

Did you know that:

Cannabis smoke contains more tar than cigarette smoke. "Traces" of cannabis can be detected in your urine for up to 7 days after a single dose or up to 80 days after a chronic user's final "toke".

Routine users often experience a drop in energy and motivation, as well as problems affecting their memory, concentration and judgement. They also become more and more passive. However, these problems generally disappear in time after the drug use stops.

Regularly smoking pot can cause you to become psychologically dependent on pot. Your life becomes centred on your drug use: you spend all your time, energy, and money to your pot habit.

Possession is illegal, no matter how much pot you have on you, or why you have it.

Your Last "Toke"

**By taking this pamphlet,
you have already made an important step towards quitting.**

You have shown an interest in quitting and the will to find ways to succeed.
All the better; motivation is the key to quitting.

You'll enjoy the satisfaction of kicking your pot habit;
you'll feel more energetic, and gradually,
you'll find you have more money in your pockets.
You'll be surprised to find that sometimes
the most difficult thing is not quitting itself...
but making the decision to quit.

What type of user are you?

THE EXPLORATORY USER:

you smoke pot out of curiosity, and only very rarely.

THE OCCASIONAL USER:

you smoke pot on specific occasions (birthday, party, shows).

THE REGULAR USER:

you smoke pot frequently... for example, one to a few times a week.

THE OVER-USER:

you smoke pot almost every day... in ever-increasing amounts. You spend a lot of time, energy and money on pot. Almost all your friends are pot-users like you.

THE ABUSIVE USER:

you use large amounts of pot, as much as you can, and experience regular losses of control. You often get extremely 'stoned', but not necessarily every day.

The greater your drug use, the greater the risk of experiencing psychological and physical difficulties when you quit. **Preparing to quit** is therefore the key to successfully changing your drug use habits.

Here are the three steps to making it easier to quit:

- Preparation
- Quitting
- Maintenance

Preparation

- Give yourself **solid reasons** for quitting by making a list of the three most important reasons for you. Read your list over regularly.
- Adopt a **positive attitude** from today on. Find a motto that you can repeat to yourself, for example: "I'm quitting for me!"
- **Note when** and **where** you usually smoke up: at recess, at lunchtime, at your friend's place on Fridays, at home alone, etc. By being more aware, you will know **how** to find other activities to replace your pot smoking routine.
- identify the most **important joint** of the day (or week) for you. You will notice that you often smoke out of habit and/or to calm yourself down, but not as much for pleasure.
- Fix a **target date** for you to quit. Make it a date that nothing and nobody can change.

Preparation (continued)

DON'T TRY TO DO IT ALONE

Team up with someone who understands and can help you. It is best to choose someone who doesn't smoke pot.

START CHANGING SOME OF YOUR HABITS NOW

- Find some activities you can do without smoking up or with friends who do not smoke pot.
- Say "no" occasionally.
- Skip your turn sometimes when a joint is being passed around.
- When you feel like smoking up, wait five minutes before lighting up.
- Don't buy any more pot.
- Stop smoking during the daytime.
- Avoid putting too much pressure on yourself and telling everyone what you want to do; share your secret only with your closest friends...the others will notice sooner or later.

YOUR LAST JOINT

It's the day before your target date. You smoke your last joint, convinced that you have made an excellent decision.

- Imagine yourself proudly saying "no" to a friend who offers you a toke.
- Get rid of all your pot-smoking gear: your pipe, knives, baggies, and pot.

Quitting

YOUR TARGET DATE HAS ARRIVED

It is important that you remind yourself that quitting happens one day at a time, Repeat your motto to yourself.

Remind yourself regularly of your three reasons for quitting.

Don't forget that cravings last only a few minutes. They will go away by themselves if you focus on doing something else.

Avoid situations, places and friends that you associate with smoking pot.

You may find the time longer and the activities you do boring. That's normal. People often experience that in the beginning...

You may be more stressed than usual, and even have difficulty sleeping the first nights. That's also normal. It's very important that you congratulate yourself each time you say "No, thanks", and at the end of every day.

YOUR BODY MAY REACT

Some heavy pot users may experience certain withdrawal symptoms, such as insomnia, irritability, nervousness, loss of appetite, stomachaches, headaches, sweating, nausea, depression, and mood swings. These symptoms usually disappear in a few days.

Maintenance

Avoid taking a "little puff just to see" one or two weeks after quitting in order to prove to yourself that you really are able to take it or leave it. Experience shows that when people test themselves in such a way, they are headed for a relapse.

However, if you do have a "slip", don't get discouraged. Just be more careful... and keep going. Contact an addiction resource for help if you feel the need.

Watch out for "transference". Often people who stop smoking pot replace it with a new habit: drinking more alcohol, increasing the number of cigarettes they smoke each day, eating more... So be aware, and replace your pot habit with something healthier and less costly: take part in more social and athletic activities, for example. Sports are an excellent antidote to depression and will help you sleep better.

REWARD YOURSELF

You've been able to kick the pot habit thanks to your determination. You deserve a reward. Start rewarding yourself the very first day you quit... and continue to do so over the coming weeks. Give yourself a treat.

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YOUTH PROGRAM

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