

A person wearing a light-colored jacket, blue jeans, and a hat is walking away from the camera on a dirt path. The path is surrounded by tall, dense evergreen trees, creating a canopy overhead. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

# Quit Your Own Way

Your path to quitting in a way that works for you.

Good for you!

If you are holding this book, you are thinking about quitting smoking. And you have already taken the first step.

We all know the health risks of smoking. And you probably have other reasons to quit too. Many smokers quit not only for their own health, but for the health of those around them too. Some quit to save money. Some quit to look better or for their clothes to smell better. Some quit to feel better about themselves or to set a better example for their children. Some quit to stop smoking from interrupting their everyday activities.

Whatever your reason for quitting, **studies show that a combination of medication (such as nicotine replacement therapy) and some kind of support or counselling works better** than willpower alone.



“But what if I fail?”

It's natural to worry. But don't let a fear of failure stop you from trying. If you do start to smoke again, it won't mean you're back where you started. Many ex-smokers tried several times before quitting for good. If you start smoking again, think of it as a short-term setback and a learning opportunity, not a failure. Use what you learned, so that next time you will be prepared for whatever challenge pushed you to start smoking again.

## “What should I expect?”

Cigarettes contain many toxic chemicals that are bad for our health. But they also contain nicotine. Nicotine is not toxic, but it is addictive. When we smoke, our bodies become addicted to nicotine.

That's why we feel strong cravings to smoke. The craving is a **withdrawal symptom** that happens when we withdraw (take away) cigarettes.

But **cravings are not the only withdrawal symptom** to expect when you quit smoking.

You may also experience:

- **irritability**
- **frustration**
- **anger**
- **anxiety**
- **trouble concentrating**
- **restlessness**



Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products contain nicotine, to help reduce your withdrawal symptoms so that you can stop smoking. If you are using NRT to help you quit, you will have less nicotine in your body than you had with cigarettes, so you may still feel withdrawal symptoms. That's why you will need to use your willpower and follow the direction for use of your NRT.

This booklet will give you extra tips and support. It includes weekly charts to help you keep track of your withdrawal symptoms as well as the positive changes you're noticing. There's also room for you to take notes to help you learn and be prepared for the next challenge.

You may want to share your tracker with your doctor, to help monitor your progress.

# “What happens when you quit?”

Within...

20 minutes	Your blood pressure and heart rate return to normal.
8 hours	Oxygen levels in your blood return to normal.
24 hours	Carbon monoxide has left your body. Your lungs start to clear out mucus and other smoking debris.
48 hours	There is no nicotine left in your body. Your sense of taste and smell greatly improve.
72 hours	Breathing gets easier. Your breathing tubes begin to relax and your energy levels increase.



1-9 months	Coughs, wheezing and breathing problems get better as your lung function returns to normal.
1 year	Your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.
2-5 years	Stroke risk can fall to that of a non-smoker.
10 years	Risk of dying from lung cancer is cut in half.
10-15 years	Risk of coronary heart disease is the same as someone who has never smoked.



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## One step at a time

It is important to approach quitting one day at a time, and one craving at a time. Your big goal is to quit smoking for good, but it can help to set little goals along the way. Make your goals small and realistic, and reward yourself for achieving them.

### What are your goals?

Goals might be: going another week without cigarettes; using positive ways to deal with cravings such as going for a walk; or getting through a planned event such as a family reunion without smoking.

### What's your reward?

Maybe treat yourself to a new shirt with some of that extra money you've saved from not buying cigarettes. Maybe get a massage. Maybe a night out at your favourite restaurant.

When I reach my goal of [state your goal]:

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I will *[state your reward]*:

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When I reach my goal of [state your goal]:

---

I will *[state your reward]*:

---

When I reach my goal of [state your goal]:

---

I will *[state your reward]*:

---

## Thinking about quitting

My **QUIT DATE**  
will be:

Maybe you're not ready to fully quit just yet. That's okay. Some people find it easier to quit by first cutting down on the number of cigarettes smoked. Or you may want to try "*temporary abstinence*," where you try not to smoke for a certain period of time or in certain situations, like at home, at work, or in the car.

If you would like to **REDUCE-TO- QUIT®**, use this week to cut down on the number of cigarettes you have each day or to practice temporary abstinence.

If you are using NRT to reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke, make sure to read the package insert for the right way to do this.

“Smoking is like a nasty friend that you just can't get rid of. You don't want it around but you're just not ready to kick it to the curb.”

Shelley

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

<b>Withdrawal Symptoms</b>	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Cravings							
Irritability							
Frustration							
Anger							
Anxiety							
Trouble concentrating							
Restlessness							

*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

<b>Positive changes</b>	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Clothes smell better							
Fresher breath							
Easier to walk up stairs							
Coughing/wheezing less							
More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Quit Day

Good for you! Making the decision to quit is not easy. To help you stay on track, make a plan for when those cravings hit: get help from your doctor, pharmacist, friends and family. If you are using NRT, have some on hand to help you cope with cravings. Get rid of any “triggers” that could make you feel like having a cigarette. List them here.

*I removed these triggers from my environment (e.g., cigarette butts, ashtrays, lighters, or anything that makes you think of smoking):*

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“ I’m excited. It feels kind of like Christmas. ”

Fraser,  
on quit day

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Cravings							
Irritability							
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Anger							
Anxiety							
Trouble concentrating							
Restlessness							

*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

Positive changes	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Clothes smell better							
Fresher breath							
Easier to walk up stairs							
Coughing/ wheezing less							
More money							
More time							

Notes:

## What are your reasons for quitting?

List your reasons to quit. Look to it when you feel the urge to smoke.

*My reasons for quitting:*

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“ There was a time when it seemed kinda cool. Now I see people smoking and I think, ‘Is *that* what I look like?’ ”

Kevin

“ My daughters deserve a mom who is a good example. ”

Shelley

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

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Coughing/wheezing less							
More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Finding help

Don't go it alone! Your smoking cessation medication will help you beat the cravings. But you'll increase your chances of quitting by getting help from your doctor and pharmacist, and from your friends and family. You can also find help from other smokers trying to quit online at websites such as smokers' helpline, below.

*My sources of help:*

My doctor:

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My pharmacist:

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Friends:

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Family:

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[www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)

“ When I see them proud of the fact that I have been able to give it up, it changes everything. ”

Sumit

How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Cravings							
Irritability							
Frustration							
Anger							
Anxiety							
Trouble concentrating							
Restlessness							

What positive changes have you noticed?

Check all that apply.

Positive changes	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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Coughing/ wheezing less							
More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Dealing with withdrawal

Withdrawal symptoms are powerful. When you try to break the smoking habit, you may have different reactions that you feel in your body and mind – all trying to get you started again.

Remember that the feeling will pass. Look to your treatment and your supporters for help. Review your reasons for quitting.

If you tried to quit without help in the past, you might not have realized that certain symptoms (such as anger or difficulty concentrating) were because of withdrawal. What symptoms have you recognized?

*I have noticed this withdrawal symptom:*

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“ I have to break these, or I’ll dig in the garbage later. ”

**Shelley,**

while throwing out a half-package of cigarettes she found in her garage.

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

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More time							

Notes:

## Take action!

Tip: Set small, realistic goals and **reward yourself** for achieving them. What goals and rewards did you set on Page 12?

Smoking used to be part of your daily routine. You'll notice the urge to smoke not just in your body, but in your habits and behaviour. Now you need to create new healthy habits in place of smoking. Reach for your NRT to help replace the ritual of smoking. Remove yourself from situations and people where you are tempted. Activity is another way to shake off a craving, so go for a walk, run, or swim. Stress can be a big trigger but your body and mind are learning that you no longer need smoking to relax. List your new healthy habits here.

Instead of smoking, I now:

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“ I was eyeing the cigarette that I'd saved. I was thinking about smoking it. So I went out in the backyard and tossed it over the fence. ”

Fraser

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

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Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Staying motivated

Tip: If you are considering having a cigarette, ask yourself, "How much do I really need this cigarette?" Remind yourself of the reasons you decided to quit on Page 17. Do you really want to throw away all your hard work now that you've come this far?

Congratulations - you are in Week 6 of your quit plan! You've come so far. Do you feel motivated?

It is common to have negative thoughts while you are quitting, but try to spot negative thinking and turn it around. Staying positive helps put you in control. Your willpower, plus your supporters, plus your treatment all combine together to help you quit for good. Remember to keep rewarding your successes (see Page 12). If you feel like your treatment isn't doing enough to help you cope with cravings, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. They can give you new treatment tips.

*What people or things help you feel motivated?*

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“Never having the next cigarette. That’s my goal.”

Fraser

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Cravings							
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*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

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More time							

Notes:

## Overcoming triggers

Tip: Clean up any evidence of cigarettes such as ashtrays, butts, or lighters.

Triggers are little cues in your environment that remind you of smoking. Knowing your triggers will help you avoid, reduce, or cope with them. For example, it might help to walk short distances instead of driving if driving is a trigger for you. Or perhaps take a different route home from work. If coffee or alcohol are triggers, try avoiding them for now – or drinking less, or less often. Change things up to be more mindful: Sit at a different seat at your table. Sit in a different place to watch TV.

Some common triggers:

- stress
- coffee
- alcohol
- time of day (e.g., early evening)
- after meals
- driving
- talking on the phone
- places where people smoke

*My main triggers are:*

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*I cope with these triggers by:*

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*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Cravings							
Irritability							
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Anxiety							
Trouble concentrating							
Restlessness							

*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

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More time							

Notes:

## Surviving slips

Slips happen to the best of us. Don't give up; one cigarette doesn't mean you've failed. It means you're human. The key is to learn from the slip so it doesn't turn into a fall. What was the trigger? What step will prevent the same slip from happening again?

*Take the time to ask yourself the following questions:*

Why did I smoke?

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Where was I?

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Who was I with?

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How did I feel afterwards?

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What will I change next time?

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*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
---------------------	---	---	---	----	---	---	----

Cravings

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Irritability

---

Frustration

---

Anger

---

Anxiety

---

Trouble concentrating

---

Restlessness

---

*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

Positive changes	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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Clothes smell better

---

Fresher breath

---

Easier to walk up stairs

---

Coughing/ wheezing less

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More money

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More time

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Notes:

## Coping through crisis

Tip: Get some exercise. Exercise is a great stress-reliever – and a great reminder of how much healthier you’re getting. Even light exercise is worthwhile.

If you have a crisis at work or in your family life, you might feel like giving up. Stress can trigger strong cravings, and can distract you from your goal. You might tell yourself this isn’t the time for you to quit. However, much of the “calming” effect of smoking is due to the relief of nicotine withdrawal, and smoking actually causes the release of hormones which can INCREASE stress levels. Smoking is not an effective strategy for coping with stress.

Now, more than any other time, it’s important to review your reasons for quitting. Those reasons will still be there when the crisis passes. And you’ll come out of it even stronger for not smoking.

*Stressful things that are happening in my life:*

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*My main reason for quitting smoking:*

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*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Cravings							
Irritability							
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Anger							
Anxiety							
Trouble concentrating							
Restlessness							

*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

Positive changes	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
Clothes smell better							
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Coughing/ wheezing less							
More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Tasting success

Tip: Cigarette cravings can feel like hunger pains. If you are worried about your weight, keep fruits and vegetables handy instead of high-calorie foods like chips or chocolate.

By now you are probably seeing big changes in your health. You probably feel stronger, and are able to do more than before. At the same time, you'll begin to notice your withdrawal symptoms are fewer and weaker. Let this good feeling carry you forward.

*The biggest change I have noticed:*

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*The biggest benefit I have noticed:*

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“The voice in my head saying ‘let’s have a smoke’ is getting smaller and weaker.”

Fraser

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

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Cravings							
Irritability							
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Coughing/wheezing less							
More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Finding the benefits of quitting

Tip: How much money will you save by not buying cigarettes? Try the **budget calculator** at <http://www.quitnow.ca/tools-and-resources/calculate-your-savings>.

Better health, better mood, better energy, personal pride, more time, more money from not buying cigarettes... there are so many benefits to quitting. How is your life starting to get better now that you've come this far?

*Ways my life has improved by not smoking:*

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“ In 10 years we will have saved \$42,000. ”

John and his wife,

on how much money they will save by not buying cigarettes.

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

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Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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Irritability							
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*What positive changes have you noticed?*

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Positive changes	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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More money							
More time							

Notes:

## Looking to a bright future

Congratulations on making it this far! Remember, there will still be times when you crave a cigarette. So keep in mind what you've learned and all the ways you've found help over the last 12 weeks.

*What does it mean to you to be free of cigarettes?*

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“This is something I never thought I was going to be able to do.”

Fraser

“I'm aware that I am going to have to fight it, certainly for the next year, and maybe for the rest of my life. But I'm pretty excited about it.”

Kathleen

*How have your withdrawal symptoms been this week?*

Scale: 0 = none | 1 = good | 2 = okay | 3 = bad | 4 = really bad

Withdrawal Symptoms	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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Cravings

---

Irritability

---

Frustration

---

Anger

---

Anxiety

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Trouble concentrating

---

Restlessness

---

*What positive changes have you noticed?*

Check all that apply.

Positive changes	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su
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Clothes smell better

---

Fresher breath

---

Easier to walk up stairs

---

Coughing/wheezing less

---

More money

---

More time

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Notes:

Keeping track helps you stay in control.

For the next few months, you might feel the urge to smoke from time to time. Try to take note of any cravings. What was happening at the time? How did you deal with the craving?



Month: \_\_\_\_\_

M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

My next doctor's appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

40 /

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_ My next doctor's appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

M	T	W	Th	F	S	Su

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_ My next doctor's appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

## Where to turn for help:

Consumer resources to help you on your quit smoking journey.



<p><b>Your local Quitline</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.gosmokefree.gc.ca/qui">www.gosmokefree.gc.ca/qui</a> 1-866-366-3667</p>	<p>Quitlines offer free, personalized, non-judgemental coaching, support and information about quitting smoking and commercial tobacco use.</p>
<p><b>Canadian Cancer Society's Smokers Helpline</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.smokershelpline.ca">www.smokershelpline.ca</a> 1-877-523-5333</p>	<p>Smokers' Helpline offers free quitting support by phone, online, or by text message.</p>
<p><b>The Lung Association</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.lung.ca">www.lung.ca</a> 1-888-566-LUNG (5864)</p>	<p>Call The Lung Association to find out about smoking support groups and counselling.</p>



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