

StopSmokingSM

P R O G R A M

BOOK 4: STAYING SMOKE-FREE

Mark Twain once said, "Quitting is not that tough. I myself have stopped hundreds of times!" The most difficult part of quitting smoking is staying smoke-free.

You may have faced a situation where you had an incredible urge to smoke and may have even smoked a cigarette since you've quit. But don't worry, you can get back on track! Identify the situation or reason that caused the strong urge to smoke and plan how to prevent it from happening again.

Remember: Quitting is a process, not an event.

RELAPSE TRIGGERS

You already know about triggers that create the urge to smoke. These same triggers can also cause relapse. It is important to recognize these triggers and prepare for them. Triggers to smoke can be divided into three categories: emotional, personal and environmental.

Emotional

These triggers occur when you are happy, sad, tense, angry, bored or relaxed. Examples:

- Relaxing happily on the porch and enjoying a good book
- Running late for an appointment and getting stuck in traffic
- Someone you care for is unhappy
- Being bored with nothing to do

Personal

These triggers usually occur when you try to justify why you should smoke again. Examples:

- Feeling withdrawal symptoms
- Gaining weight
- Thinking that you get more done when you smoke
- Thinking you miss the taste of cigarettes
- You had a few drinks
- Your spouse started smoking again

Environmental

These triggers occur when you are in a place or situation where you would normally smoke. Examples:

- When you wake up in the morning
- During a break from work
- Talking on the phone
- After romance
- When you drink coffee or have a soda
- At a bar or party with other smokers

Identifying triggers that create the strongest urges for you is important. Doing so will help prevent future relapses. Review the Relapse Triggers previously highlighted. Write down the triggers with which you have the most trouble and add any other triggers that are not on the list. Review Books 2 and 3, then create a plan to deal with these situations when they occur. Write down your plan. Planning for these situations will help avoid the urge to smoke.

A Slip Is Not Necessarily a Fall

If you have smoked, the important thing is to get back on track. Do not blame yourself for smoking. Nicotine is a very addictive drug. It may take several times at quitting before being successful.

Make sure you know why you have smoked and what you can do to prevent it from happening again. Read the following section, "The Smoker's Stages of Action," and work on your plan to stay smoke-free.

Triggers

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Plan to Avoid Urge

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

The only time you find success before work is in the dictionary.

THE SMOKER'S STAGES OF ACTION

There are four stages that most smokers go through on their way to becoming smoke-free. By signing up for this program you have made it to Stage 3 and are on your way to Stage 4.

Stage 1 I'm Immortal!

At this stage the smoker does not think smoking will affect him/her and is not considering trying to quit. This stage is also known as "denial."

Stage 2 Maybe I Would Be Better Off Not Smoking?

This stage begins when a smoker recognizes he/she no longer wants to smoke and is planning to try and stop smoking. This individual is seriously considering quitting.

Stage 3 I Think I'll Stop. (Action)

Smokers enter the "Action Stage" when they make an attempt to quit either by themselves or with the help of a stop smoking program. For most smokers, this stage can last up to six months. People like you who try to quit with the help of a stop smoking program have much greater success. Don't get discouraged. You can do it.

Stage 4 I Can Stay Smoke-Free! (Maintenance)

When you have successfully quit, but are not 100 percent positive that you can stay smoke-free, you enter the "Maintenance Stage." During this stage, you can prevent relapse by using the urge and stress control techniques you have learned. Continue to use them until you are positive you will remain smoke-free.

CONTINUE READING
BOOKS 5 THROUGH 7 AT A PACE
THAT IS COMFORTABLE FOR YOU.

You have just completed Books 1 through 4. They cover all the tools necessary to help you achieve your goal of quitting for good. Continue to refer to them for reminders on how to stay smoke-free.

