

How to Quit Smoking

Stan Shur

Start smoking. In the beginning, smoke only on occasion, at parties or when you're out with friends. If anyone asks, your official position is that you're a non-smoker, on account of your infrequent smoking. If your parents confront you about smoking, deny everything. Tell them that the stench emanating from your mouth really belongs to your friend Jimmy who, unlike you, does happen to be a smoker. Tactfully explain the physics by which the smoke inhaled by Jimmy ended up invading your lungs. Call it second-hand smoke.

When you turn eighteen, smoke whenever you feel stressed out or something bothers you; a pack a day should do it. It's no longer necessary to hide the pack from your parents. They've known for years and have become quite complacent. Occasionally, they'll buy you a nicotine patch to wear, or some gum to chew, which you try but soon give up because neither matches the calm and alert state of mind engendered by your Parliaments. Neither looks half as slick either.

At a lounge in the city, strike up a conversation with a blonde named Stephanie, whose smile will warm your heart and whose body will melt your balls. Stephanie is the quintessential female, if such a thing exists. What you find most irresistible about Stephanie is the way she cracks up when you say something funny, then smacks your shoulder and says, "Oh stop." The more you talk to her, the better you feel about yourself. When she finishes her drink, ask her to step outside with you. She will. When you're out in the fresh air, ask Stephanie for her number as you remove the Parliaments from your jacket pocket and notice the supercilious look on her face when you bring a cigarette to your mouth.

"Sorry, but I don't date guys who smoke," she will say.

Determine that this is a no brainer. Toss the cigarettes into the receptacle beside you and say, "Do you date guys who just quit?"

Nominating faculty: Professor Camille Goodison, English 2000, Department of English, School of Arts & Sciences, New York City College of Technology, CUNY.

Cite as: Shur, S. (2010). How to quit smoking. *City Tech Writer*, 5, 55. Online at <https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/city-tech-writer-sampler/>