another one.

But the demon inside you is ready, with a new set of possible get-outs for you. Now it's saying things like:

"I could drop dead tomorrow."

"All this health stuff is probably exaggerated."

"I picked the wrong time. I've learned some useful lessons, and next time I'll definitely get it right."

"Being so irritable is not fair on everybody else."

All familiar stuff, and pretty laughable in the cold light of day. But you believe it: you are a smoker, and smokers will believe anything.

For example, to know that smoking is no more than a particularly harmful kind of drug addiction, and still believe that they get something positive out of it, so that quitting involves self-denial.

Then naturally it's a hard thing to do, and it's very tempting to try and replace the lost "treat" with something else. Nicotine replacement is not the answer - it's just like trying to cut down on cigarettes.

Nor is snacking on candy or potato chips. Not only will it make you fat, but every time you compensate for not smoking, you're buying in to the myth that a cigarette is used to be a treat or a reward.

The other big problem with tackling smoking head-on is that you can never be sure that you have made it.

You may have heard it said that you can never become a non-smoker, just a person who has smoked in the past and could start again at any time - like an alcoholic.

That will certainly be the case unless you can change your whole attitude to cigarettes, and see smoking in a completely new light.

In other words, if you are still thinking like a smoker, believing that cigarettes once gave you something you needed, for the rest of your life you are just waiting to fail, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

And chances are that it will. When the particular situation arises - a high time or a low time - and somebody offers a cigarette, it's the work of a moment to say, "Oh why not?" And in that moment, you've wiped out all the sacrifice and self-denial of the previous months or years.

**After 15 years as a smoker, Tony quit successfully by attending one of my consultations. Nobody was prouder of him than his Italian-born father, himself a regular smoker for many years. Then, tragically, Tony's mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Not once during those last nightmare days did Tony turn to his old crutch, the cigarette. But on the day of the funeral, when the mourners had left and he and his father were alone in the house, Tony silently joined the old man in a smoke. At that moment, his own best interests were submerged in the need to feel solidarity with his father. A second consultation identified the problem and fixed it.**

The other reason why trying to quit just by your own willpower is not likely to work is that the very process of exerting pressure on yourself creates the counter-pressure. You're a strong-willed person trying to force yourself to do something you're not going to like - no wonder you put up a fight. No wonder it turns into a struggle.

It all comes back to the crucial need to get back to the mindset of a non-smoker, sharing their bafflement at the idea of somebody sticking one of those things in his or her mouth and setting fire to it.

Just remember: once all the conditioning has gone, the belief that you can't function properly without cigarettes, or enjoy a good time, or get through a bad time without cigarettes, once all that has faded away and your body has beaten its craving for nicotine, then you will find that life is so much more enjoyable.

That's right: non-smokers have more fun, as you are about to discover.

You will discover another amazing thing. You may have thought your main reason for quitting was to avoid potential harm. In fact, the best reason of all for becoming a non-smoker is a totally positive one: that it restores you to the complete human being you used to be before the whole nightmare started - physically, and psychologically you are own person again.

Physically, the thing you gain is energy - the sheer ability to do more with your life. You may think that you're running out of steam. You're not: there are reserves of energy locked inside you that you are about to unleash.

Psychologically, it's knowing that you are back in charge of your own life again, free of the obligation to harm yourself for the benefit of something else, free to make your own choices at last.

So now it's time to light the last cigarette you will ever have to smoke, and while you smoke it, let's start to sum up, to pull all these threads together.

## Chapter Thirteen

# Pushing At An Open Door

The reason you are reading this now is that you finally got fed up with being a smoker. Now you've seen through all the myths and delusions, and you know that cigarettes never did anything for you in the first place.

There is an important point here. Being a smoker is a state of mind. So is being a non-smoker. If you still harbour any idea that smoking a cigarette can be a good thing, then you're still thinking like a smoker.

And everything you know now tells you that it cannot be. So let's accept that you have had it with smoking and everything it brings with it.

Next, I want you to accept the obvious truth that smoking is for losers.

Not just because it will wreck your health and your ability to enjoy physical activities.

Not just because it's a huge waste of money.

Not just because it turns you into somebody that people would rather not be with.

Not just because it puts restrictions on where you can go and what you can do.

But mostly because it is completely pointless.

If you can accept those obvious truths, then you can move on and accept the marvellous possibilities that now open up.

You will be able to achieve more in your life, by having more energy to do the things you want to do and being able to concentrate better.

You will be able to go anywhere you want to go.

You will be able to enjoy tasting and smelling things properly again.

You'll be financially better off.

You will have the joy of knowing that you are a whole person again.

And at what price? What have you had to sacrifice in order to gain these marvellous things?

Nothing. You have gotten rid of a nasty, uncomfortable, unsightly infestation - something about as glamorous as athlete's foot. And that, as Elton John says, is no sacrifice at all.

You have seen that there's no point in fighting. That's what the thing wants you to do, because it knows that's the only way it can win. And now you know better.

So all that remains is to deal with the physical fact of nicotine addiction. It's a very short-acting drug, so the process only takes a few days.

Imagine that parasite, that alien creature inside your body. That is your nicotine addiction. You'll know when it's hungry, because you will get that edgy, restless feeling in the pit of your stomach.

And at that point, you have a choice - you can feed it or you can tell it to get lost.

If you refuse to feed the thing, it's going to starve to death in just a few days. As soon as you put out that last cigarette, you broke the chain. Do you really want to go back into slavery?

I promise you, that's all it takes - just a few days of dealing with a purely physical discomfort, much as you might have after a visit to the dentist, when the anaesthetic starts to wear off.

You don't drop everything when that happens, do you? You just get on with your life, because you know what is causing the discomfort and you know it is only a temporary thing.

When it does raise its ugly head, just tell it to get lost. It might make the whole process even more satisfying if you name the creature after your least favourite person!

That way, you can turn each of those encounters into an exciting and rewarding moment of victory.

If you do experience any discomfort, never forget whose fault that is. Remember that this is what that creature has been doing to you ever since it got its claws into you.

Remind yourself that non-smokers don't have to put up with this sort of thing, and you're a non-smoker, so the hell with it.

If you can do that, then those twinges will become moments of sheer pleasure.

## Chapter Fourteen

# Living As A Non-Smoker

By turning quietly from a smoker to a non-smoker, you have made a big change in yourself. However, you have not changed the world: there are still smokers out there.

If you were just starting out on a conventional attempt to quit, they would represent quite a threat. Oddly enough, it seems that the more people you tell, the more pressure it puts on you and the more chance you have of failing.

So, this time, don't tell the world. Let them find out. But there is no reason to avoid the smokers. After all, they have nothing that you want, so they represent no threat to you.

Some of them might react a bit oddly, though, and it is as well to be prepared for the fact. It is a strange thing that, however much every smoker would love to be free in their heart of hearts, they can still feel quite resentful and uncomfortable at the thought of somebody else getting off the sinking ship.

Don't be surprised if you get some funny reactions, even from people close to you. And remember, it all comes down to envy.

Now that you understand why you smoked for all those years, you can sympathise with all those other poor smokers. Because we have all been in the same boat.

So you can't blame them and you certainly won't envy them. Just be understanding and sympathetic.

The next thing you have to take to heart is that there is no such thing as just one cigarette. You can see it now, the invisible chain that starts when you first light up and doesn't end until you've smoked your last cigarette of all.

If any of us had been able to see it that way before we started, we might all have had second thoughts about it. But we didn't - you never do. It seemed such a trivial thing back then: if only we had known.

Anyhow, all that is in the past now. The important thing is that you have given yourself a second chance, the chance to quit while you are ahead. With a bit of luck you will get away practically scot free.

I did, after 30 years as a smoker.

All you have to do is let yourself take these simple principles on board, stand by as that parasite starves to death, and you've done it.



## Additional Tips On How To Quit Smoking

- Make a list. Write down why you want to stop smoking.
- Pick a good time to quit. Avoid times when you will be under a lot of stress, even holidays.
- Throw out ALL cigarettes, ashtrays, and lighters from your home and car.
- Consider changing your daily routine. For example, take a different route to work or school.
- Drink lots of water, eat a balanced diet, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol.
- Get support. Tell family, friends and co-workers that you are going to quit. Ask that they not smoke around you or leave cigarettes out where you can see them. Maybe even get one of them to quit with you!
- Be aware that you may not quit on the first try. Most smokers need a few practice runs to quit for good. Be patient, but persistent.
- Be prepared for difficult situations and side effects. Some may experience depression, irritability and headaches.
- Talk with your health care provider. Consider getting help by attending cessation classes and using medications.
- Keep busy! Exercise every day, even if it's just going for a walk. Make a list of what you are going to do instead of smoke. Do something you enjoy!

## What Quitting Can Do 20 Minutes To 15 Years

### *20 Minutes After Quitting*

- Blood pressure drops to normal
- Pulse drops to its normal rate
- Body temperature of hands and feet increases to normal

### *8 Hours After Quitting*

- Carbon monoxide level in blood returns to normal
- Oxygen level in blood increases to normal

### *24 Hours After Quitting*

- Chance of heart attack decreases

### *48 Hours After Quitting*

- Nerve endings start to regrow
- Ability to smell and taste is enhanced

### *72 Hours After Quitting*

- Bronchial tubes relax, making breathing easier

### *2 Weeks to 3 Months After Quitting*

- Circulation Improves
- Walking becomes easier
- Lung function increases up to 30%

### *1 To 9 Months After Quitting*

- Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, shortness of breath decrease
- Cilia regain normal function in lungs, increasing ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce infection
- Overall energy increases

### *1 Year After Quitting*

- Excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker

### *15 Years After Quitting*

- Risk of coronary heart disease is the same as that of a non-smoker.

## What You Should Know About Smoking & Tobacco

1. If Humans were meant to smoke, we'd all have chimneys.
2. Smoke-Free environments help people quit quicker. Demand smoke-free homes, restaurants, clubs, businesses, and the world.
3. Smoking is depressing to the non-smoker.
4. Smoking takes away your freedom and makes you a slave.
5. Tobacco prematurely kills 5 million people every year and the figure is rising!
6. Each day, tobacco companies spend over 26 million dollars to advertise their addictive, deadly product.
7. Smoking while pregnant can pass the addiction to the child.
8. The health cost to governments (US) is billions of dollars each year.
9. Nicotine is a drug that is as addictive as heroin and cocaine.
10. One drop of PURE nicotine would kill an average-sized person.
11. Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death in the U.S.
12. More people die from tobacco-related illness than from AIDS, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides COMBINED.
13. Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, lung disease, and strokes.
14. Smokers not only hurt themselves - they hurt other people around them.
15. **YOU DON'T NEED IT!** Take care of your health and your future. You're worth it!

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON QUITTING SMOKING

American Heart Association  
1-800-242-8721  
[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

American Cancer Society  
1-404-320-3333  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

American Lung Association  
1-212-315-8700  
[www.lungusa.com](http://www.lungusa.com)

Center for Disease Control & Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco/how2quit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/how2quit.htm)

Pregnant women can call 1-866-66-START  
[www.americanlegacy.org/greatstart](http://www.americanlegacy.org/greatstart)