

**'Habit is habit and is not to be flung out of the window,
but to be coaxed downstairs, a step at a time'**

– *Mark Twain* –

- 1 Make a definite decision to stop smoking. Write down the reasons why you want to stop and display them in a prominent place. Start with:
 - a Every cigarette smoked shortens a person's life by five minutes.
 - b Smoking causes cancer, strokes, heart disease and bronchitis.
- 2 For one week keep a daily smoking record chart showing the number of cigarettes smoked each day and exactly where you smoked each cigarette.
- 3 Aim to reduce gradually. Calculate the average number smoked each day; this is your baseline to work from. Divide your average daily total by six and then subtract that figure from the daily total, which is your goal to work towards next week. Example: Baseline average = 24. 24 divided by 6 = 4. Next week's target is 24 – 4 = 20. So next week you can only smoke 20 cigarettes a day.
- 4 Eliminate the easiest cigarette first. Identify cigarettes with particular times of the day or activities. For example, the coffee cigarette, the driving cigarette, the after-lunch cigarette, the drinking cigarette. Devise a strategy for overcoming each cigarette. For example, break the habit of drinking coffee – have tea instead and have a biscuit.
- 5 Challenge and dispute thoughts associated with smoking. For example, replace: 'It would be nice to have a cigarette right now' with: 'I don't need to have a cigarette right now – I have a choice. If I break this habit my health will improve, I'm likely to live longer, I'll save money and I won't be polluting the atmosphere for others'. Challenging thoughts of continuing to smoke is the key to breaking the habit.
- 6 Collect cigarette stubs in a small bottle (about 2 inches in height) with a cap on it. As the weeks go by, the odour from the bottle will become increasingly unpleasant. Remove the cap and take a sniff if you feel an overwhelming urge to smoke.
- 7 Set aside any money you have saved from not smoking and buy yourself something special.
- 8 When you do smoke, smoke rapidly. Do not inhale and only smoke half the cigarette.
- 9 Break as many habits in the chain of smoking as possible. Change your brand. Buy your cigarettes from a different shop. Keep your cigarettes in a different place (preferably where they are more difficult to reach). Think to yourself, 'One hour at a time', when deliberately trying to abstain.
- 10 When you have broken the habit, always call yourself a non-smoker, not an ex-smoker. Say, 'I don't smoke' not, 'I've given up'.