

# **HOW TO QUIT SMOKING**

**EX-SMOKER'S GUIDE TO AN  
EASY  
QUICK  
AND PERMANENT  
WAY TO GIVE UP SMOKING**

Steven Case

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Ex-Smoker's Guide to an Easy, Quick  
and Permanent Way to Give up  
Smoking

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## Let's Get Right to It

Quitting is actually easy and painless once you build up your mind muscle and know how to do it correctly and this is what I will help you with. After more than a decade of smoking I was able to quit quickly, easily and most importantly - permanently.

You have probably already tried quitting and you are familiar with experiencing frustration, cold sweats, inability to concentrate, aggressiveness, nausea, headache, drowsiness and anxiety, that follow quitting process. I will show you how you can reduce them to bare minimum.

I tried my first cigarette when I was fourteen years old. It was not the love at first sight. I started smoking regularly only at the age of sixteen and by eighteenth birthday I was smoking pack a day which eventually increased to two packs. The biggest problem I had with smoking was the smell but other than that smoking was my good companion.

I considered cigarettes as an inseparable part of me. They helped me when I was feeling down, they helped me to meet new people and they helped me to calm down. Mental addiction was actually stronger than physical. It is not only a habit but a ritual as well.

Some situations just begged for a cigarette because without it they wouldn't feel right. Cigarette was a way for me to start and to end the day. You could say that it even increased my safety as on long drives I would stop regularly to have a smoke. I did smoke on the go but I preferred to stop whatever I was doing - it was like a small meditation session.

Half-heartedly I tried quitting a number of times, quite few of these attempts were to show that I could "if I really wanted to" but usually that would end after a half of day with a cigarette in my mouth.

You invite colleague to come with you to have a smoke break, but he says "neah, I'm quitting" and with a feeling of betrayal you say "cool, good

luck” but sooner than later you are standing together puffing away. He looks at you with a look of disgrace and defeat.

You probably also had this conversation multiple times. You both light up and you have that conversation:

- So, aren't you quitting?

- Yeah, as you can see it's going great.

I smoked for more than ten years. It was the same as breathing, drinking and eating. At that point it was not quitting, it was more like betraying. Smoking was not just an activity but also a part of me.

People in my life were telling me to quit and I constantly heard the same reasons - save money and improve your health. Both sounded good but I felt fine and cigarette expenses weren't that significant part of my income.

This is why you need to find what will motivate you and I will share logic behind my reason with you in a bit. Reason is more important than the method.

Currently you can have nicotine patches, gum, spray, hypnosis records, “special” diets, tea, electronic cigarettes and etc. Lets try not to use any of them and for now continue smoking as you did before.

We will begin the process by building your motivation.

## Important Steps

Let me congratulate you. You have decided to quit smoking. This is the first and the most important step in this process. To be honest, I wasn't very excited to quit due to physical and emotional addiction. I'm guessing you have the same emotional and physical attachment.

This is an important decision and if you don't have a strong reason yet do not worry, as we will work on that. But if taking the first step were the only thing that mattered - you would have never learned to walk.

Let's get those shackles off. What can you do so you would be enjoying smells, tastes, energy and self-respect that come from achieving freedom from smoking?

You might be tempted to use substitutes but trust me - you have all the power you need inside you.

By reading these words you already showed more motivation and have taken more action than most people will ever do in order to achieve this goal.

## Why Do You Smoke?

I thought about it and I came to the conclusion that I have never made a decision to start smoking. Think about it - have you?

Nobody wakes up one day and says to themselves “Today, I will start smoking! At first it might make me sick but I am not a quitter! I will stick with it. I will make it a part of my daily routine.”

In movies cool characters smoke and a cigarette in woman’s hand right away tells you that she is sexy, strong and independent. Even if we discount influence of culture you still couldn’t escape the fact that it was the cool kids who were smoking.

You might have been saying to yourself that you are a strong person but in reality we try to follow people we find appealing. This is why celebrity gossip magazines are always the ones with the best sales stats. This is why smoking is now decreasing in popularity.

Cigarette advertisements were banned in most of the world and we just don’t see badasses and sexy women with cigarettes in their teeth as often as we used to.

You can put blame on you starting smoking at least partly on TV and others. That’s the good news.

The bad news is that it doesn’t really make any difference now. You might have not made a decision to start smoking but the decision to stop is all you and only you.

You see anti-smoking ads, people around you say how bad it is, encourage you to quit but that is only noise until you make a decision.

I used to constantly hear that I should think about my health, that I smell like ashtray, that I should think about how much I could save. I have never really paid any attention. The decision to quit was only slightly

Influenced by these outside factors. You need to make this decision for yourself.

I found that the most important thing is not the method but the reason. Now let's work on that motivation and figure out reasons that will help you stay the course.

By the way, currently let's say you are in a preparation stage so smoke along.

I will tell you when and how to quit but for now puff away.

## Why Smoking is so Addictive?

I like to eat chocolate and drink coffee but I can go without these for days or even weeks without any discomfort. Some people are addicted to chocolate and coffee as I used to be to cigarettes.

They can't go a day without their fix. We are all addicted to something so is it only the chemicals that control us or is it something else.

Nicotine activates reward pathways making you feel good. Nicotine stimulates a feeling of happiness. Maybe in the beginning cigarette had such an effect on me but at the end it was a different relationship.

Cigarette was not so much making me feel good as I felt bad without it. It seems to be the same story with all drugs. Even exercising is actually a drug.

Runners start running to improve their health, achieve a goal. As it becomes a habit they can't stop. They need to exercise because if they skip a day they start to feel bad physically.

People exercise because they feel better and even euphoric. I'm talking about the so called "runners high". It is called this way because it really is the same thing as drug "high".

The key is endorphin. It's the "carrot" of your body. It's the happiness drug that you get every day. Not always it is in high doses. Tasty cake triggers your pleasure but if that cake produced a drizzle, drugs produce a flood.

This is important because you need to get one thing out of your head – nicotine is not as strong a stimulant as morphine or cocaine. When I smoked I actually searched for exactly this in Google: "nicotine addictive as cocaine" and I was sooo happy to find an article that "proved" to me that quitting smoking is the same as quitting hard drugs.

But it is not! I never tried morphine but I imagine it should have a much stronger high than I used to get smoking. Face it, nicotine is just not that

strong of a stimulant. That doesn't make it less addictive but realizing this will help you quit.

If you ever had hallucinations due to smoking please let me know but I never experienced that. The only way smoking will make you hallucinate is if you get dehydrated to a dangerous level.

But that was not the question. The question was why smoking is so addictive. Nicotine is not as strong of a stimulant to get you hooked only on the merit of being a drug so it must be something in addition to that.

As you smoke day after day, year after year you form the second ingredient – the habit.

My day used to start with a cigarette. That was my morning ritual and that's how I told myself and my body that the day has started. At work it was the same story.

At regular time intervals I would stand and go for a smoke. The immediate question when planning on quitting was “So, now what? I won't do brakes?” . Should I now work without taking a brake as it seemed that there was not much else to do except to have a smoke.

Every habit is formed by you and you can stop any habit you have or create a new one. To tell you the truth, it felt weird for the first few days not to smoke at work. As my eyesight could be better I substituted cigarettes with a carrots.

It does take willpower to break the habit. I substituted smoking with a carrot. Think of what you could substitute a cigarette with.

By the way, carrot was a short term solution. Now I just make a cup of tea or chat with colleagues.

It is very common to get an advice to come up with a habit that will take the place of smoking but don't force anything. For a habit to stick you need either to use a lot of your will power or for that activity to feel easy and natural.

As a portion of your willpower is used up by quitting smoking I recommend to look for something that is easy, enjoyable and won't require you to fight yourself to do it.

Sport is a habit that requires willpower. As you start doing exercises your whole body is resisting this “torture”. It takes time and effort for it to become at first comfortable and even more time to get pleasure from doing it.

Smoking became a habit because it was easy. But is it really comfortable and does it really give you any pleasure?

Let's look at comfortable. On a nice day it is comfortable but even when the conditions are great you still experience discomfort as you are not allowed to smoke in public spaces. How comfortable is it to smoke in a cold of winter, in a rain or while sun is burning you?

I'm an ex-smoker and trust me – it is fun to watch smokers during bad weather. If you're having bad weather right now look at those smokers. See how funny and pathetic it looks when you look at it from a side. It's cold or it's raining and you sit comfortably as you watch a smoker fight the elements.

The only thing that makes such moments a bit less fun is the thought: “Damn, I used to be one of them. Why was I doing that to myself? “.

So, smoking is not comfortable but what about the pleasure. You can find a ton of publications that prove that nicotine is a stimulant that works like cocaine.

Yes, nicotine does affect the brain in a similar way to opiates. But that's meaningless. My body works same as the body of Michael Phelps. My car works the same way Nascar car does. One is more powerful than the other.

If eating donuts would give me an orgasm and a piece of cake would make me feel happy – I would have a much harder time giving up donuts. Nicotine is just not that strong.

Effects like better ability to concentrate and pleasure which are attributed to nicotine are very short term and those aren't even actual positive effects at all.

I mentioned that I felt that smoking wasn't about feeling good but about not feeling bad. This is a huge difference. One thing is to do something because you enjoy it and completely different to do it because you don't want to feel bad.

Smoking is the latter. As soon as you are done with a cigarette, withdrawal kicks in. For you this is good and bad news.

Good, because when you quit smoking it takes on average only three days for your body to get rid of all nicotine. Bad, because as long as you keep on smoking this means that you need to smoke very regularly.

Remember, you need to do this not to "calm down" or experience pleasure. You need to smoke regularly to temporarily stop the cravings.

Smoking doesn't increase your ability to concentrate or improve your mood. Nicotine just temporarily removed the symptoms of withdrawal which are caused by nicotine itself.

Nicotine only perpetuates the addiction. It doesn't give you anything positive in return. Quit and stop being a slave to this habit.

Finally we arrived at the answer to the question of this article. Nicotine is addictive because it keeps you on a short leash making you consume nicotine very regularly thus forming a strong habit.

This is very good news. It makes quitting so much easier because that short leash means that you won't have to run far to get away.

## **Why Should You Quit Smoking?**

Does this sound familiar – you are quitting smoking again but as withdrawal starts kicking in, the thought comes to your mind “Why am I

doing this?”. If you made the list you start going through it eliminating one reason after another.

You probably had the same reasons to quit as I: health, money and partner begging to stop this filthy habit. First symptoms make these reasons seem so insignificant and inapplicable to me. You already know the result but still you start the debate.

I didn't feel that bad, so health didn't feel that important of a motive. Sure I regularly had flue or bronchitis and was out of breath easily, but it might have all been due to desk job and diet. I got used to the routine of regular illness and it seemed normal at the time.

Money as a motive also got destroyed quickly. Smoking did cost me as much as owning a car but it's my money and if I choose to smoke- it's my right. Somehow smoking became about freedom and independence.

This kind of thinking nicely worked to eliminate the last reason. My partner didn't want me to smoke because I smelled bad and I put them in danger. For you it might also mean that you want to protect your child from smoke.

They knew what they were getting into. It's not about me choosing smoking over loved ones. It's about them not accepting who I was... as if cigarette was a part of “who I am”.

On average it takes seven attempts to finally quit smoking for good so it is a good chance that we both had the same conversation. 1

Nicotine addiction is a tricky thing and the one fooling you is yourself. The moment you ask yourself “why should I quit smoking” is the moment you have mentally given up.

Health, money and loved ones are very important reasons but unfortunately when the addiction starts asking to feed it they seem not that important. For full disclose I “quit smoking” I think 5 or 7 times and every time the moment I asked that question I knew that it won't last.

Make a list of reasons why you want to quit. You might even come up with a list of reasons why you need to quit.

Lists are good to keep you on track or to do checks but if you just write them down, these reasons will be only words. My problem was that on all those failed attempts I had reasons why I was quitting but as the nicotine starvation began it seemed like a fair trade off.

I received a letter with a comment “Not cigarettes but life kills!”. That’s exactly what I was saying to myself and that’s one of the reasons why you continue smoking.

Many things are bad for you. I would ask myself why I should quit if even people who don’t smoke get diseases. I was trying to justify my smoking.

I was constantly on the look-out for stories that prove that tobacco is not that bad. Regularly news report about some old lady from Cuba or something, who lived to 110 and she smoked cigars all her life. Such stories were providing me with relief that I am not an idiot to continue puffing my life away.

I did it and you are probably doing it. That’s why the first step is to acknowledge that you are actively lying to yourself.

You are smoking because you believe that smoking has a positive function to you and that your smoking has a minimum (if any) impact on your future. You need to not only know but to actually understand the impact smoking has on your mental and physical health, that smoking doesn’t have any positive function to you.

Life is a lottery but you need to understand that every single cigarette is another ticket in your pile and the prize is a horrible disease. People do get lung cancer even without smoking but you need to understand that it’s smokers who get it 9 out of 10 times. 2

Same goes for the positive functions. Most common misconception is that smoking helps you calm down. Understand that it is not – that smoke just calmed the craving that was caused by smoking. Your smoking just

feeds this circle of misery and nothing else. You are being controlled by your addiction.

You need to ask not “Why am I quitting?” but “Why am I smoking?”. Put the habit on the defensive.

Once you realize that smoking doesn't have any positive function and actions you take now have a direct impact in the future – this will be the moment you quit your nicotine slavery for good.

## All the Right Reasons

By now you heard reasons why you should quit hundreds of times. Google it and you will get lists upon lists of reasons but they are the same three reasons but in different words: 1) Health 2) Money and 3) Social pressure.

It might be top 5, 10 or once I saw even 97 reasons to quit but they are all the same three reasons. Everyone knows that the best call to action is easy to remember and short. This concept helped politicians win elections, corporations sell you overpriced running shoes or consumer electronics you have no use for. So why are you still smoking?

Quit Now - Save Money and Live Longer!

That's it, that is the message we are constantly getting and it is easy to understand, it calls to action and it clearly states benefits. So what is the problem?

You have probably made a list of what you will gain from quitting this habit. You indicated all the great reasons and I did it too.

The benefits aren't really that hard to see. I saw it constantly. While buying cigarettes I would think to myself that I could be buying something better instead. I would get ill with bronchitis regularly at least twice a year and I knew that it was due to smoking.

I had this information, you have this information but that doesn't change anything.

The reason for this is very simple - it's due to how we think. Let's explore these three reasons and see why they fail to stir us into action...or more correctly inaction, as we are talking about NOT smoking.

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