

Tobacco Dependence Clinic Participant's Guide

Compiled by:

**Lindsay Killam MSW, RSW
Addiction Counsellor
Vancouver Coastal Health**



in partnership with Health Canada

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Week 1: Balancing Your Decision

The Stages of Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking does not occur all at once. It happens over time. Researchers have found that there are stages to quitting.

Stage 1: Pre-Contemplation.

Is smoking really harming me? Is smoking really a problem for me? I do have some healthy lifestyle choices; do I really need to give up smoking? Do I even want to quit smoking?

Stage 2: Contemplation.

This is when you first start thinking about quitting smoking. You are not sure about it yet. Your reasons for quitting are adding up. You are starting to think that your life would be better if you did not smoke.

Stage 3: Preparation.

This is the stage when you decide for sure to try to quit smoking. You are thinking more and more about quitting. You think of a quitting plan. You start the QUITTING PROCESS. You start observing your habits with smoking and recognizing your triggers to smoke. Your plan may include quitting on your own or seeking help (joining a group, using a nicotine patch, reading a self-help book, etc.). You may decide to slowly reduce your smoking, or to quit “cold turkey”.

Stage 4: Action.

This is it! You start making changes to your habit and reducing your smoking! You prepare well for each action step & learn as you go in the quitting process. You have set your schedule so that you manage urges to smoke, and you are avoiding as much stress as possible. You have bought food to eat when you have an urge to smoke. You have told friends that you are in the process of quitting in order to get their support. You are restricting access to your cigarettes more and more. This is also the stage when you will have nicotine withdrawal.

This is the stage when you are excited about quitting smoking, and when you spend much of your time thinking about quitting. During this stage, urges to smoke are very strong at first. They will become less strong over time. How long does the action stage last? It depends on the person, but it is about six months on average.

On NRT products you are building up your clean nicotine levels and enjoying cigarettes less & less. You are more and more mindful of when & why you smoke as your physical cravings are managed more and more.

Stage 5: Maintenance.

Finally, you are physically comfortable. You have awareness of your smoking habit and triggers, you are managing the quitting process and you let go of that last smoke. You have new coping skills. You see your life as a non smoker growing stronger and stronger before your eyes. New lifestyle choices emerge with your new health and energy.

Tobacco has no control over you, you are free.

The last stage for a successful quitter begins about six months after quitting smoking. This happens slowly, you find that you hardly ever think about smoking. Urges occur far less often than in the past. You can deal with them pretty well. They are not like they used to be when you first quit. But this stage has risks too. Unexpected urges may occur at times of stress (e.g., loss of job, or death of a family member) or at happy times (e.g., at a wedding). As time passes, even these risks get smaller and smaller.

Prochaska, J. & Di Clemente CC. (1983). Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, 390-395.

Facts about Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

You will be able to question and review your NRT in one-to-one sessions with the doctor or nurse after each group.

Nicotine replacement therapy constitutes the patch, gum, inhalers, and lozenges. Other options for quitting smoking include prescription medications such as Champix and Bupropion (Zyban).

Many people avoid NRT due to myths about its complications or effectiveness. The reality is that NRT is a highly effective tool for managing the physical effects of withdrawal. When we relieve discomfort it can help keep us motivated to change the behaviours associated with smoking.

Common Myths:

Nicotine causes cancer. Nicotine is the addictive ingredient in cigarettes. Carbon monoxide and carcinogens are harmful, along with 60 known cancer causing chemicals in cigarettes.

21 mg patch is the highest treatment. Off label use of the patch is an option to increase levels of nicotine and reduce discomfort of withdrawal. Patches can also be combined with gum, lozenges, or inhalers. With medical consultation Zyban or Champix can also be combined with NRT.

Wearing the patch and smoking will cause a heart attack. Wearing the patch and smoking will not cause a heart attack. If this were to occur it is most likely due to years of smoking, poor diet, or unhealthy lifestyle.

Patch:

- can be used in 3 steps and in off label dosages
- can cause nightmares or sleep disruption
- can cause mild irritation of the skin. This is from the adhesive and not the nicotine.
- can fall off in hot weather
- patch provides a level dose of nicotine over a 24 hour period

Gum and Lozenges:

- delivers nicotine via tissue in the mouth
- park-and-chew method of use
- common side effect is upset stomach usually caused by improper use.

Inhaler:

- small tube
- nicotine is inhaled and absorbed through the mouth and throat
- side effects are often a bad taste, burning sensation or throat irritation, upset stomach

Zyban:

- pill form of medication
- available by prescription
- does not contain nicotine

Chantix:

- pill form of medication
- does not contain nicotine. Reduces craving and pleasurable effects of nicotine
- common side effects nausea, diarrhoea, abnormal dreams

Adapted from: CAMH TEACH Project:

http://www.teachproject.ca/publicdownloads/SOR_Booklet.pdf (2011)

People often have many fears about quitting smoking. These can stem from the unknown. Sometimes they also stem from stories of failure told by others or our own past experiences.

What are you most concerned about when thinking of quitting?

In this program we recognize that quitting is a process, everyone will be different. While we encourage you to get down to 0 cigarettes you will be able to decide your own timeline. There will be ups and downs, good weeks and bad weeks. It is all about learning and building up your toolbox of resources that will bring success.

Tips for Getting Started

Tip 1:

Think positive!! People feel more successful when they focus on what is going right instead of all of the things they may feel that they are giving up. Review the list below and add your own reasons for quitting. Take this list and post it up somewhere visible in your house and use it as a daily reminder about why you are making this change. You may also want to create a wallet size version that you can use as a reminder when faced with triggers in the community.

Some examples of reasons to quit:

- *I will be getting healthier*
- *I will have more energy and better focus*
- *My sense of smell and taste will be better*
- *I will have whiter teeth and fresher breath*
- *I will cough less and breathe better in the long run*
- *I will lower my risk of cancer, heart attacks, strokes, early death, cataracts, and skin wrinkling*
- *I will be proud of myself*
- *I will feel more in control of my life*
- *I will no longer expose others to my second hand smoke*
- *I will have more money to spend/save*
- *I won't have to worry about when I will be able to have my next smoke*

Tip 2:

As part of the planning process it can be helpful to think about past experiences in which you have changed a behaviour. What worked and didn't work for you? Also think about what your needs are for support throughout this process.

- Tell people that your moods might be different for awhile but that it will pass
- Is there anyone who you want to invite to quit with you?
- Do you need to tell people to not talk about it with you or do you want everyone to know and ask you how you are?
- Do you need to inform your doctor about this change? Are you taking any medications that a doctor should be aware of to be able to support you?
- Register for **QuitNow** either by phone or online (quitnow.ca)

Additional Exercises:

Keep Track of When and Why You Smoke

Many people believe that lighting up a cigarette is something that just happens. In reality each cigarette in a day is attached to some type of trigger. This trigger may be situational, emotional, psychological, or physical. Sometimes a cigarette is about relieving the discomfort of withdrawal that can occur during the day or night. Often the first cigarette in the morning is about relieving the withdrawal that occurs overnight. Getting to know the associations that you have with smoking will help you to implement change.

Know your triggers:

The following list identifies some common triggers. Tick off the ones that relate to you and use the additional blank lines to add some more of your own.

- Feeling stressed.*
- Feeling down*
- Talking on the phone*
- Watching TV*
- Driving a car*
- Finishing a meal*
- Playing cards*
- Taking a work break.*
- Being with other smokers*
- Drinking coffee*
- Seeing someone else smoke*
- Cooling off after a fight*
- Feeling lonely*
- After having sex*

Cigarette #	Time	Situation (what are you doing?)	Feeling

Adapted from: Quit Now <http://www.quitnow.ca> (2010)

Week 2: Know Your Triggers

Types of Triggers

Now that you have taken some time exploring your personal triggers over the past week, you are probably aware that triggers vary throughout the day. Below are some examples of the types of triggers you may have noticed.

Physical triggers

- Our body's physical response to withdrawal, dropping nicotine levels result in a craving to smoke

Emotional triggers

- Sadness
- Stress
- Anger
- Worry
- Etc

Situations or Events

- Family get togethers
- Meeting friends
- Places ie. Bus stop, coffee shops, bars, parks
- Sun tanning
- Enjoying sports
- Watching TV
- Places or people that you have associations of smoking with – nostalgia
- Reward

- Breaks at work or school

Thinking or cognitive triggers

- “I can’t get through this without a smoke”
- “I need a break”
- “A smoke will ease my stress”
- “I deserve a smoke”

Because triggers occur in so many different ways, our coping response must reflect a similar diversity.

Learning to Cope with Triggers

There are many options for managing triggers. We can use behavioural tools, cognitive strategies, or emotional supports. Nicotine replacement therapy will help with any physical discomfort. Below are some examples of coping strategies.

Behavioural Tools – things that you DO to cope

- Leave the situation
- Avoid people, places, or things
- Take a walk
- Read a book
- Talk to someone
- Journal
- Meditate
- Sleep
- Have a drink of water
- Chew on something – gum, healthy food
- Choose NRT
- Keep your hands busy – knit, play cards, write
- Take a shower
- Listen to music

Cognitive Strategies – things that you THINK to feel better

- Remind yourself of why you are quitting
- Remind yourself that you don’t want to start over again
- Think about how you have coped (successfully) in the past
- Remind yourself that smoking won’t solve any problems
- Imagine how your health is improving

- Imagine riding the wave instead of being wiped out by it
- Tell yourself that smoking is not an option

Emotional Support – things you can do to FEEL better

- Practise breathing exercises
- Use grounding techniques
- Try to use containment – ie. Focus on one thought or emotion at a time
- Allow yourself to cry
- Reach out for support
- Distract yourself until the trigger/craving passes
- Do an activity that lifts your mood

Initially you may experience many triggers as every new situation or stress may evoke urges. It doesn't matter what coping you choose as long as it works. Over time these urges will lose their strength and while there may be memories of smoking, most ex-smokers will no longer have the desire to smoke.

No matter how difficult the road to quitting may feel try to avoid the temptation towards negative self-talk or beating yourself up when you struggle. People who tend to see themselves as weak, stupid, or hopeless tend to start smoking again.

Create your Trigger Coping Plan

What we choose to do to cope with a trigger will depend on the situation, our resources, and our ability to change it. We can view coping from 3 different standpoints: avoid, alter, or accept. Below is an explanation of each.

Avoid - avoiding a situation is one of the most effective ways to prevent being triggered. This may mean avoiding certain situations or people for at least a period of time.

Alter - During the times that you cannot *avoid* a situation/feeling/thought, changing the trigger might be helpful. For example you might want to replace your morning coffee with juice, change your routine, turn off the TV, engage in new activities (chew gum, go for a walk, knit, get support), or alter your thinking, "I don't need a cigarette to get through this."

Acceptance – sometimes life simply happens and despite our best efforts we are best to simply accept and move on. Accepting 'what is' does not necessarily make a craving seem any less urgent. In these situations it is useful to have gum, inhaler, etc.... or some other alternative activity that distracts from the urge to smoke. It can also be helpful to draw on positive self-talk or cognitive coping skills to get through.

Some examples of common triggers and options for coping are identified on this chart. Reflect back on some of your triggers and come up with some possible coping strategies.

Can you avoid this trigger or is it possible to alter the situation to make it more comfortable? Use the list of coping skills on the previous page to help you.

Example of a plan:

Trigger	Avoid/Alter/Acceptance
smoking with coffee	limit coffee intake for the day, make home smoke free and only have coffee inside, have tea instead
smoking at AA meetings	attend non-smoking meetings, stay inside during breaks, use gum or inhalers for cravings
stress	deep breathing, talk to a friend, finish tasks, acceptance

Trigger	Avoid/Alter/Acceptance

As you continue on in your process use this worksheet as a coping toolbox. Reflect back on the skills that worked for you in different situations and record it next to the trigger. Change your coping as you discover new strengths and strategies that will emerge over time. You never know when you might have a moment of weakness in which this worksheet may be a helpful guide.

Adapted from: Canadian Mental Health Association (2005). *Breathing easy workbook*. Health Canada: Canada.

Additional Exercise: Coping with Triggers, A Personal Plan

The following homework exercise can help you to further develop your coping skills. Using your journal or a piece of paper, list the triggers that might cause you to have an urge to smoke. How many can you list? Now list possible coping skills based on the questions below.

List **5 behavioural coping skills** that you can use for these urges.

List **5 mental/cognitive skills** that you can use for these urges.

List **5 emotional coping skills** that you can use for these urges.

The Tobacco Research and Intervention Program at the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Centre and Research Institute at the University of South Florida. www.moffitt.org (2010)

Week 3: Starting to Plan

Understanding your Smoking Pattern

As you enter the third week of treatment take a moment to reflect back on the past couple of weeks. You have likely found that you are becoming more aware of your relationship with cigarettes. Use the following questions to continue developing your self-awareness.

Which days do you smoke the most?

What are you doing on those days?

Who are you with on those days?

Which days do you smoke the least?

What are you doing on those days?

Who are you with?

What time of day do you smoke the most?

What is your mood?

What are you doing?

Who are you with?

What time of day do you smoke the least?

What is your mood?

What are you doing?

Who are you with?

Understanding your smoking pattern will not only help you to successfully plan change in your life. It will also help you to sustain change.

Planning Change on the Calendar

Part of achieving goals is to set out a plan that allows us to create our own benchmarks for change. Using the following questions fill in a one month plan for change on a wall calendar.

How do you plan to stop or reduce smoking?

Everyone's comfort with quitting will be different. Think about how you have achieved change in the past. Do you need deadlines? Do you prefer to experience change gradually? Think about what you believe would work for you and schedule daily or weekly smoking reductions.

Remember: Your plan is a guideline. Some people find that their reductions go faster than planned. Quit dates often change. Be open to re-evaluating as you move forward.

List at least one lifestyle change that you would like to implement each week.

Quitting smoking is not about what we take out of our lives but what we put in. As we reduce smoking we open up periods of time in the day to fill with new, healthier activities. Think about what you are missing or new things that you want to do and schedule it in. Some examples: cooking healthy food, walks, meet with friends, exercise, etc.

Plan one reward for yourself each week.

We don't have to be perfect to recognize hard work. Furthermore, we don't always get the recognition from others that we might hope for. Be your own biggest fan and do something good for yourself. Some examples: manicures, haircuts, a meal out, the movies, saving money, opening a bank account, saving for a trip, getting teeth cleaned. It is personal recognition that can keep us motivated through the ups and downs of quitting.

After you complete your plan take a moment to consider any possible barriers to achieving your goals. Then think in advance what solutions might be available to overcome those barriers. Use the following chart to record this part of your plan.

Barriers to Change	Possible Solutions

Review your calendar regularly and continue to build on your ideas and successes as you strive towards quitting and staying quit.

Here are some additional ideas to help you in your process:

Limiting your smoking:

- Don't carry cigarettes with you
- Decide on less cigarettes each day or week
- Only buy one pack at a time
- Only roll the number that you are allowing for yourself in a day

Aversion:

- Smell a dirty ashtray
- Keep a jar of used cigarettes and smell or touch them when feeling the urge to smoke

Change the way you smoke:

- Change the hand that you hold the cigarette

- Create non-smoking areas in the home
- Only smoke in areas that feel uncomfortable to you
- Do not allow other people to smoke with you

Change your routine:

- Change when you smoke
- Start a new activity that occupies your hands
- Stop drinking alcohol or caffeine
- Practice refusing cigarettes
- Practice relaxation and visualizing yourself as a non-smoker
- Get your teeth cleaned
- Clean your house and clothes
- Brush your teeth before having a cigarette

Additional Exercise: PHALT Chart (Learning Self-care)

The H.A.L.T. acronym is commonly used in 12-step programs. Adding the “P” includes “Pain” as one of the risks for smokers to slip or relapse.

Post this P.H.A.L.T! chart on the refrigerator or desk. Sometimes we have a cigarette only because we are really in **Pain, Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired.**

Please be aware that self-awareness and self-care increase your chances of success!

P – PAIN

AM I IN PAIN?

Experiencing emotional and/or physical pain can really tax our resources and put us at risk for smoking to cope. Having tools to work through emotional pain and support is necessary. Going to your doctor for regular medical care to solve health issues or get support with pain management is important. Being able to know how to support one’s self through pain and gain more support or skills when pain cannot be managed with one’s current skill set is very important. If pain is unmanaged destructive coping skills, like smoking, is often the result.

H - HUNGRY

AM I HUNGRY?

Do I feel “something is missing?” When we get that feeling of emptiness, we often are not able to decide whether we want food or cigarette- all we know is that we want “something”. Smokers can miss a meal because they often don’t want to take the time to eat – instead they just “smoke a meal”. If you have become a non-smoker, you can’t afford to miss a meal- it is guaranteed to leave you feeling “hungry”. Although, your

BODY is calling for food, your ADDICTION is calling for nicotine. In the confusion, you may relapse into thinking that ONLY a cigarette will fill in that “empty space”.

FILL YOUR STOMACH SO THE EMPTINESS WILL DIMINISH. YOU’RE TOO VULNERABLE TO RELAPSE IF YOU DON’T PRACTICE WELLNESS BY EATING SENSIBLY AND REGULARLY.

A - ANGRY/ FRUSTRATION INTOLERANCE

AM I ANGRY? DO I HAVE THE SKILLS TO MANAGE DAY TO DAY FRUSTRATION?

Do I feel that my anger is a valid excuse to have a cigarette?

Please remember that we can still be worthwhile people when we are feeling angry- we don’t have to punish ourselves with a cigarette. We don’t need to “stuff” down those angry feelings with a cigarette! **ANGER IS A VALID EMOTION. ANGER IS NOT A VALID EXCUSE FOR HAVING A CIGARETTE!!** FEELING angry is all right. What we DO with those angry feelings may not be all right for you and others. Usually, we need to get in touch with the angry feelings and admit to them- this self-awareness will begin to diminish the angry feelings and reduce the anxiety of the unknown. Ask these questions:

“What am I afraid of losing?”

“What am I afraid of?”

CALL SOMEONE FOR HELP IF THE ANGER MIGHT LEAD YOU BACK TO SMOKING!

L – LONELY/ BORED

AM I LONELY? AM I BORED?

Feeling lonely can be overwhelming enough to send us back to smoking. Again, we need to tell ourselves that FEELING lonely is all right, but what we DO with that lonely feeling may not be all right for us and for others. Being alone does not need to be as lonely if we can appreciate the person we are with- we need to like ourselves and realize we are worthwhile even if we are alone. Some time boredom goes hand in hand with loneliness. If we are under stimulated we can feel empty and need something to soothe us. Isolating is a choice; using loneliness or boredom as an excuse to go back to smoking is a choice. **WE HAVE OTHER CHOICES!!** Create new hobbies. Call a support person. Become a volunteer. Give service. Get counselling or professional help.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO ASK FOR HELP.

T - TIRED

AM I TIRED?

All of us feel more vulnerable when we are tired. We begin the relapse process which deludes us into thinking that the only way we will be re-energized is to “stoke our fires with a cigarette.” If we don’t have time to sleep, we can always take a few minutes to do

a relaxation technique. People who are TRULY relaxed or centred have little need for cigarettes!

PLEASE GET YOUR REST AND SLEEP. YOU ARE CERTAINLY WORTH IT!

Week 4: Coping with Withdrawal

What is withdrawal?

Symptoms of withdrawal often act as a barrier to quitting smoking. Sometimes the worry stems from previous quit attempts. Other times it is based on the horror stories that we have heard from friends and family about withdrawal. Much to the surprise of many people, withdrawal is both a physical and emotional experience.

Physically, people crave cigarettes as a response to decreasing levels of nicotine in the body. For many the discomfort of physical withdrawal can occur about 20 minutes after the last cigarette. It can be faster or slower depending on the number the cigarettes per day that the body is used to. When a cigarette is inhaled the nicotine reaches the brain within 7 seconds. This releases dopamine into the pleasure/reward centres of the brain and creates an artificially generated 'feel good' sensation.

Fortunately, the physical symptoms of addiction can be managed by nicotine replacement therapy. Options such as the patch, release nicotine at continuous levels throughout the day and therefore, alleviate the ups and downs of physical cravings from a smoking pattern.

The emotional connection to cigarettes can sometimes be a greater challenge than the physical addiction. Much like the theory of Pavlov's dog, a smoker has been trained to respond to a variety of emotional experiences by having a cigarette. There can be a belief that the cigarette offers relief from uncomfortable emotions. Breaking this connection can feel daunting and overwhelming but it is by no means impossible. Each time a person chooses not to respond with a cigarette it starts to break these connections. It is also important to remind ourselves that cravings average only 3 minutes before they pass.

Effects of Withdrawal:

The following list identifies common symptoms of withdrawal. Individuals may experience all, some, or even none of these effects.

Anger and Mood Swings:

Smoking creates a cycle of rising and falling nicotine levels. When that nicotine is cut off it can feel like an emotional roller coaster. Emotions such as anger and anxiety are common.

Time Perception Distortion:

For many, daily activity has been measured from cigarette to cigarette. Coping with the withdrawal of nicotine can make time feel like it is dragging on. In reality, most craving episodes last no more than about 3 minutes.

Inability to Concentrate:

Smoking nicotine pumps up the brain with adrenaline. It is why people sometimes feel that they can skip a meal for a cigarette. Poor concentration can be associated with low blood sugar or poor diet.

Dizziness:

Your body has been suffering from a lack of oxygen for a long time. Dizziness should subside after a couple of days.

Fatigue:

Nicotine is a powerful stimulant. Withdrawal and readjustment can be physically and emotionally exhausting.

Trouble Sleeping:

Nicotine affects brainwave function. This can influence sleeping patterns and dreaming.

Tightness in Chest:

May be caused by the tension created in the body in its need for nicotine. As the body starts to cleanse itself muscle stiffness is normal.

Coughing, Mucous, Nasal Drip:

This is caused by the years of tar build up slowly loosening and being flushed from the body.

Bad Breath:

This is caused by years of build-up of tar and other chemicals through the mouth, gums, and lungs. Cell and tissue healing takes time.

Headaches:

Caused by increases in oxygen levels, tension, stress, and sleep disruption.

Constipation or Gas:

Intestinal or bowel movements can be disrupted in the period of quitting.

Depression or Sadness:

Quitting smoking marks the end of a dependent psychological bond. It can be felt as a form of grief to let it go. Lack of sleep and tension may also contribute to a sense of depression.

Suicidal Ideation:

Quitting smoking can be very stressful, especially for individuals with vulnerable mental health. Nicotine replacement therapy can have interactions with some psychiatric medications. Many individuals also notice that letting go of cigarettes causes long-stuffed emotions to surface and may not have the coping in place to deal with them. If you find yourself depressed, psychotic, or thinking about ending your life, reach out to your supports and consult with a physician as soon as possible.

Loneliness or Feeling Cooped up:

There is a loss of routine or “sense of companion” that comes from quitting smoking.

Increased Appetite or Hunger:

This can be caused by hand-to-mouth habit, or replacement feeding for the now absent nicotine induced adrenaline. The body craves more blood sugar.

Cravings:

It takes 72 hours of abstinence to purge our blood of nicotine. Cravings are more a response to conditioning than to actual physical withdrawal. Cravings are the mind’s way of warning us that it is time to ingest nicotine to avoid physical discomfort. For most smokers the brain starts to send gentle reminders about every 20-30 minutes.

Unfortunately, even after all of the nicotine has left the body, the part of our mind that generates cravings remains intact. When we feel a craving begin to escalate it is simply the unconscious mind turning up the volume on what it has been conditioned to believe it needs. Fortunately though, the average craving only lasts 3 minutes (it only seems like longer). When the need is not fulfilled, the mind eventually quits prompting the desire.

Many cravings are triggered by the habit itself. Over time, smoking becomes associated with different situations and feelings. It is necessary to recondition each trigger as it arises. Much like a battery losing its charge, each time there is a new response to an old trigger the cravings will begin to subside. In time, former cravings become nothing more than thoughts.

Adapted from:

Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-pubs/tobac-tabac (2010)

Why Quit www.whyquit.com (2009)

McEwen, A. et al. (2006). *Manual of smoking cessation. A guide for counsellors and practitioners.* Blackwell Publishing: USA.

Benefits of Quitting:

Enough of the bad news, now for the good news. Quitting smoking is the most important health decision that most people can make. By quitting smoking, you will add years to your life. You will also increase the quality of your life. You will breathe easier, walk further, exercise more, taste food and smell better. You will feel and be healthier as a non-smoker than you would have been if you kept smoking.

Your risks of bladder cancer, cervical cancer, cancer of the larynx, and peripheral artery disease are reduced by quitting smoking.

You will see that your health quickly starts to improve once you quit and the earlier you quit, the greater the chance that you will overcome the risks caused by smoking. But quitting smoking improves your health at any age. In 1990, the United States Surgeon General published a report called “The Health Benefits of Smoking Cessation.” That report was **928** pages long!

What you can expect:

20 minutes after your last cigarette

Most of the nicotine has left your brain. Your blood pressure and pulse rate goes back to normal.

8 hours after your last cigarette

The level of carbon monoxide in your blood has decreased to normal. The level of oxygen rises to normal.

24 hours after your last cigarette

Your risk of having a heart attack begins to go down.

2 days after quitting

You can taste and smell things better.

2 weeks after quitting

Your lungs are working better. You have better blood circulation.

1 month after quitting

You cough less and have less shortness of breath. You breathe better and are not as tired.

1 year after quitting

Your risk of heart disease has been cut in half.

5 years after quitting

Your risk of dying of lung cancer has been cut in half. Your risk of oral cancers has also been cut in half.

5-15 years after quitting

Your risk of stroke is about the same as someone who never smoked.

10 years after quitting

Your risk of lung cancer is nearly the same as someone who never smoked. Your risk of pancreatic cancer has also been reduced.

15 years after quitting

Your risk of heart disease is as low as if you never smoked.

Health Canada, www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-pubs/tobac-tabac (2010)

Canadian Mental Health Association (2005). *Breathing easy workbook*. Health Canada: Canada.

Week 5: Managing our Emotions - Stress

Introduction: What is Balance?

We are in a constant state of growth as individuals. As we start to focus on one particular change, such as quitting smoking, we may notice that we are prompted to make other changes as well. Some of these changes may be by choice and some out of necessity. It is important to become observant of what is happening in our lives when we feel good and what is happening when we feel overwhelmed, negative, or depressed. This interplay of things that give us energy and things that deplete our energy informs us about healthy balance. In this program we explore four dimensions of health - emotional, social, physical, and psychological.

Assessing balance in our lives can be done as a daily or weekly journal exercise. It can be a valuable information system about our health, about why we might feel stressed, and about where we need to make changes. You will find that as you quit smoking physical, emotional, and social voids will emerge that used to be stuffed or filled by cigarettes. As well, your needs and coping will be constantly changing. The following two exercises can help you explore your strengths and weaknesses in day-to-day life.

Option 1:

What are you doing to fulfil each of these dimensions of health? What area do you feel strongest in? What area do you feel you need to work on? Do you feel balanced? If it is helpful choose a different colour of pen and add activities that you would like to have in your life to create more balance.

<p>Physical</p> <p>What are you doing to support your physical health? What are you doing to create a healthy environment?</p>	<p>Psychological</p> <p>What are you doing to build your self-esteem? How are you taking care of your mental wellbeing?</p>
<p>Spiritual</p> <p>Spirituality is the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that provide our sense of connection to the world around us.</p>	
<p>Emotion</p> <p>What are you doing to take care of your feelings and accept your feelings?</p>	<p>Social</p> <p>What are you doing to build or strengthen your relationship with others (work, community, family)?</p>

Option 2:

This exercise can be used as a daily or weekly reflection about our physical, emotional, social, psychological, and spiritual health. Simply ask yourself: What am I doing that is giving me energy, fuelling my motivation, or inspiring me? And, what is happening in my life or what am I doing that is taking energy away from me? We cannot avoid all stress and negative circumstances. When you observe your chart, do feel that you have balance between self-care and responsibilities? Do your positive coping, activities, and self-care outweigh what drains you?

What gives you energy?	What is draining your energy?
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Dealing with Stress

What do you experience as stress in your life?

As you look at your list you may notice that some stress stems from the hassles of daily life. These may feel moderate and manageable or build up as bigger stresses. Other situations may feel like catastrophic or unexpected events that are possibly time limited but significantly burden our coping. You may also observe that some events that might be viewed in society as positive have an impact of stress on the individual (ie, wedding, childbirth, family).

Stress is an information system that we all experience. Healthy stress activates our nervous system and motivates us to meet our basic needs and to make changes when necessary. Stress becomes unhealthy when our system is overwhelmed. We may feel vulnerable, isolated, and struggle with accessing our coping skills.

The relationship between smoking and stress is both physical and psychological. Nicotine causes the brain to release chemicals called neurotransmitters. Some of these chemicals, such as beta-endorphin and nor-epinephrine can cause a person to feel better, but only for a short period of time. Because nicotine is a stimulant it serves as a quick pick-me-up. Unfortunately, that pick-me-up is temporary and physical signs of stress may increase as a person starts to experience withdrawal.

Emotionally, smokers often use the act of smoking as a 'time out' from thinking about or dealing with stress. Like any activity, smoking can distract a person from his or her troubles. Taking time to gather our thoughts is a useful self-care tool, but using smoking as the excuse will not help to resolve whatever the stress is.

People who have significant stress in their lives tend to have a harder time quitting smoking. This is also true of people who are prone to negative moods, such as sadness and anxiety. We also know that when ex-smokers start smoking again, they often have the first cigarette in response to stress or moods. It is essential that smokers develop awareness about stress in their lives and develop coping skills to deal with it.

Tools for Managing Stress

The following list offers some options for managing different stresses in your life.

Strategy 1: Avoid unnecessary stress

Learn to recognize stress in your life and you may be surprised by the small changes that you can make. Start a stress journal if that is helpful

- learn to say 'no'
- avoid people who stress you out
- take control of your environment - ie. if the evening news makes you anxious then stop watching it
- pare down your to-do lists - differentiate between 'shoulds' and 'musts'
- avoid 'hot button' topics - if talking about religion or politics gets your blood boiling then stop those conversations. If you repeatedly argue about the same topics with the same people then make the decision to excuse yourself.

Strategy 2: Alter the situation

If you can't avoid a situation, try to alter it.

- express your feelings instead of bottling them up
- be willing to compromise
- be more assertive
- manage your time better - stop procrastinating, set priorities and stick to them

Strategy 3: Adapt to the stressor

If you can't change the stressor, change yourself. You can regain a sense of control by changing your expectations or attitude.

- reframe problems
- look at the big picture - gain some perspective, "is this really a big deal or will it pass?"
- adjust your standards
- focus on the positive

Strategy 4: Accept the things you cannot change

Stress is an unavoidable experience in life.

- don't try to control the uncontrollable
- look for the upside
- share your feelings
- learn to forgive - we are imperfect people

Strategy 5: Make time for fun and relaxation

Take charge of stress reduction and nurturing yourself

- set aside relaxation time - have a safe space, exercise, deep breathing
- connect with others - you are not alone, utilize support systems
- do something you enjoy every day
- laugh - this includes being able to laugh at yourself

Strategy 6: Adopt a healthy lifestyle

It is important to keep energy moving in our bodies and strengthen our health.

- exercise regularly
- eat healthy
- reduce caffeine
- avoid alcohol and drugs
- get enough sleep

Adapted from: www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm (2009)

Additional Exercise: Personal Stress Management Plan

We know that stress happens whether we like it or not. We can learn to manage our stress better by setting up a plan. Stress planning can be achieved in 2 ways. The first is anticipatory. This is when we identify in advance the situations that might be stressful to

us and set up coping strategies that can help to reduce or alter the stress we might experience. The second strategy is reflection. Like journaling we can use hindsight to acknowledge stress and assess what worked and didn't work for managing it. From this knowledge we can set a plan for better management in the future.

The following questions can support you in your plan:

What is the stressful situation?

Is this situation something I can change or do I need to accept it?

If I can change it, is there any small thing I can change/do right now to reduce this stress?

Who can I turn to for support? And/or what types of support would be helpful to get through this?

What coping skills have worked for me in the past that might be helpful now?

What are some new coping skills I might be willing to try?

Week 6: Healthy Living

Quitting Smoking and Weight Gain

For many people, particularly women, there is a fear that quitting smoking will result in weight gain. The average person may gain 5-7 pounds when quitting smoking. This happens for a variety of reasons (details below). Fortunately, most people lose this weight within the first 6-12 months of being smoke free.

Remember: This weight gain is small compared to the health benefits of quitting. Smoking does much more harm to your health and to your looks than does the added weight. The stress on your heart of smoking one pack of cigarettes per day is equal to being 90 pounds overweight! Quitting smoking decreases your risks of lung cancer, other cancers, heart attack, stroke, and lung problems. For most people, smoking is far more dangerous to your health than is extra weight.

When you read through the following information and the Canada Food Guide (if available), think about 1 or 2 things that you can change in your diet.

I Quit Smoking....Now I Need to Manage my Weight

Information compiled by Ingrid Vurduyn, RD, community and addictions nutritionist VCH

Why does weight gain happen after quitting smoking?

- When you smoke, the nicotine (which is an appetite suppressant) makes you less hungry
- Nicotine increases your metabolic rate above normal (burns more calories)
- Smoking involves more than 400 hand to mouth movements in a day- it will take some time to stop this reflex

When you quit smoking....

- Your metabolic rate returns to normal. This means your calorie needs go down by 100-200 calories per day
- Your taste buds can start to taste again and flavourful food is wonderful
- You may still have the 'hand to mouth' habit only now it is food in your hand

Snacks under 100 calories:

- 1 cup any fruit
- ½ cup low fat yogurt
- 1 boiled egg
- 1 cup most vegetables
- Pickles
- 5 melba toast or saltines
- Mini bag of popcorn
- ½ cup cottage cheese
- ½ cup milk

What can you do:

- Eat healthy meals and lower calorie snacks at regular intervals (3 hours)
- Get enough vitamin B and C (see list below)

- Be aware that you may crave caffeine and sugar which can add extra calories if you use sugar or cream
- Delay or distract to get through cravings
- Be active – it helps to control you weight and helps move secretions. After quitting smoking you may initially cough more as your cilia are recovering from tar build up
- Be mindful of your eating – eat slowly, pick healthy and satisfying foods, put your fork down between bites
- Don't dwell too much on your weight – the benefits of smoking mean you will have more energy for active living

Foods rich in Vitamin C:

Whole Food Sources	Serving	Vitamin C (mg)
Sweet red pepper	½ cup, raw	141
Strawberries	1 cup	82
Orange	1 medium	70
Brussels sprouts	½ cup	68
Broccoli, cooked	½ cup	58
Collard greens, cooked	½ cup	44
Grapefruit	½ medium	44
Cantaloupe	¼ medium	32
Cabbage, cooked	½ cup	24
Tomato	1 medium	23

Aim for at least 100mg vitamin C daily. Choose fruits and vegetables as your source because they contain other beneficial substances not found in supplements (like phytochemicals). Too much vitamin C (>1000mg/d) can cause nausea and kidney stones.

Foods rich in B Vitamins:

There are 6 B vitamins in various foods. Most breakfast cereals are fortified with B vitamins. Here are some vitamin B ‘best bets’ – liver, beef, tuna, oats, turkey, brazil nuts, bananas, avocados, legumes (beans, lentils, peas).

Physical Activity and Quitting Smoking

Getting regular exercise is one of the best ways to offset potential weight gain. Physical activity has other benefits as well. Exercise will help your body recover faster from the negative effects of smoking. It will also give you more energy and help to fill some of the time gaps left behind when quitting smoking.

Physical activity does not mean that you have to run a marathon. It can consist of simple everyday changes that introduce movement, stretching, or resistance activities into our lives. For example, taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Observe the examples below and think of activities that you enjoy. Look back at your calendar from week 3 and add some new physical activity that you would like to see introduced in your non-smoking lifestyle.

Possible suggestions:

- ***playing with your kids***
- ***get off the bus a couple of stops early and walk***
- ***take a walk anywhere***
- ***ride a bike***
- ***stretch in the morning when you wake up***
- ***clean your house***
- ***garden***
- ***join a sports team***

Adapted from: Canadian Cancer Society (2009). *For smokers who want to quit*. Canadian Cancer Society: Canada.

Week 7: Staying Positive and Supported

Understanding Self-talk

Self-talk is the little or sometimes powerful voice we hear in our heads. This voice is always hard at work and plays a significant role in influencing our behaviours and emotions. When this voice is positive we may notice an improvement in our mood, improved self-esteem, and increased confidence. It motivates us to continue moving forward in making changes. When our self-talk is negative, the opposite is true. We may notice volatile emotions, sadness, anger, and stress. We may be more likely to give in to cravings or temptations or to simply feel like throwing in the towel.

For many people with a history of addiction, negative self-talk is also associated with the addictive voice. This is often experienced as a battle in our heads between a voice that wants to relieve discomfort, or seek reward at all costs and a voice that is often perceived as ‘the voice of reason’. In this situation, it is the voice of reason that we want to listen to, and strengthen.

It would be wonderful if we all lived in a perfect world, and thought perfect thoughts, and behaved in perfect ways. This is true for no one. Instead, how we see ourselves and how we view the world is coloured by our personalities (some people are naturally more upbeat than others), and our life experiences. When we identify negative self-talk, we can usually associate it with distorted thinking or beliefs that have been learned over time. The more we challenge unhelpful thinking, the more we start to believe that we can get through anything.

Some examples of distorted thinking:

Catastrophizing - you believe that what has happened or will happen is so terrible that you won't be able to stand it. “It would be horrible if I had a cigarette.”

Overgeneralizing - you perceive a global pattern of negatives based on a single incident “I gave in to a cigarette. I will never be able to quit”

All-or-nothing thinking - “nobody supports me” or “I had a smoke so I have failed”

Shoulds - interpreting events based on how you believe things should be rather than simply focusing on what is. “I should have quit by now” “I should feel better” “I should be at 2 cigarettes and I am not.”

Personalizing - you put a disproportionate amount of blame on yourself. “I haven't quit yet because I am not strong enough” or “I haven't quit yet because I am not good at making change”

What if? - constantly thinking of future possibilities/events and are never satisfied with any of the answers. “what if the patch doesn’t work” “What if I have relapse and smoke again...”

Emotional Reasoning - letting your feelings guide your interpretation of reality, “I am stressed I need a smoke”

Adapted from: Leahy, R. (2003). *Cognitive therapy techniques*. Guildford Press:New York.

Turning the Negative to Positive:

Review the following phrases that are commonly experienced when quitting smoking. Try to rephrase them into positive self-talk. Then take the opportunity to identify some of your own negative self-talk and rephrase it. Changing our thinking takes awareness and practise.

“I am too stressed I need a smoke break”

ie. *“I can get through this” “How about I take a walk to clear my head”*

“One cigarette won’t hurt”

“I should have quit by now”

Your thoughts: _____

Your thoughts: _____

Personal Bill of Rights

As talked about already, our beliefs and how we see the world are influenced by life experience. Everyone experiences challenges, bad events, bad relationships, and overall struggles (of course some people have more traumas than others). We can easily end up focussing on these negative experiences or acquire a belief that we are bad people, that we deserve bad things, or that we are helpless/hopeless to change things. This is not true. The manner in which we see and engage in the world is a choice. When we are invested in making a change it is important to acknowledge and reinforce our values and abilities, as well as, what we deserve in our lives.

A personal bill of rights is about setting the standards for how you want to live your life, much like the mission statement of an organisation. Phrases should start with:

I deserve...

I have the right...

I am able...

I will....

I can...

Examples might be: *I deserve clean air, I will live smoke free, I have the right to a healthy home, I have the right to a healthy body, I deserve supportive people in my life, etc.*

Now write your own bill of rights. Try to come up with 8-10 statements.

REMEMBER: YOU CAN, WILL, AND DESERVE TO, BE SMOKE FREE

The Role of Social Support

Social support plays an essential role in our success at change. It can help us to maintain a positive attitude, can get us through a craving, and it can provide encouragement through the difficult times. When we approach quitting smoking it is important that we take a close look at what we find supportive and who we can get support from. Everyone's idea of support may be a little bit different.

Part 1:

Before we solicit support from others, we need to know what we find helpful and unhelpful behaviours from others. Ask yourself the following questions:

Describe the behaviours of others that are helpful or supportive.

Describe the behaviours of others that interfere with your efforts.

What behaviours do I feel comfortable asking others to do?

Part 2:

Once we know what we want, we can look to the support that is available. Support can be accessed from 3 primary areas - family or close friends, the community, or professional support systems. It is helpful to have a variety of options that you can draw on.

Use the following chart to identify the types of support available in your life (family, friend, community, professional) and how these supports can help you.

Name	Type of Support	How this support can help you
ie. Jim	Partner	ask him to quit with me, ask him not to smoke in front of me, don't offer me smokes

Finally, if you notice that many of your needs are not being met, use it as an opportunity to explore new supports or resources that you feel might work for you. Ask others who have quit successfully what worked for them.

Adapted from:
 Abrams, D. et al. (2007). *The tobacco dependence treatment handbook*. Guildford Press: NY.
 Canadian Mental Health Association (2005). *Breathing easy workbook*. Canadian Mental Health Association: Canada.

Week 8: Staying Quit/Relapse Prevention

Understanding a Slip

There is a difference between a slip and a relapse. A slip is when a person has an occasional cigarette or two. This person may find themselves feeling guilty or thinking about the reasons why they stopped with each smoke. A slip is often done in secret. A relapse, on the other hand, is when a person starts to smoke regularly with at least half the number of daily cigarettes as before they quit. It is a return to smoking with friends and in stressful situations. A relapse also has a higher likelihood of building nicotine dependence again.

Unfortunately, nine out of ten ex-smokers who have a cigarette after quitting later return to regular smoking. You must do everything you can to avoid that first cigarette.

What should you do if you find yourself smoking:

- *stop right away and throw out the cigarettes*
- *don't allow yourself to feel defeated, tell yourself, "This is just a slip. Everything is not lost."*
- *tell yourself "this is my last cigarette. I am smoke free"*
- *commit to quitting again right then and there.*
- *learn from the experience. Ask yourself, "what was the trigger", review the PHALT chart, is there something you need to avoid in the future*
- *use your coping skills*
- *minimise negative thoughts, remind yourself that this is all part of the process*
- *seek support*

We discuss a slip not to give permission for it to happen but to encourage you to prepare in case you find yourself at risk. If you do have a slip staying with the quitting process is far more likely if you have a plan in place to get back on track after the first cigarette or puff.

Don't write yourself off as a failure if you have a cigarette after quitting. It makes more sense to use this experience to review all you have learned and to get yourself back in the process. In being prepared for a slip it is important to think about what you should do in various situations. You need to have your coping skills ready to help you put down that cigarette, recognize and deal with a risky situation. You also need your coping skills to prevent you from lighting another one.

We can compare preparing for a slip to preparing for a fire. If you have children, you may have taken the time to talk to them about what to do in case of a fire. They should know ways to get out. They should know to stop, drop and roll if their clothes catch fire. And so on. They should also know that fire is very serious. Just because they know how

to respond to it does not mean that it is okay to play with matches. They still need to prevent fires at all costs. Having a cigarette is like playing with fire. **Avoid smoking at all costs, but know what to do just in case you have a cigarette.**

Creating your Relapse Prevention Plan

It is clear that the best way to stay quit is to avoid situations or learn to cope with situations that are high risk. Whether you have completely quit at this point or you are simply practising getting to that point, you should be aware of situations, feelings, and people that are a challenge for you.

Use the following chart to identify situations that are high risk for you.

high risk situation/feeling	who will you seek support from	how can you distract yourself	positive self-talk you can use	any other options available

Sometimes it is helpful to reflect on your trigger worksheets from week 2 for suggestions on coping skills. Also observe what has worked for you up to this point and what has worked for others in the group.

Appendix: Meditation Exercises

Meditation offers many benefits. We know that the acute experience of a craving lasts only 3 minutes. Basic relaxation can help individuals get through such a craving. We also know that focused relaxation can help to ground us, regulate our emotions, bring focus, and support ongoing motivation. The following meditations are designed as 3-7 minute exercises.

Option 1: Body Scan

- Sit comfortably in a chair with feet flat on the ground. Start to notice your breathing. Imagine that your lungs are a balloon. Breathe in and inflate the balloon. Exhale slowly until the balloon feels empty.
- Starting with your feet and moving up, physically observe your body. Are there any areas of tension. When you notice tension take a moment to stretch it out or squeeze and release the muscle. When you have completed your scan notice that you may feel heavier in your chair, that your body is completely relaxed.
- Observe your thoughts and emotions. How are you feeling right now? Are you able to let go of the stressors in the day and simply focus on this moment?
- Come back to your breathing. Notice the rhythm of breathing in and out. Come back to room when you feel ready.

Option 2: Visualization

- Sit comfortably in a chair with feet flat on the ground. Start to notice your breathing. Imagine that your lungs are a balloon. Breathe in and inflate the balloon. Exhale slowly until the balloon feels empty.
- Imagine yourself as a non-smoker. You are celebrating freeing yourself from the ball and chain of cigarettes. Your days are no longer scheduled around finding the next opportunity to smoke. You can enjoy sitting through a meal without leaving the table. You can sit through a movie without having to pause it or leaving the theatre. You can enjoy time with non-smoking friends and no longer feel ashamed of your nasty habit. You no longer have to stand outside in the rain or snow to feed your addiction. You feel confident, healthy, and ready to take on a new life.
- Come back to your breathing. Observe your feelings and tell yourself “I am going to quit smoking” “I deserve to be healthy and happy”. Return to the room when you are ready.

Option 3: Visualization

- Sit comfortably in a chair with feet flat on the ground. Start to notice your breathing. Imagine that your lungs are a balloon. Breathe in and inflate the balloon. Exhale slowly until the balloon feels empty.
- Imagine your quit date and quickly move past it into your first days and weeks as a non-smoker. Create a mental picture of the ways that you will benefit from this change. Notice your surroundings? Is your home cleaner are you sitting inside? Perhaps you are enjoying some exercise and fresh air. How do you feel? Are your clothes fresher, your teeth whiter. Are you breathing better and sleeping better? Notice the lightness and freedom you might feel, the increase in self-esteem, and the connection with others. You feel proud of yourself. How does food taste? Do you have extra money to enjoy new activities?
- When you have played out your mental movie come back to your breathing. Congratulate yourself for taking on this journey. Tell yourself, “I will be a non-smoker” or “I am proud to be a non-smoker”. Return to the room and stretch if you need to.

Adapted from:

SelfGrowth.com – The Online Self-improvement Centre

http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Quit_Smoking_Techniques_7_Steps_with_Creative_Visualization (2011)

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