



QuitPack News

Vol. 1 No. 3

February 2006

Welcome to the third edition of the QuitPack News. This monthly newsletter helps us keep in touch with Yukoners who are moving toward becoming smoke free with the help of a QuitPack.

Here's how you can use this newsletter:

- Send in your comments about the QuitPack – likes, dislikes, etc.
- Let us know **your** tips for others as they try to quit.
- Suggest articles you'd like to see in the next issue.

We look forward to hearing from you!

The Staff at Health Promotion

Yukon
Health and Social Services

411 on how to use the Road Map and the Smoker's Log

The first round of follow-up interviews has begun, and the feedback we have received about the effectiveness of the items in the QuitPack has already been helpful. You told us that more information was needed on how to use some of the tools found in the QuitPack. We heard you and agree! That is why we are dedicating this edition of the newsletter to explain how to use the Road Map and the Smoker's Log.

The Road Map

The Road Map is a tool that shows the steps most people take on the path to becoming smoke-free. It can help you track your progress, or get back on track if you have a slip or a relapse. The Road Map will be most helpful if you post it somewhere in your home or workplace where you can refer to it frequently (for example, on your fridge or a bulletin board near your desk). If you get stalled or stuck in your efforts to give up smoking, locate yourself on the Road Map; then try out or repeat the suggestions on the Road Map to get you through the rough patch. Remember many people have traveled this road and gotten to their destination – you can too!

The Smoker's Log

Smokers light up and raise cigarettes to their mouths so often over their smoking career that it becomes automatic – so automatic that you may not even be aware of when and why you light up. In fact, that's what is meant when we say smoking is a "habit."

A first step in becoming smoke-free is to break the automatic behaviour of lighting up, by becoming aware of what triggers you to reach for a cigarette in the first place. Is it boredom, having a cup of coffee, or a way to give yourself a break? Once you have identified your triggers, you can develop specific strategies to curb the urge to smoke the next time you find yourself in the same situation.

Step 1: Become more aware

We have developed the Smoker's Log to help you become more aware of the situations which lead you to light up. The first step in becoming more aware is to break the automatic connection between the urge to light up and actually lighting up. By strapping one sheet of the smoker's log around your pack of cigarettes with an elastic band, you will be reminded to take time to think about what is triggering the urge to smoke before you light up.

Step 2: Learn about your triggers

With the Smoker's Log strapped on to your cigarette pack, it's easy to write down information about what triggers you to reach for a cigarette. The first four columns of the log will help you track triggers – do you light up at certain times, with certain people, in certain places, or when you are in a certain mood? If you keep track of each cigarette for 2 weeks, you may find that there are patterns associated with your smoking.

Step 3: Give up the least important cigarettes first

The fifth column ("Rate it") asks you to rate how badly you need each cigarette on a scale from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 means "I didn't really need a smoke" and a rating of 5 means "I had to have that smoke badly." It will be easier to give up cigarettes that you've rated as a 1 or a 2. Eliminate these cigarettes first, then tackle the harder situations which are rated 4 or 5.

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(Smoker's Log 411 continued)

A good way to curb an urge to smoke in specific situations is to develop a *specific* alternative behaviour. For example, if you usually have a smoke after a meal, try an After Eight mint instead. If you have a smoke with your morning coffee, switch to tea or drink your coffee in a different room. The more alternatives you develop and the more often you use them, the fewer cigarettes you will smoke.

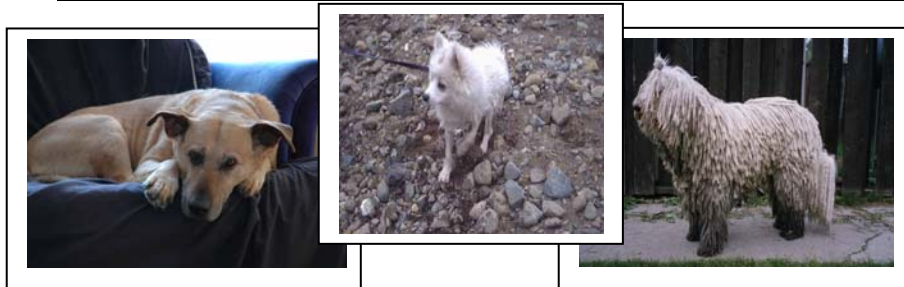
Another good tactic is to always delay lighting up by 5-10 minutes, even if you want to have a cigarette very badly. Chew gum, have a mint or eat sunflower seeds to satisfy the mouth sensations, and read the flip cards to keep your hands busy in those 5-10 minutes. Most urges to smoke last only 2-3 minutes. Like many former smokers, you may find that by postponing a cigarette, the urge goes away and you will have eliminated, rather than just postponed, a smoke.

Once you have reduced your smoking to about 1/3 of what it was, it's time to give them all up. Otherwise you may continue to smoke in situations when you feel you really need to and in this way maintain both the physical and psychological dependence of nicotine. In the long run, this may set you up to gradually increase the number of cigarettes you have each day.

You can find more tips in the flip cards and booklets found in the QuitPack, and our monthly newsletters. If you would like additional copies of the Road Map or the Smoker's Log, just call or drop us an e-mail And, please keep the feedback coming !! health.promotion@gov.yk.ca 1-866-221-8393.

Terilee's QuitPack Feedback

I decided that I wanted to quit for a few reasons. "MoneyHoney", health reasons (I don't want one of my lungs donated when I die as an example of a smoker's lung!!), the wrinkles, the yellow teeth and fingers, the stench in my car, the look a smoker gets from all those glorious non-smokers (I always liked to say that smokers are a minority and some people are racist!), and also – to broaden my horizons when it came to the manhunt. Apparently, not all men like a stinky smoker girl. My friend told me about the wonderful people and 'things' at Health Promotion. I contacted HP and was inducted as their guinea pig for the QuitPack (which I loved). The whole quit smoking business is just a bumpy road on a journey to being smoke free. I did quit once, a few years ago, for 3 months, using Zyban. A second round of it left me with monster hives, an indication that I cannot use it again. The patch – it works well with willpower, but without the willpower, well... it doesn't work. And you have to take it off at dinner time (not bedtime) or you could be stricken with awful nasty, turn-you-into-a-bitch-quickly, insomnia. And that's just not fun. I found though, that on the patch, I would do great during the week, but I would crack on the weekends, then I would beat myself up about it, and try to start on Monday again. After not succeeding (I guess that all depends on what you consider to be 'success') AGAIN, I would try AGAIN. Then, the Health Promotion Unit suggested that I use that as part of my quit plan. Smoke only on the weekends, and slowly decrease the amount you smoke each weekend. Lucky for me, I do have a support system of great non-smoking friends, who put up with me and all my attempts. I haven't quit yet, but I have learned a few things. If you want the help, it is there. If you don't succeed, TRY AGAIN, DAMMIT. I know I can NOT SMOKE for many hours at a time – I just have to learn how to link all those hours together into one continuous stretch. Don't drink alcohol – you'll only want to smoke. Water is wonderful. Keep busy – idle hands are my trigger.



Health Promotion Staff Album: Curb an Urge – Walk a Dog!

Quit Tip of the Month

source: quitnow.ca

Exercise decreases the number of urges you get, and increases your chances of success.

Here are a few suggestions how you can tackle some high risk situations:

- Bored?** If you're waiting for someone and it doesn't require you to stay in one place, run errands. If you must stay in one place, bring a book or crossword puzzle to keep you busy.
- Restless?** Exercise. Work on a hobby. Catch up on your chores. Have sex. "Doin' It" burns 360 calories/hr.
- Angry or frustrated?** Take a walk. Do deep breathing exercises.
- Lonely?** Call a friend. Go for a walk or drive.
- Happy?** There is no end to the ways you can celebrate feeling good without lighting up a cigarette!

Please send your ideas & input for next month's QuitPack News to health.promotion@gov.yk.ca or call the Smokersline toll-free 1-866-221-8393.