

PART 4

Taking Off

This section adds to the Skill Development phase of quitting. You have already learned a few “Urge Tamers,” skills and techniques to help you be successful at quitting. You will learn many more in this section.

The following “Urge Tamers” can help stop urges before you have them and help you deal with the urges you may have. **QuitWell™** teaches you a lot of “Urge Tamers.” That’s because there are a lot of things you can do to make quitting easier. The more “Urge Tamers” you learn, the better the program will work for you and the easier it will be for you to quit.

Altering Triggers

Actions, especially habits, are linked. For example, you may light up a cigarette without thinking when you start your car, end a meal, drink coffee, or hear your alarm clock. If you dip or use other forms of tobacco/nicotine, you may have similar triggers.

Altering triggers can help you break your automatic habits.



Scrambling

Scramble your routine to stop the triggers before they happen.

1. Change your morning routine.
2. Change your work area and the times of the day you do things.
3. Change the route you take to work.
4. Change the way you talk on the phone.
5. Take a walk with a water bottle instead of a coffee break.
6. Sit in a new place at the dining room or kitchen table.
7. What other ways can you change your routines? List them here:

Non-Smoking Zones

Go to the places where you usually did not smoke/use tobacco—or where tobacco/nicotine is not allowed. Spend time with people who don't use tobacco/nicotine.

- Go to the movies
- Visit a non-smoking friend
- Spend time with children
- Volunteer



List places that are easier for you to be tobacco/nicotine free:

Clean Your Environment



Go around your house, car, workplace, and other places you have stored tobacco products. Gather all your tobacco, lighters, matches, and other items related to your habit. Don't forget to check your coats, purses, and drawers.

If you have quit, throw these products away. Seeing these items will not be helpful to staying quit. If you are still working on quitting, having all these items out of sight will also reduce the unhelpful reminders of your habits. You will be more ready for the day you quit completely.

Fill in the Void

Hands:

To take the place of holding a cigarette or e-cigarette, try holding one of these:

- A paper clip
- A hand grip or stress ball
- A rubber band
- A hair tie
- A pen or pencil

Mouth:

These can be placed in your mouth instead of tobacco:

- Toothpicks
- Coffee stirrers or cocktail twisters
- Sugarless gum or candy
- Sugarless breath mints
- Cinnamon sticks
- Crunchy vegetables (e.g. carrots or celery sticks)

Mind:

Make use of the gaps of time when you used to use tobacco. You might:

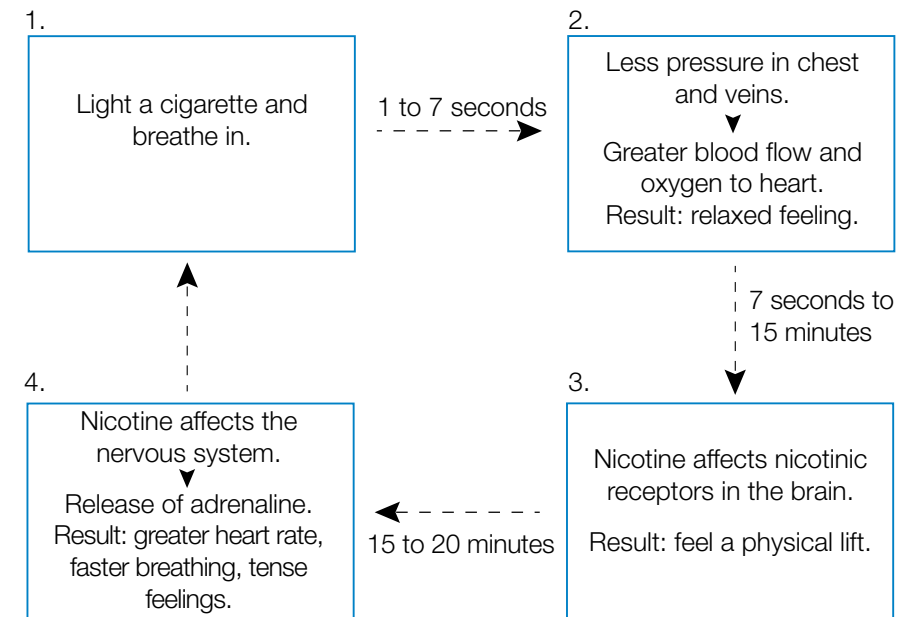
- Play cards
- Sketch an idea or make a list
- Do yard work
- Crochet or learn a new skill that uses your hands
- Stretch or exercise
- Write a letter or send an email
- Read
- Learn the words to a new song—or how to play it on an instrument
- Wash and wax your car or motorcycle

Smokeless Inhalation

This is one of the best Urge Tamers you will learn. Do this deep breathing when you have an urge.

1. Breathe in deeply through your nose.
2. Hold your breath for 3 seconds.
3. Slowly breathe out through pursed lips to make a “whooshing” sound.
4. Keep breathing this way until the urge goes away. Sometimes you may need to do the smokeless inhalation 2-3 times, or up to 12-13 times. An increase in oxygen helps you feel relaxed.

The smoking cycle:



Avoiding tobacco/nicotine and using smokeless inhalation can help you break the cycle.

Positive Reinforcement

Anytime you are given a reward for something you do, chances are you will do it again. For example: If a person popped out and handed you a \$100 bill each time you walked around the block, you would take a lot of walks.

The more rewards you get for quitting (from yourself and others), the more likely you will be successful.

Ciggy Bank

Take a jar and place it next to your “Butt Bottle.” Each day put the amount of money you would have used to buy tobacco in the jar. Write a reward you might buy with the money. Past **QuitWell™** participants have taken vacations with their family, bought tickets to sporting events and concerts, and even bought a boat with the savings from quitting.

Reward:

The Little Things

Give yourself a reward each day that you are successful. Choose things and activities that bring you joy. They don't have to cost money.

- Buy or pick flowers
- Picnic in the park
- Call an old friend
- Take your car to the carwash
- Rent or stream a movie

Reward:

Negative Reinforcement

If you are punished for doing something, you are less likely to keep doing it. If a person threw a bucket of water in your face each time you walked around the block, you would take fewer walks.

Urge Zapper

1. Place a stretchy band on your wrist.
2. Snap your wristband whenever you have an urge to use tobacco/nicotine.

Tobacco Consequence Control

When you get an urge, think of something you want to avoid—shortness of breath, cancer, heart disease, or letting someone down. What do you want to avoid?

As the urge goes away, reward yourself by thinking of something you are looking forward to with quitting—feeling in control, breathing more easily, or having more money. What do you look forward to?

Butt Bottle Revival

1. Keep your butt bottle where you can see it.
2. Open it up and smell.
3. Add water to highlight the foul odor.

A Strategy for Stress

Many people use tobacco to manage stress—and return to old habits in times of stress. If you currently use tobacco/nicotine products to manage stress, it is very likely your mind will go there in times of stress in the future. If you have quit, having a plan for when stress increases will help you from returning to tobacco/nicotine.

What is stress?

Stress is normal and can be a healthy, productive force in your life. Stress can have a good or bad effect on you depending on:

- The type of stress
- The amount of stress
- How well you deal with stress

“Good” stress can help you pay attention, stay focused, feel challenged, stay interested, and complete tasks.

“Bad” stress or chronic stress is intense stress over a long period of time. You may not be able to manage this stress as you would like. You tend to stay tense and don’t or can’t relax after things are once again under control. In our modern world, there are many things that can “push your buttons” and stress can become a way of life.

When we have too much stress to manage, our bodies can be more prone to illness—heart disease, cancer, ulcers, asthma, and colitis.

The stress response is the way your body and mind react to change. Our bodies have an inborn “fight or flight” response to a stressor:

- Heart rate and breathing speed up
- Blood pressure rises
- Blood moves away from the internal organs to the muscles
- Muscles tense
- Sweating occurs
- Blood sugar (glucose) increase which gives the muscles and brain a lift

Create Your Stress Strategy

1. Explore what causes you stress and how you react to these stressors.
2. Identify stressors that can be reduced.
3. Learn tools to reduce the feeling of stress, even with the same trigger.
4. Learn ways to manage the stress that remains.

Know Your Stressors

Everyone reacts differently to stress. In order to manage stress, you need to find out the source of your stress and how you react to it.

1. Look at the list that follows and think about stressors in your life. Check off any that apply to you right now or that are common stressors for you. Knowing your stressors will help you better prepare for triggers.
2. In the space next to each, write how you react to these stressors. What do you do? How do you feel?

Stressor	How I React
Family issues	
Relationship	
My health	
Family or friends' health	
Moving	
Finances	
Work demands	
Job security	
Lack of purpose	
Vacation or holiday	
Rude people	
Traffic	
Deadlines, time pressure	
Pregnancy	
Community or world problems	
Chronic pain	

Cleaning up Mind Pollution

Start with changing how you react to minor annoyances, like traffic or a chatty co-worker. Work to reduce the number of things that push your buttons. It is not the event itself that determines your feelings—it is what you tell yourself about it. You may have some truly big, serious stressors in your life. Avoid piling the little things on top.

“Men are not disturbed by things, but by the views they take of them.”
—Epictetus

Let’s pretend you got stuck in a traffic jam on the way to work today. You feel angry and upset. But it is not the traffic jam that makes you upset. It is what you tell yourself that upsets you: “I’m going to be late for work.” “I have so much to do.” “This is such a waste of time.”

You cannot change the fact that you are stuck in traffic. Getting angry serves no purpose. If you can look at the delay as a minor problem that you can’t control, rather than a major event, you will feel much better. When your mind stays calm, you may even see ways around the issue, like taking another route or using hands-free calling to join a meeting you’re running late for.

Your outlook on quitting is also very important. If you tell yourself that quitting will be awful, chances are the process will be as bad as you think. If you accept the fact that you will have urges, but nothing you can’t handle, you will have an easier time quitting. Focus on what is gained from quitting, not on what is being lost or the minor discomfort along the way.



Thinking Differently

You can change how you think, feel, and react to any event. The ABCDE model can help you do this.



Activating Event

An event that triggers thoughts and feelings. Example - “I am trying to quit smoking and this event is making me anxious.”



Belief

What you think or say to yourself about the activating event. Examples - “I just can’t quit.” “I don’t have any willpower.”



Consequence

How you feel in response to your beliefs. Examples - “I feel discouraged.” “I feel embarrassed and defeated.”



Dispute

Question your earlier beliefs. Examples - “Wait a minute here, I can do hard things!” “I don’t need to rely on willpower to quit. I can apply skills I’m learning in **QuitWell™**.”



Effect

How you feel after you dispute your earlier beliefs. Examples - “I can succeed.” “I feel my actions are within my control.” “I can handle this.”

Keep What is Truly Calming

Removing tobacco/nicotine doesn't mean your entire strategy for managing stress has to go away. Many things you are doing ARE healthy and genuinely calming to your body and mind.

Reasons why you may feel calmer after taking a smoke break at work:

- Getting away from your work area
- Getting away from the people that you work with (that may be contributing to your stress)
- Fresh air/being outside
- Movement—walking from place to place or pacing around outside
- Deep breathing as you inhale
- Looking off into the distance, versus looking at something right in front of you or at a screen
- Talking to co-workers outside of the office (maybe even venting a bit!)
- More open space, especially if you work in a crowded, noisy environment

Why else do you feel taking a smoke break is calming for you?

Modified smoke break strategy ideas:

- Plan to step away from your work for 5-10 minutes.
- Walk to a drinking fountain or bathroom far away from your desk to get in extra movement.

How can you practice taking a tobacco-free break today or tomorrow?

Practice Relaxation Techniques

Use relaxation techniques to manage daily stressors.

Plan Relaxation Time

Plan time during the day to relax. You can also do relaxation exercises as needed during the day. Practice these techniques before, during, or after trigger activities (like eating or talking on the phone).

Relaxation techniques can help reduce stress-related health problems, such as high blood pressure, headaches, and pain. These tools also help you to have greater physical and mental control. This helps you get through times when you may have had a cigarette or other form of tobacco/nicotine in the past.

How the mind can control the body:

- It can slow brain wave patterns.
- It can reduce heart and breathing rates.
- It can increase blood flow to the limbs.
- It can relax muscles.

Think about the rest of today. When can you spend 10 minutes relaxing?

Here are a few ideas of times you can practice relaxation:

- Break times when you would usually be on your phone, checking apps or scrolling mindlessly
- While drinking your morning coffee
- Winding down for bed in the evening
- Walking the dog or playing with your pet

Write your relaxation time plan here:

Relaxation Techniques



We will teach you four skills to relax:

- **Relaxation Reflex:** Getting rid of muscle tension.
- **Mental Imagery:** Thinking of calm, restful places.
- **Deep Natural Breathing:** Feeling relaxed by breathing in more oxygen.
- **Spend Time with Animals:** Feeling relaxed, happy and secure.

These relaxation strategies are not designed to take your stress away. Done correctly, they will help you calm your body and mind so that you can think more logically, see major problems as manageable challenges, and get through a tough day.

If something helps you—even a little—add it to your quitting tool kit. Remember, you will probably need a lot of strategies to be successful in the long run. One strategy may work on Monday morning, but you'll need another tool on Friday afternoon!

Relaxation Reflex

This skill involves relaxing 4 basic muscle groups. Tightening and releasing the muscles produces a soothing effect which helps you relax. Taking slow deep breaths and dropping the head and shoulders forward add to the effect.

Practice every day for about 5-10 minutes. Divide the body into 4 muscle groups. Tense each group for 5-10 seconds, then release.

- **Arms and Hands** – Lift arms, bend wrists and elbows, make fists, tighten upper arms.
- **Face and Neck** – Squinch eyes, nose, cheeks, and brows, stretch mouth and grit teeth, point chin down toward chest.
- **Middle Torso** – Push shoulders back, tighten stomach and small of back.
- **Legs and Feet** – Lift legs off floor, hold straight out, point toes toward face, tighten thighs.

When I will try this:

(After) How did your body feel after this activity?

(After) How did your stress level change after this activity?

Practice this strategy regularly. It may not help you the first time you try it, but the next time it might. As you get better at it, it may become even more helpful to you.

Mental Imagery

You can help your body and mind relax by imagining a calm, restful place. Your brain waves and breathing slow down, allowing you to feel relaxed. The stressor may still be there, but the way you feel can change. Physical relaxation can give your logical-problem-solving brain a chance to work.

Read these steps, then close your eyes to practice.

1. Think of a place that is very calming to you. It may be a classic beach scene, or a place from your childhood that reminds you of simpler times.
2. Sit back into a chair. Close your eyes, noting which parts of your body are feeling tense and which are more relaxed.
3. Take a few deep breaths, taking the air in through your nose, holding it for a moment, and then slowly exhaling. With each exhale, find yourself relaxing more and more deeply. Allow yourself to relax.
4. Start to picture your calm, restful place. Imagine the vivid colors and sights before you. Picture the scene as if you were there.
5. Feel the temperature—perhaps it is warm and comforting.
6. Hear nature. Perhaps you hear a bird overhead or waves crashing into the shoreline. Perhaps you hear the laugh of a child.
7. Gaze out at the scene before you. As each cloud goes by, or wave comes in and out, feel the rhythm of the calm around you.
8. Take a few minutes in this relaxed state before opening your eyes.

When I will try this:

(After) How did your stress level change after this activity?

Keep a picture of this restful place near you so you can glance at it when you are triggered. Just a glance may help remind you of a calmer, more relaxed state of mind.

Deep Natural Breathing

This skill is very much like Smokeless Inhalation, but it takes 3 to 5 minutes. It involves both your abdomen and your chest. You will focus on the sound and feel of your breathing.

1. Sit in a chair. Put your arms at your sides and uncross your legs and feet. Or, lay down on a bed or couch.
2. Note any tension in your muscles.
3. Put one hand on your chest and the other hand on your abdomen.
4. Take a slow, deep breath through your nose. The hand on your abdomen should rise first. When your abdomen is full of air, the hand on your chest should rise.
5. Hold the air for 3 seconds.
6. Purse your lips and blow out through your mouth, making a whooshing sound.
7. Keep taking long, slow deep breaths in through your nose and letting long slow breaths out through your mouth.
8. Focus on the sound and feel of your breathing. Do this for 3 to 5 minutes. After a while, you can lower your hands.

When I will try this:

(After) How did your body feel after this activity?

(After) How did your stress level change after this activity?

Spend Time with Animals



Spend time with a pet. Volunteer at a shelter. Spend time with a friend or family member's pet. Go to a pet store, or look into adopting a rescue animal.

Spending time with a pet can:

- Decrease production of cortisol, a stress hormone that can put you on edge and make you ill over time.
- Increase serotonin, which helps you feel relaxed and happy.
- Help you feel secure. Pets, especially dogs, can love unconditionally and may sense when you need extra support. Some pets are trained to help you manage certain emotions, like anxiety.

Cutting Back

While there is no healthy level of tobacco/nicotine use, it can be helpful to cut back before quitting completely. This allows you to:

- Reduce the amount of tobacco/nicotine your body must process every day, reducing the damage and toxic load on the body.
- Practice strategies without the pressure of quitting completely.
- Build confidence as you show yourself how strong and capable you are with making changes.
- Get used to going through different times of the day without a cigarette/dip/vape.
- Learn which strategies are going to work for different triggers.
- Gradually change habits and how you respond to triggers.

Remember, every less cigarette, dip, or vape gives your body a break.

Cutting back can be helpful for all stages of quitting.

- If you aren't ready to quit completely, cutting back can still give you all the benefits listed above. You may find that the new tobacco/nicotine-free habits stick and you now are at a lower level of tobacco/nicotine. While it can be hard to stay at a low level for a long time, due to the addictive nature of nicotine, you are now more ready to quit in the future.



- If you are thinking about quitting but not fully ready, cutting back can get the ball rolling. As you see yourself succeed with small steps, you may be ready to take more small steps. Eventually, all those small steps take you to the finish line.
- If you are fully ready to quit, taking a week to cut back before your quit date can help you prepare for the triggers you may face. It gives you time to try the strategies in this guide and prepare your environment.

Practice Change

There are many ways to practice quitting before getting all the way there. You can improve your health even before you feel “all in”.

- Leave your pack, can, or vape pen home when you go out for short errands. Try leaving products home when you go to work one day.
- If you are a smoker, put a certain number of cigarettes in a pack for the day. Try to put one or two less in the pack than you’d normally smoke. If you usually smoke a full pack, take a few out at the beginning of the day so “finishing the pack” means smoking 18 instead of 20 cigarettes. After a few days, cut out one or two more.
- Put your cigarettes, can, or vape pen out of reach in your car. Maybe keep them in the trunk of your car, or in the backseat. When you want to have one, you will need to pull over to the side of the road to safely get it. When you do, just take one. This makes your habit a lot less convenient. Practice working through an urge while you are deciding if you want to pull over or keep going.

What are some other ways you can practice change?

Action Planning

Remember, an “okay” plan today beats a “great” plan tomorrow. Use this template to write out your quit plan. By this point, you probably know most of your expected triggers during the day. Write both your planned urge tamer/ response to the trigger and another idea to try, in case you need it.

MY ACCOUNTABILITY BUDDY:		
Triggers:	Urge tamer/ what I will do:	If that doesn't work, I will do:
When I wake up/before work:		
On my way to work:		
Work day:		
Right after work/on my way home:		
Time at home/after work		
Before bed:		

Recovery Signals

Quitting may cause certain changes in your body due to the withdrawal of the many toxins found in tobacco. Some of these changes you may enjoy—food tastes and smells better. Some changes may be a little unpleasant. Everyone will have a different reaction. However, most people will only have a few signals, and these usually last less than a week.

Some of these signals, of course, may be related to a health issue or illness. If you are concerned about how long a recovery signal is lasting or it feels more serious, contact your physician right away. You may be feeling that way because of something other than quitting.

Increased Hunger

The taste buds in the mouth become more keen when you quit and food tastes better. You may find yourself eating more, which could add up to weight gain. Be mindful to increase physical activity, avoid emotional eating, and avoid snacks high in sugar and saturated fat. Choose crunchy vegetables or a high-protein snack instead.

Irritability and anxiety

Studies offer two reasons for this signal:

1. Smoking, chewing, and other tobacco behaviors serve as a mild calming agent for some. Take it away and the body is very tense until it adjusts.
2. Your whole life has been disrupted by quitting. Try a relaxation tool, take a hot shower, or call a close friend.

Coughing

The hair-like fibers (cilia) that line the bronchial tubes are starting to work to get rid of the mucus that tobacco produced. As the mucus loosens, you cough.

Sweating

One way the toxins leave the body is through the skin's pores. This may show up as sweat. If this affects you, it should only last 3 to 4 days.

Frequent Urination

This may happen because of the extra liquids you're drinking.

Constipation

The toxins in tobacco cause the release of the hormone adrenaline. For some, this helps in moving the bowels, so not smoking can lead to constipation. Eat high fiber foods, fruits, vegetables, bran, and whole grains. Drink plenty of water as well.

Loss of Sleep

Quitting may cause you to be restless at night. Increase your daytime activity to make you feel more tired. Try drinking a warm glass of milk before bed.

Sleepiness

For many people, tobacco provides a “lift.” Take that away and you feel more sleepy. Try to get as much sleep as you need.

Dizziness

With carbon monoxide no longer in the blood and the bronchial tubes clearing up, more oxygen may be entering the body. The result could be dizziness. Sit down and rest until it passes.

Mouth Sores or Bad Taste

Sores or bad tastes in the mouth may be due to the body chemicals that used to counteract the effects of the toxins in tobacco. Use an oral pain reliever for sores or see a doctor or dentist. Use mouthwash or breath mints for a fresher taste.

Lack of Focus

Turning your life around by quitting may make it harder for you to focus. A short walk is helpful.

Dreaming of Using Tobacco

Many people find they dream about using as they are trying to quit.

Sense of Loss

Quitting an activity that has been a major part of your life can make you feel very sad. There may be a feeling of missing something. This sense of loss will pass with time.

Headache

Your blood vessels open up due to withdrawal from nicotine. This could produce headaches during the first few days of quitting. Deep natural breathing, getting fresh air, and making sure you are eating healthy foods regularly can help.

Notice the unpleasant recovery symptoms—and make sure they are going away over time (otherwise, see a doctor). Try not to focus on the unpleasant recovery symptoms. You might overlook the good recovery signals that are taking place. Blame all the unpleasant changes on tobacco/nicotine. Focus on the good changes that have happened because you no longer use this addictive, body-damaging product. Keep in mind, **no one ever died from quitting**.

- If you **have quit**, which of these recovery signals have you noticed so far? Have they started to go away yet?
- If you are **still thinking about quitting**, imagine welcoming these changes as a sign that positive changes are happening in your body.
- If you are **cutting back** (but haven't quit yet), do you have any of these recovery signals already? While there is no healthy level of tobacco use, your body may begin to heal as you get close to quitting completely.

Review & Prepare

This section provided strategies to manage urges that you have for tobacco/nicotine. You also learned tools to manage yourself in a demanding, often stressful world.

Which urge tamers and other strategies have you practiced already?

Which tools have worked well for you? Add these to your quit plan.

What gaps do you have in your quit plan? What is still a big challenge?

Review this section often. What may have helped you get started may not be what takes you all the way to quitting completely. You may need to use new strategies as your life changes, new stressors arise, or new people enter your life. As you feel more and more ready to take action, strengthen your action plan by assigning urge tamers to triggers.