



TOBACCO-FREE ME: 2a — MOTIVATE TOWARD A QUIT DATE *(Article)*

Okay, you've learned some things about your tobacco/nicotine habit, and you're getting closer to taking a big step toward improving your health. You're getting closer to committing. It's time to start planning your quit date — not too far off in the future but not tomorrow, either. The quit date is a big deal. It's serious business. It is the beginning of your new life as a healthy, tobacco/nicotine-free person.

As you have seen, there is work involved in successfully quitting tobacco/nicotine. You've read handouts and written out lists. And there's a few more of each to go. You're getting the tobacco/nicotine use education you need while compiling motivating reasons to quit.

One important method for motivating yourself to take an important action is to make a solid decision and strengthen your resolve. Positive thoughts and "self-talk" play a major role in success. Another important method is to define your reasons for the decision and to define the benefits you will receive from making that decision.

Make Up Your Mind

- Resolve your ambivalence:
 - Carefully consider all the issues for and against tobacco/nicotine use.
 - Realize this is a very important change in your life; it's a key decision.
 - Think of quitting tobacco/nicotine not as giving up something but rather gaining control of this part of your life.

Review Your Reasons for Quitting

- Review why you have decided to take control over your tobacco/nicotine use:
 - Strengthen your motivation to stop smoking, chewing or vaping.
 - Enlist your family, friends and co-workers to reinforce your decision; ask them each to give you a reason to quit.

Believe in Yourself

- You can be successful:
 - Believe this will be a successful experience even if you have tried and stumbled in the past.
 - Tell yourself that you can be successful; say it out loud; tell yourself again and again.



- Remind yourself of all of the good things that quitting means.
- Stay committed to your goals.

Prepare for Change

- Take some concrete action toward your goal:
 - Find a support group in case you decide to attend.
 - See your physician to discuss which nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or other medication might be best for you.
 - Sign up to attend a stop-smoking or quit tobacco/nicotine use program.
 - Use less tobacco/nicotine.
 - Start thinking about a quit date.
 - Switch to a brand that does not taste good.
 - Talk to other people who have quit tobacco/nicotine.

Completing the Following Lists

- 1) “My Reasons for Using Tobacco/Nicotine” *(form supplied)*
 - Some examples:
 - Feel more mature or cool
 - Feel part of a crowd in social situations
 - Just habit
 - Manage stress
 - Physical, psychological, or social dependence
 - Relaxation
 - Socialize with other smokers, chewers or vapers



2) “My Barriers to Quitting” (*form supplied*)

- Some examples:
 - Disruption of social relationships
 - Fear failure
 - Fear losing your stress reliever
 - Fear mood changes
 - Fear tobacco/nicotine cravings
 - Fear weight gain
 - Lack self-confidence
 - Loss of enjoyment
 - Pain (withdrawal symptoms) not worth it
 - Seems too late to worry about it (harm is already done)
 - Tobacco/nicotine users around me
- Keep adding to this list as you prepare to quit.

3) “My Triggers and Responses Log” (*form supplied*)

- Some trigger examples:
 - Finishing a meal
 - Being around tobacco/nicotine users
 - Drinking coffee or alcohol
 - Driving
 - Feeling bored
 - Feeling hungry
 - Feeling sad, angry, lonely, nervous, or stressed
 - Talking on the telephone



- Tobacco/nicotine use as an automatic behavior
- Waking in the morning
- Some trigger response examples:
 - Avoid alcoholic beverages for a while.
 - Carpool with a non-user.
 - Change your morning routine.
 - Doodle on scrap paper.
 - Drink some water.
 - Hold something like a pen in your hand to replace a cigarette, pipe, cigar or vaporizer.
 - Keep low-fat, healthy snacks on hand.
 - Take up a new hobby.
 - Tell friends and family that you are trying to quit.
 - Visit places where tobacco/nicotine use is not allowed.