

PART 2

Preparing for Change

This part of the guide will help you get ready to make a change. Even if you feel very confident, knowing what may trip you up can help you overcome barriers when they come up. This section will give you tools to overcome barriers and set yourself up for success.

- If you aren't sure about quitting, learning what stands between you and that change is a helpful step. You can also work on other areas of your mental and physical health (like logical thinking or healthy eating) to prepare for quitting.
- If you are ready to quit, taking stock of barriers can help you know what you will need to work on as part of your quitting process. If gaining weight worries you, it could be a relapse trigger if you do not plan for healthy eating behaviors.
- If you have recently quit, review these barriers to see if any could be relapse triggers for you. Answer the questions with the goal of staying quit in mind.

What Holds You Back?

Many people want to quit, but don't. When people are asked why they don't quit, the main reasons tend to be:

- Fear of gaining weight
- Worry about feeling more anxious
- Thinking that it's too difficult to quit
- The thought that "it's too late to quit"

Star any of the above that are holding you back. Write your own reasons here for why you have not quit yet. What are your biggest worries or fears about quitting? Avoid judging yourself for these reasons. It is important to understand your own barriers. If you do not want to quit, list those reasons here as well.

QuitWell™ can help you work through these issues. The more honest you are with yourself, the better this program will work for you.

Break Down Barriers

Maybe you don't feel like you have time to read the **QuitWell™** guide or answer the questions in each section. The tips on time management in this section can help. Other barriers may seem to be unchangeable until a powerful motivator enters the picture. More information or skills to get through a challenge can also help you overcome what felt impossible in the past.

Be Open to Powerful Motivators

Have you ever started a new relationship or made a new friend and suddenly you want to spend all your time with that person? You may even get into a new hobby in order to spend more time with them. Or, maybe you got concerning test results and want to improve before your next visit to the doctor. Or, maybe you just found out you are going to be a parent or grandparent.

These are examples of powerful motivators. They usually seem to come out of nowhere or when you are least expecting them. Some seem to knock you off your feet and you can't ignore how powerful they are. Others you may not notice unless you are paying attention. These may be negative and scary or joyous and exciting. As you think about quitting and look at your barriers, try to be open to power motivators.

Do you feel any powerful motivators in your life right now?

What *could* be a powerful motivator in the future? Imagine what it would take to suddenly make nearly all the barriers on your list seem less important.

Time Management

Deciding to make a change and taking the steps to succeed will take some of your time. It's an investment that will pay off down the road—it is worth it to take the time to plan and execute change.

First, think of “time” management as “me” management. Time continues on, no matter how much we want it to slow down or speed up sometimes. The one thing you **can** work on is how you manage yourself given the time that you have.



Look at how you currently spend your time. Get a piece of paper and write down how you spend each half hour of your day. A lot of this time may be sleeping or working, but there are probably blocks of time you have some flexibility (even if they are small).

Think of quitting as a high-priority project that you would schedule into your day. Identify two 15-minute blocks of time that you could spend planning your day and what you are going to do when you have an urge. Try to make at least one of these blocks of time early in the day, as this will set the tone for the rest of your day.

If you are having trouble finding a 15-minute block of time, look for the ‘low-hanging fruit’ in your day— time you spend doing things that are relatively mindless and don't take a lot of thought. This could be when you are usually looking at your phone, watching TV, or walking the dog. Your dog will still need a walk, but this could be time you think through what you want the rest of your day to look like.

Think about tomorrow—when can you spend 15 minutes reviewing the guide or thinking through your goals?

Mindfulness

Mindfulness means you are fully aware of what you are sensing in the current moment. Mindfulness can help you get through a stressful or uncomfortable time without your usual tobacco/nicotine use. It can also:

- Give your mind a chance to think creatively and come up with the answers to tough questions.
- Help you gently pull yourself back to the present when your mind wants to go somewhere else.
- Exercise greater control over your actions and your energy.
- Understand yourself more.
- Lower inflammation in the body.
- Activate areas in the brain that give you feelings of calmness.

Mindfulness Exercise

Practice mindfulness while you listen to music, walk, run, eat, or sit in traffic. You can also try this the next time you feel the desire to have a cigarette, dip, or puff from your vape:

- Try to physically pause your body. Sit or stand still. Maybe you can lean against the back of a chair or a wall. Get comfortable.
- Focus on your breathing or anything in the present, such as the sounds you hear or an object in your sight.
- As thoughts pop up in your mind, notice them without judging them. Picture your thoughts like clouds floating by—let them go by. Return your focus to what you see, hear, and feel.
- Notice the feelings you have about smoking/your habit and what may be making you feel that way. Be aware of what is helping you do what you want and what is not helping.
- When your mind starts to drift, imagine gently guiding it back to the present, as if you're helping a child that has strayed off the path.

The craving may have gone away or is now much less. If this is the case, try to do something else while the craving continues to fade.

Managing Weight

Quitting is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Quitting tobacco/nicotine can lead to changes in your weight. There are ways you can manage your weight, as you are quitting and afterwards. You may even find that you lose weight over time as you adopt more healthy habits.

The average person who quits gains 5 to 10 pounds in the months after quitting. This can happen for several reasons.

- Nicotine has been speeding up your metabolism while you've been using tobacco/nicotine products. This means that your body was burning energy (fuel from food) faster. When you quit, your metabolism returns to normal.
- Nicotine has been raising your blood sugar and interfering with your body's natural hunger cues. This is the main way that nicotine suppresses your appetite. Now that you are quitting, cravings for sweets may increase as your blood sugar drops. Plan for regular, healthy meals and snacks to help you feel better and avoid eating too many high-sugar foods.
- You may feel a strong urge to have something else in your mouth, leading to more snacking. If these are high calorie foods that are high in sugar or saturated fat, you are likely to gain weight.



The **QuitWell™** program will teach you how to avoid gaining too much weight after quitting. Read on to learn ways to manage urges with food and ways to plan your eating with your health in mind.

Food & Drink Tips

What you eat or drink and how you eat or drink can influence your urges for tobacco products. By working on quitting, you are taking an important step to manage what goes into your body.

Do	Why?
Drink at least 8 glasses of low-sugar, natural liquids per day: water, herbal tea, sparkling water.	This will make you feel less hungry and give your body the water it needs to function. Water is important for clearing toxins from the body.
Eat small, nutrient-dense meals and snacks throughout the day.	This will help your blood sugar and energy stay steady and avoid feeling too tired during the day. You will also get the fuel your body needs.
Eat protein as part of all meals and most snacks: lean meats, fish, poultry, low-fat cheese, nut butters, nuts, and seeds	These foods are full of nutrients and help give you even energy throughout the day. They are also filling, so you will find you don't reach for as many snacks.
Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, and salads.	These foods are filling, vitamin-rich, and low in calories.
Eat foods high in calcium, such as dairy or calcium-fortified juice.	Smoking can add to your chances of having brittle bones, so extra calcium may be needed.
Avoid high sugar foods. Look at food labels to spot added sugars. "Sweets" are not the only culprit!	Cutting out added sugar helps prevent your blood sugar from going too high or too low. Low blood sugar can trigger an urge.
Cut down on coffee, tea, colas, and other caffeinated drinks.	These drinks are often tied to a smoking habit. Cutting out caffeine, even temporarily, while you are quitting, can help reduce urges.
Avoid alcohol	Alcohol causes blood sugar to rise. Your habit may also be linked to drinking habits. Alcohol can lessen your desire to quit in the moment.
After eating, brush your teeth and rinse with mouthwash.	The minty fresh taste in your mouth won't go well with tobacco. It also helps scramble your old routine, if you smoked after a meal.

Address Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of dread, fear, or distress over a real or imagined threat to your mental or physical well-being. Smoking, chewing, or vaping may be a way that you have coped in the past with these feelings. At all stages of change, you can learn to address anxiety in healthy ways.

First, try to calm your body physically. Calming the physical body can make working through what is in your mind easier.

- Breathe deeply and evenly.
- Take a walk or get some other form of exercise.
- Take a long, warm bath or shower. Or, go for a swim.
- Listen to soothing music. Or, go somewhere quiet.
- Connect with people. Visit or call someone who will listen to you and support you.
- Drink a warm cup of decaf coffee or tea—avoid caffeine, which can make anxiety worse.

As you take a step back, use these tips to manage the thoughts that are causing your anxiety:

- Ask: is your thought based on facts?
- Identify what you are trying to do. Know your purpose.
- Consider many different outcomes and their effects.
- View the situation from many perspectives.
- Don't assume a situation will have the same outcome as it did in the past.
- Have good evidence for a generalization before you make it.
- Avoid assuming one event caused another just because they happened at the same time.

You will likely feel calmer after you quit. Nicotine only makes you more nervous. Nicotine is a stimulant. After you get over the initial stress of quitting, you'll find that without all that nicotine in your body, you feel calmer and more relaxed.

Plan Problem-Solving

Your worries and concerns take up time in your day. Many issues cannot simply be ignored or brushed aside. To avoid letting these thoughts trigger smoking or chewing habits, plan time to address them.

Steps to Address Your Worries

1. Write a worry at the top of a piece of paper. It may seem old-fashioned to write this down on paper, when so much is done on the computer or a smartphone. However, writing things down can be powerful.
2. Divide the paper into three columns:
 - a. **What I can't do.** Recognize what is out of your control.
 - b. **What I can do.** List possible actions that are within your control. Write things you know how to do and that are realistic actions for you to take.
 - c. **What I will do and when.** Decide which action you are ready to take first. This action may not solve every part of the problem, but it is a small step toward a solution. Write when you will do this.
3. After you have taken an action towards a solution, repeat this process the next day or when you are ready to take another step.

My worry:		
What I can't do:	What I can do:	What I will do and when:

Separate Tobacco/ Nicotine from Situations

Many times you may feel that you want to smoke, dip, or vape when what you really want is something else. When uncomfortable feelings arise, such as anger, sadness, boredom, or frustration, you may reach for a cigarette (or can or vape pen) without even pausing. You have worn a deep groove in your mind, creating a habit that can happen without much thought.



Tobacco/nicotine does not clear up or change these feelings. If nothing else, it simply creates a “smoke screen.” When the smoke clears, your problems are still there. The next time you get an urge, ask yourself, “What do I really want?” or “What do I need to figure out?” Use the mindfulness tools to help you think logically.

Reflect on Your Past Change Attempts

This may be your first time thinking about quitting or trying to quit. If you are like many, though, this is not your first rodeo. Think about the times you thought about quitting in the past.

If you have never tried to quit before, think about another major change you have made in the past. It doesn't have to be health-related. The point is to identify strengths from your experience—and see what tripped you up.

What motivated you then? How important was it for you to change?

How did you try to make this change?

What went well? What did not go well?



What will you do the same this time?

What will you do differently this time?

With your experiences, you probably have ideas of what might work for you. Use the strategies in this guide to build on what you already know helps you succeed.

Make the Connection

Keeping your motivation and values in mind is a great way to encourage yourself when quitting gets tough. Look for ways to connect your motivation and values to your attitude and actions.

How do your attitudes and actions show what is important to you? If you feel there is a mismatch, it might be time for a new point of view!

OLD VIEW: Quitting is going to be horrible. I like to do what I want, when I want.

NEW VIEW: I value time with my family and want to be a good role model for my kids. It will be awesome to enjoy family time without the interruption of smoke breaks. I can model healthy behavior for my kids.



Balance of Choice

Learn what is pulling you toward your goal and what is holding you back. All thoughts and feelings are valid. Is your goal more important to you than the challenges to achieve it? Are you pursuing this goal just because someone said you “should” do it? Complete the chart below as well as you can. If you think of something later, come back to this page to add another point to one of the boxes.

	Benefits – “Pros”	Costs – “Cons”
Making a change	<i>Example: I will reduce my risk for cancer, heart disease, and other conditions.</i>	<i>Example: I am going to miss how smoking makes me feel in the moment.</i>
Not Changing	<i>Example: Chewing gives me something to do when I’m bored.</i>	<i>Example: I’m worried my kids are going to pick up my bad habits.</i>

Identify Your Strengths

What are you really good at?

What have you overcome in your life?

How do you help others?

How do you take care of yourself?

Trust that the things that make you strong will continue to be there during your quit attempt. Repeat after me: “I am strong.” Say it again. And again. Say it out loud to add some ‘oomph’ to your statement. Continue to repeat as needed!

Review & Prepare

In this section, you were guided to understand the barriers you face with quitting. By carefully reading, thinking about each part, and answering questions along the way, you are getting yourself ready for success.

How have you prepared yourself to quit? Write the steps you have taken, mentally and physically, to get to this point.

Look back at your list of barriers. Do any of them feel more manageable now?

Which of your strengths do you think will come in handy for quitting? Be confident in what you know you are good at and what makes you a strong person.