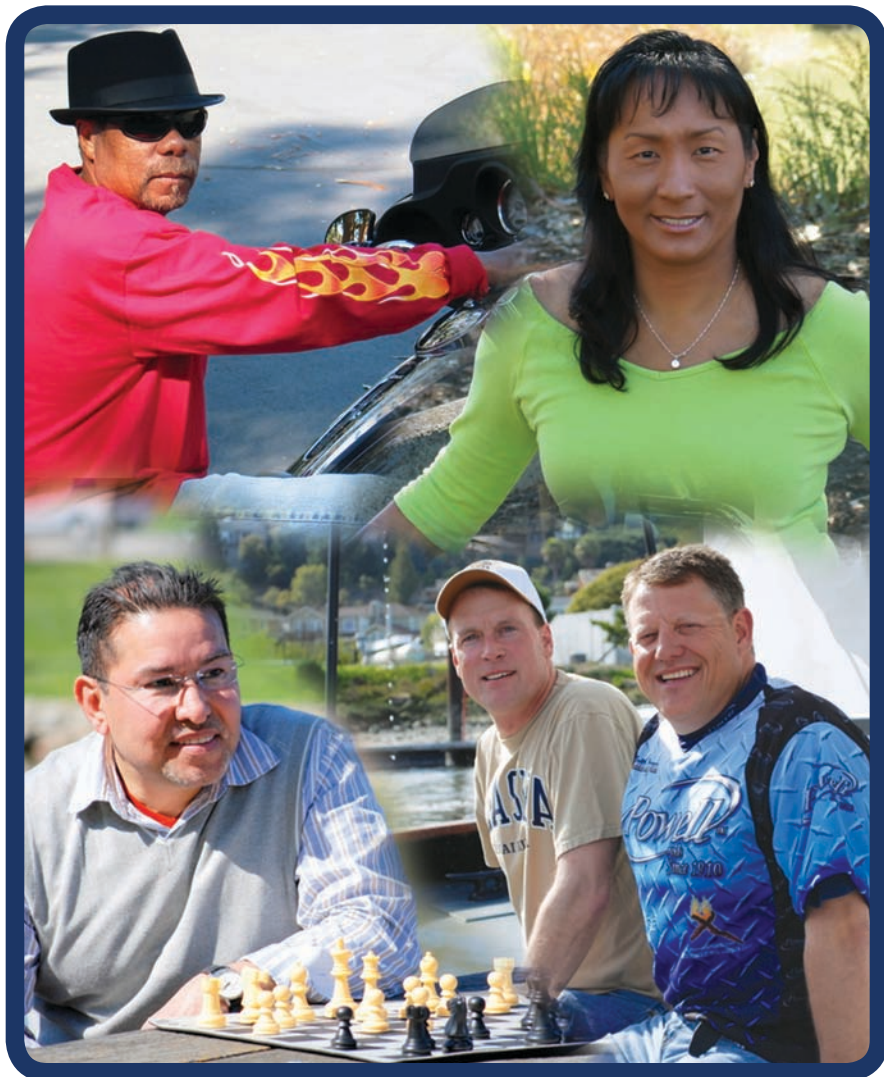


True Quitters' Stories



For People in Recovery

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Keith Bryan

Perseverance ... faith ... and not having to go it alone.

I was always under the impression that the outdoors, sports and chewing tobacco went hand-in-hand. As I got older I began to realize that nothing could be farther from the truth. The fear that I couldn't quit chew was overwhelming until I decided to get help.

My hope has become reality, and I'm now living the kind of life I've always dreamed of.



Sid Hartnett (L) and Keith Bryan (R)

Sid Hartnett

Give yourself the gift of being smoke-free – it lasts a lifetime!

The idea of quitting smoking was very scary at first, but I was determined to go for it. I could come up with a million reasons to stop, and I finally ran out of reasons to keep smoking. I don't have to plan my camping and fishing trips around tobacco anymore. Breathing fresh air in the outdoors is just fine with me.

Freedom from smoking is wonderful. You can do it, too.



Michelle Johnson

I got into recovery in 1995, and three months later I quit smoking.

It wasn't just about me anymore. I had a newborn with pneumonia, and I didn't want to jeopardize his health.

It took me a couple of times to stay quit, especially because all the people I hung out with smoked; but once I made up my mind, I did it.

I am so grateful that cigarettes are no longer running my life.

Fact

Among recorded deaths of alcoholics during a 20-year period after receiving inpatient treatment, over half (51%) were tobacco-related, while 34% were alcohol-related. *Hurt, R.D., Offord, K.P., Croghan, I.T., Gomez-Dahl, L., Kottke, T.E., Morse, R.M., & Melton, J. (1996). 'Mortality Following Inpatient Addictions Treatment: Role of Tobacco Use in a Community-Based Cohort'. JAMA, 275:14: 1097-1103.*



Haroldo Torres

One of the most important lessons in my life is that I started dying when I was born.

Once I realized that, I decided to take steps to prevent accelerating that process. Like getting off alcohol and other drugs, reducing stress and quitting smoking.

Health issues have emerged that I'm much better prepared to deal with now that I'm unhooked.

Fact

Non-tobacco users maintain longer periods of sobriety than tobacco users after inpatient treatment for alcohol/drug dependence. *Stuyt, E.B. (1997). 'Recovery Rates After Treatment for Alcohol/Drug Dependence: Tobacco Users vs. Non-Tobacco Users'. The American Journal on Addictions, 6:159-167*

Ronnie Roary

One's too many and a thousand's never enough.

The best thing I ever did was to make it to recovery. The next best thing was to quit smoking. And all that unspent cigarette money? I saved mine for a year and gave myself a great time at the big NA convention in Hawaii. Perfect place to celebrate being smoke-free.



Fact

Smoking kills more Americans than alcohol and all other drugs combined: 40 per day die from heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and other illicit drugs; 342 per day die from alcohol; 1177 per day die from cigarettes. Lynch, B.S. & Bonnie, R.J., eds. (1994). 'Growing Up Tobacco Free: Preventing Nicotine Addiction in Children and Youths'. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. p.4



Christine Scott

Pass the heartbeat along to someone you love – help them quit.

My son Alex said, “If you won’t quit for yourself, please quit for me.”

Once I had been clean and sober for 2 years, I incorporated the tools of my recovery to help me quit smoking, especially taking it one day at a time. Now I’ve been smoke-free for 5 years, and I’m so glad.

Fact

59% of smokers, both in inpatient and outpatient settings, expressed interest in quitting smoking during or within a year of their substance abuse treatment. Sees, K.L., & Clark, H.W. (1993). 'When to Begin Smoking Cessation in Substance Abusers'. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 10: 189-195.

OK, I'm ready to quit.

Now what do I do?

Plan for this quit the same way you would any other important changes in your life. Here are some suggestions adapted from *The Take Control Guide*, published by the California Smokers' Helpline:

THE FIVE STEPS OF PLANNING:

Step 1: Decide --- cold turkey or quitting aid?

Withdrawal symptoms can be uncomfortable, but they are not harmful. Because the symptoms are temporary, many smokers choose to quit cold turkey. If you're concerned about withdrawal undercutting your efforts, you may want to consider using a quitting aid.

Step 2: Choose a quit day.

Look ahead a couple of weeks. Mark your calendar and commit to that day. [Note: Vacations are not always the best time to quit tobacco, because the familiar routine of our "normal" lives can give us helpful structure.]

Step 3: Predict your trigger situations.

Try to predict trigger situations that could come up in the first few days – or weeks – of learning how to live without tobacco, and write them down. They could be familiar moments when you want to smoke, like after dinner; or stressful times when you could have a strong urge to smoke – conflict with a family member, for example. If you are prepared for early challenges, you'll be well on your way to quitting smoking for good.

Step 4: Plan strategies for your trigger situations.

Now think about each trigger. What purpose does a cigarette serve in that situation? Does it fill time? Reduce stress? Help wake you up? Try to think of other things you can do that will serve the same purpose. For each trigger, write two or three realistic alternatives to tobacco.

Step 5: Get support.

Some people like lots of support, while others prefer just one or two others cheering them on. Who in your life can provide the kind of support you want? Ask them to help you out, and be specific about what you need. Remember, you are your own best support. Encourage yourself with rewards for every milestone you pass.

(Excerpts used with permission from *Quit Smoking for Good: The Take Control Guide*, published by the California Smokers' Helpline, 2001. To receive a copy, call 1-800-NO-BUTTS.)

Resources:

Adult Tobacco Cessation Services and Tobacco Free Youth



Bay Area Community Resources

171 Carlos Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903
415.755.2399
www.bacr.org

Information and referral.
Tobacco cessation classes.
Community education and
in-service staff trainings.

KAISER PERMANENTE: Call the Kaiser-San Rafael Health Education Department at 415.444.2173 for more information or to register. Free for Kaiser members. \$90.00 for non-members.

CALIFORNIA SMOKERS' HELPLINE: Telephone counseling provided to all California residents free of charge. Leave your phone number and someone will call you back to schedule your free sessions.

1-800-NO-BUTTS (English & Teen Line)

1-800-844-CHEW (Chewing Tobacco)

1-800-778-8440 (Vietnamese)

1-800-45-NO FUME (Spanish)

1-800-400-0866 (Chinese)

1-800-556-5564 (Korean)

1-800-933-4-TDD (Deaf/Hearing Impaired)

NICOTINE ANONYMOUS: These 12-step support groups hold several weekly meetings in Marin and Sonoma Counties. Phone meetings available. Visit www.nicotine-anonymous.org for more information. No dues or fees.

WEB-BASED PROGRAMS:

www.quitnet.com

www.becomeanex.org

and many others

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