

Benefits of Quitting Tobacco for People in Mental Health Recovery

If you are interested
in quitting smoking
talk with:

Your case manager
Your doctor
A non-smoking
friend or sponsor

You can also call:
1800QuitNow

Or

Nicotine Anonymous
1-877-879-6422 toll
free

Or

Go Online to:
Becomeanex.org
Smokefree.gov

Or Call These
People

Health

- It is easier to breathe when walking upstairs or running for a bus.
- People have less coughs, colds, and flu. Less risk of severe illness from COVID.
- Skin looks younger.
- Exercising will be easier. When people exercise the brain releases endorphins that make people feel good.
- Health improves. People have fewer symptoms and lower risk of chronic diseases, such as: asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes and cancer.

Facts About Tobacco & Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

- The positive mental health impact of quitting tobacco use can be as effective as an anti-depressant.
- Quitting tobacco use can improve the likelihood of long term sobriety from alcohol and other drugs by 25% if addressed at same time as alcohol/drug recovery.
- Tobacco-related diseases are the number 1 cause of death for people with mental illness.
- Tobacco use can trigger cravings and urges to drink and use drugs.
- Tobacco use mimics addiction to other drugs and alcohol. Quitting tobacco is likely to help you stay clean and sober.
- Tobacco/nicotine is as addictive as heroin and cocaine.
- **Smoking interferes with dosage levels of some psychotropic medications requiring higher doses. When you quit you will probably find you'll need less of these medications.**

Relationships and Socializing

- At first it may seem like quitting is interfering with your personal relationships. Over time that may change.
- Relationships are often better – People are often more available because they are not focused on the next cigarette.
- Clothes and hair and body smell better – Family and friends are more likely to be comfortable around you.
- Friends, family members and pets will not be exposed to harmful secondhand smoke. They are likely to spend more time with you.
- Many people feel less isolated.
- People no longer are held back from socializing in places where smoking isn't allowed. They might even feel like they fit right in.

My Plan to Quit Smoking—Consider these—add your own Activities

- I'll cut down--set a quit date.
- I'll ask my provider to support me.
- I'll call 1800quitnow.
- I'll get nicotine patches and/or gum.
- I'll get rid of smoking stuff around the house.
- I'll ask non-smoking friends for support.
- I'll go to a group or get counseling.
- I'll change my routines and plan alternative activities—esp. going to places where I can't smoke.
- I'll reduce stress-get more exercise.

Add your own ideas here:

LIST Your Reasons for Quitting Smoking

LIST Triggers to Avoid

Self Esteem

- People usually feel better about themselves because they have conquered something very challenging in the recovery process.
- People generally feel proud that they were able to quit.
- Friends and family often offer lots of praise for quitting which is heartwarming.
- Health usually improves and people feel better.

Employment and Housing

- Quitting smoking may increase job opportunities. Many employers don't want to hire people who take breaks often to smoke or smell of smoke.
- Landlords are more likely to rent to non-smokers. Non-smokers tend to be less risk in terms of fire hazard, smoke smell damaging curtains and carpeting, nicotine staining walls. Landlords don't have to worry about drifting secondhand smoke annoying other tenants.
- Non-smokers have an advantage in jobs and housing.

Finances

- People will have more money to pay bills and buy things such as healthy food, new clothing, a car or electronics.
- And you will have more money for fun, such as going out to movies, gym, restaurants and more.

Relapse Prevention Once You've Quit Smoking

- Protect yourself from triggers: people, places and things. Avoid falling into old patterns.
- Watch your thoughts and moods. If you are getting negative thoughts, reach out and talk to someone.
- Avoid getting too Hungry, too Angry, too Lonely too Tired, or Bored. (HALT –plus B).
- Carry nicotine gum or lozenges at all times in case of a crisis. Also carry other oral soothers, like regular gum, mints, cinnamon sticks, or sugar-free candy.
- Choose a non-smoking sponsor if you're in 12-Step Programs. Choose non-smoking friends to hang out with. Go to places where you can't smoke.
- Check out Nicotine Anonymous if you need more support or have 2-3 non-smoking buddies to call when you're tempted to smoke.

Healthy Living Activities

- Can help you quit and stay quit.
- Do something physically active every day.
- Follow a healthy food plan.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Breathe deeply.
- Meditate and pray.
- Use coping skills to manage stress.
- Get support from friends and family.
- Be grateful and reward yourself.