

Quitting Tobacco



The last thing you need to hear is another anti-tobacco lecture. Not using tobacco is certainly a worthy discussion when kids are concerned, but unless you are debating the risks with an executive of one of the tobacco companies, it is no longer a debate as to whether tobacco is harmful. It kills millions of people around the world every year, and those who it doesn't kill find their health and well-being compromised to some extent. The real question is what to do about it, and in one sense that issue, too, is non-negotiable: no matter what form of tobacco you use, you need to stop. The remaining debate, then, is easy to describe and nearly impossible for many people to understand: just how do you quit using tobacco?

The Best - And Most Difficult Way - To Stop Using Tobacco

For the addicted masses, the gap between knowledge and action remains wide and mysterious. What works and what doesn't? What can tobacco users who are serious about quitting do to overcome their addiction and leave the habit behind once and for all?

For those cynics who suggest that you "just do it," it is wise to remember that tobacco smoke has hundreds of chemical components. It is a formidable opponent when compared to the comparative ease of continued access to tobacco and the social pressures that surround it.

And if you think smokeless tobacco – like snuff and chewing tobacco – is a solution, you should realize that these products put about twice the nicotine into the system as cigarettes, making it twice as addictive. Instances of mouth and throat cancer, while not as prevalent as lung cancer, are still killing thousands of Americans every year.

Ironically, hard as it is, the most successful method of quitting tobacco is to quit cold turkey. The American Cancer Society says that more than 90 percent of successful ex-smokers stopped just this way. Consider this approach first, and if you can't make it work, another strategy just might work.

The Other Way To Stop Using Tobacco

The other approach for those who just can't face the cold turkey challenge is a combination of two strategies – the creation of a plan with a timetable, and the use of medically approved products that allow you to wean yourself from nicotine addiction over time.

The first step here is to set a date and stick to it. Next, use the time before the date to educate yourself about the road ahead, the pitfalls, temptations and specific products, and weaning strategies available. Options include nicotine gum, nasal sprays, and transdermal patches

and inhalants, most of which come with instructions and specific regimens. There are also prescription medications and medically supervised programs out there; consult your doctor for a recommended resource.

Regardless of which method you choose, the most important element of all is commitment. If you break away from your regimen in a weak moment, don't use that as an excuse to return to the habit. One of the greatest goal achievement experts of all time was Napoleon Hill. Author of *Think and Grow Rich*, he strongly believed in the power of affirmations and their ability to create change. Following his recommendations on how to create change, try to write out a positive affirmative statement about your goal, commit it to memory, and repeat it 12 times a day. This conditioning may produce a helpful influence in reinforcing your motivation quit tobacco.

Accept that quitting will be hard and that your commitment must be stronger than your addiction. There is no half-hearted way to stop using tobacco. If you don't quit, odds are that you'll receive an even stronger motivation somewhere down the road, and when that happens, quitting won't be optional. It'll be a lifesaving necessity.

How The EAP Can Help

Your EAP offers tobacco cessation coaching, confidential and free to you. Tobacco Cessation coaches are specially trained to help you work through challenges and obstacles, identify and utilize your motivators to your advantage and provide support and guidance in making a lifestyle change that will have a lasting impact and give you a much brighter future.