

## P.L.A.N. Your Quit

It is important to plan your quit attempt.

**P** – Pick a Quit Day.

**L** – Let friends, family, and coworkers know you plan to quit.

**A** – Anticipate your triggers and use the "A" strategies to cope.

**N** – Nicotine addiction medication – talk to your doctor about options.

### P – Pick a Quit Day

Choose a day that you will stop using tobacco. This is your "Quit Day!" It is important to set a day and prepare for it. Find a day that is not too stressful. Think about a day that may have some meaning to you.

Here are some ideas:

- A birthday. Your birthday reminds you that you are doing this for your life.
- A child, grandchild or family member's birthday. This reminds you that you are quitting for your family.
- An anniversary. This reminds you that you want to be healthy for your loved ones.
- A vacation. Consider quitting on vacation when you will have little stress.
- A holiday. Perhaps New Years Day, Independence Day (July 4th), or The Great American Smokeout (the third Thursday of each November).

You might also choose a typical day, such as the first of the month. That is good, too. When you are ready to make the change, the actual day is not as important as how well you prepare for it.

### L– Let family, friends, and coworkers know you plan to quit

It is important to let others know about your Quit Day. Studies show that support from other people can really improve your chances to quit.

Some people like to have friends and family members ask them how things are going. Other people don't want to talk about their quit attempt. It is important to know what you need and let people know how they can help you.

Here are some ideas:

- Ask other smokers to avoid smoking around you.
- Ask family members to help you clean out tobacco products and cigarette smells from the house and car.
- Ask your loved ones and friends to understand if you have mood changes.
- Ask them not to take it personally.
- Talk with others who are quitting, such as an online support group.
- Quit with a buddy or friend who will support your success.

### A – Anticipate your triggers and use "A" strategies to cope.



It is important to know your triggers. What is a trigger? A trigger is anything that gives you an urge to use tobacco. It could be a person smoking or using spit tobacco near you. It could be a feeling like stress, anger, excitement or boredom. It could be a place like an outside bar or patio where you used to smoke.

Everyone who tries to stop tobacco is going to face some triggers. It is easier to deal with them if you can anticipate what they will be and have a plan to deal with them. What are your triggers? Check triggers you have.

Common triggers:

- Waking in the morning
- Being with other smokers
- Seeing someone smoke
- Drinking coffee, tea
- Talking on the phone
- Working on the computer
- Driving in the car
- Watching TV
- After completing a task
- Being a passenger in a car
- Stress
- Feeling irritable, impatient or angry
- Smelling a cigarette
- Feeling down, depressed or blue
- Feeling bored
- After eating
- After sex
- When relaxing or as a reward

## Past Quit Attempts

You can learn a lot from your past quit attempts. Don't think of them as failures. Think of them as valuable lessons that can help you in this quit attempt. What was helpful when you quit? What was hard for you? What will you do differently this time? Use this information to increase your chance of being successful long-term. Write down your answers to the questions below.

- What was helpful?
- What was not helpful?
- Why did I start again?

## The 3 A's Strategies to Cope

The 3 A's are actions to take when faced with high-risk situations where you may feel pressured to smoke.

### Avoid

Avoiding is one of the best strategies. This includes avoiding places, situations or even certain people that make it hard to say no to a craving or offer for cigarettes. Places to avoid are public smoking areas, bars with outside patios, places with alcohol, work smoke-break areas, places you smoke a lot at home (your office for example), sporting events where you smoke, or co-workers with whom you smoke, etc.

### Alternatives

Have alternatives to cigarettes handy at all times. Good alternatives give you something to hold, similar to a cigarette. They also keep your mouth busy. Good alternatives are chewing on straws, toothpicks, bubble gum, cinnamon sticks, popsicles, popsicle sticks, crunchy vegetables, mints, hard candies, swizzle sticks, licorice, a water bottle or juice.

### Adjust

This includes such things as: make new distractions, keep busy, work on hobbies, take long walks, exercise more, hike, ride a bike or call a friend when you have a craving. Go to places that forbid smoking, such as the mall, movies, store

or restaurants.

You can also adjust your routines to lessen your cravings. The brain links your regular places and things to your smoking patterns - these certain places, events, situations or people can actually trigger the brain's craving for nicotine. For example, if you always make coffee and smoke in the morning, you will feel strong urges to smoke when you make coffee. Alter this routine. Wake up and take a brisk walk and then take a shower. Or, brush your teeth first thing in the morning. The more you can adjust your routine, the more you can keep cravings and urges at bay!

## Strategy Worksheet

Create a worksheet with your strategies to help you plan ahead for high-risk situations. Here is an example worksheet:

High-Risk Situation	Avoid?	Adjust Routine?	Alternatives?
Work break with smoking co-workers	Yes	Yes, I will take a stretch break in a different area with non-smoking friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will keep straws &amp; toothpicks in pocket at work</li><li>• Will use mints and chewing gum</li><li>• Will drink a lot of water</li></ul>
Stress	No	Will try to do less for first few weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will use tea breaks</li><li>• Will drink a lot of water</li><li>• Will take stretch breaks</li><li>• Will use positive self-talk</li></ul>
After eating	No	Will brush my teeth immediately after eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will use chewing gum or mints</li><li>• Will have popsicles in fridge</li></ul>

## N – Nicotine/Quit Medication: talk to your doctor about nicotine medications

Talk to your doctor or health care provider about nicotine/quit medications. Everyone who is trying to quit may benefit from using a medication. In fact, research shows that using nicotine/quit medications can double or triple your chances of quitting for good.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the following medicines to help you quit tobacco:

- Varenicline (Chantix™)
- Bupropion SR (Zyban®, Wellbutrin SR®)
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (patch, gum, lozenge, nasal spray, inhaler)

Visit our website for more information about support groups, clinical trials and lifestyle information.

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