

Smoking

Social Support When Quitting

Quitting smoking can be much easier if you have support from your friends and family. An ideal support person may be someone who was a smoker. Make sure to tell the people close to you about your plans to quit smoking. Warn them that you might be tense for a while. If they know what is going on, they are more likely to be sympathetic when you have an urge to smoke and more likely to help you resist that urge.

Examples of Social Support

The type of support you find most helpful may be different from person to person. Some examples of social support are:

- Daily check-ins
- Agreeing to not smoke around you
- Positive feedback (such as “You haven’t smoked in 2 hours. Congratulations”)
- Doing fun things with you
- Being tolerant of increased irritability
- Rewarding your efforts to quit smoking
- Not talking about your smoking to give you some space to quit

How to Get Social Support

Ask yourself, “Whose support do I want?” and “What type of support do I want from him/her?” Here are some tips for helping you get support:

- Prepare your friends and family by telling them what type of support you would like from them during your attempt to quit.
- Be firm when asking others not to smoke around you.
- Be specific in your requests for help and support. You may want to ask those around you to be tolerant of irritable behavior for a while.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help and support. Everyone needs encouragement and praise to get through this process – needing help is not a sign of weakness.
- If possible, avoid people who are critical of your efforts to quit smoking.

Living and/or Working with Smokers

Bargaining with a live-in smoker:

- Work out an agreement that makes you both comfortable. For example, you may agree that the other person will not leave cigarettes around the house, not smoke in the house, or at least not smoke in your presence.
- Remind the person how important their support is to you.

- If you think they may feel they are losing a “smoking partner,” then talk about and plan some ways that you could do things together without smoking.

Bargaining with a smoking coworker can be harder than bargaining with a family member or housemate. You may try:

- Letting coworkers know that you are trying to quit smoking
- Reminding your coworkers of your quit date
- Letting coworkers know what might change as a result of your quit attempt (such as no longer going to the smoke break area)
- Asking coworkers to be patient if you become more irritable

Remember to use your support system during times of temptation. Call a friend or family member when you feel lonely, depressed or anxious, or if you feel an urge to smoke. The support and encouragement of friends and family will help you reach your goal of being a nonsmoker.