

## *Joel's Reinforcement Library*

**NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

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# *Junkie, burn-out, addict, drug abuser, drunk, alcoholic, smoke-a-holic*

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Some people would argue that smoke-a-holic is just a cute euphemism which should not be compared to what they consider degrading syndromes. Contrary to this belief, nicotine addiction can be equally as strong and deadly as any of these other conditions. In fact, if you total the number of people who die yearly of all these other conditions combined, they would not add up to the number of premature deaths attributed to cigarette smoking.

Until recent times, the idea of nicotine being a physiologically addictive substance was controversial in the world-wide medical community. For a drug to be considered addictive, it must meet certain criteria. First, it must be capable of inducing physical withdrawal upon cessation. Nicotine abstinence syndrome is a well documented, established fact.

Second, tolerance to the drug usually develops. Increasingly larger doses become necessary to achieve the same desired effects. Smokers experience this phenomenon as their cigarette consumption gradually increases from what probably was sporadic occasional use to a required daily consumption of one or more packs.

The third criterion is that an addictive substance becomes a totally consuming necessity to its user, usually resulting in what is considered by a society as anti-social behavior. Many have argued that cigarette smoking fails to fulfill this requirement. True, most smokers do not resort to deviant behaviors to maintain their dependency, but this is because most smokers do manage to easily obtain the full complement of cigarettes they need to satisfy the addiction. When smokers are deprived of easy accessibility to cigarettes, the situation is totally different.

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**During World War II, in concentration camps in Germany, prisoners were not given enough food to fulfill minimum caloric nutritional requirements. They were literally starving to death. A common practice among smoking prisoners was to trade away their scarce supplies of life sustaining food for cigarettes. Even today, in underdeveloped countries, such as Bangladesh, parents with starving children barter away essential food for cigarettes. This is not normal behavior.**

**During the "stop smoking clinics" I conduct, numerous participants admit to going through ashtrays, garbage cans and, if necessary, gutters looking for butts which may still have a salvageable value of a few puffs when their own supplies are depleted due to carelessness or unforeseen circumstances. To them, it is sick to think that they ever performed such a grotesque act, but many realize that if they were currently smoking and again caught in a similar predicament, they would be fully capable of repeating the repulsive incident.**

**Nicotine is a drug. It is addictive. And if you let it, it can be a killer. Consider this when you get the urge for a cigarette. One puff can and most often will reinforce the addiction. Don't take that chance. Remember - NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PUFF!**

**Joel**

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