

Health psychology report

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Good health, although frequently emphasised upon, is not given as much importance as it should be. We have been hearing the phrase “ health is wealth” since school days. Somewhere along the way we forget about this and start to attract negative health behaviours. These negative health behaviours can lead to various illnesses, diseases and can sometimes even be fatal. These behaviours need to be reflected upon and revised for our own good. Activities that we take up become habit in time and these then become a part of our behaviour itself. Positive habits like exercising and following a healthy diet should be encouraged and reinforced. Negative habits like smoking, binge drinking, indulging in junk food, etc. should be stopped in order to reduce the risks of falling prey to illnesses.

Smoking is a behaviour that I developed and which I realize should be changed. Nicotine is a useless addiction since it gives the smoker nothing in return for it. Your heart and lungs are adversely affected, your stamina is weakened, and passive smoking is said to be worse than active smoking which means you’re putting the lives of others at risk. Other than reducing the quality of your life, it also affects the way you deal with free time.

Smokers consider smoking the only way to while their time away. They say that it keeps boredom at bay. Instead, this free time can be used on so many healthier things like running, painting, reading, getting involved in activities in your neighbourhood, etc.

Smoking in college days was considered to be “ cool” and I, like many others fell prey to this status quo. It went on for about 5 years. I told myself that I wasn’t addicted and that I could quit smoking anytime I wanted to. To prove to my friends that I could, I stopped smoking for a while. But on the second

day, I smoked a cigarette without anyone around. That's when I realized that I had to make a genuine effort to really stop smoking. I realise now that it has adverse affects on one's mind and body.

When I started playing tennis, I had stopped smoking because I realised that I couldn't manage both the smoking and the playing. My stamina was affected, and I could hardly run from one end of the court to the other without gasping for breath. I decided to stop smoking. The measures I took up in order to quit smoking were by minimising the number of cigarettes I smoked every day. I also decided that smoking would not be allowed in my apartment or in the car. Getting rid of all my ashtrays had also been helpful for the most part. I also stopped buying full packs of cigarettes, so there was lesser temptation to smoke.

I kept this up for a while until I injured my kneecap. When I stopped playing, I automatically started smoking again. I convinced myself that it was just one cigarette at one time of the day, but it gradually kept increasing until I'm back to being a full- time smoker.

Since I know now that exercising will actively keep me away from smoking, I have decided to join for yoga so that it can be continued. I will keep up with tennis for as long as I can, but I don't want myself to relapse the next time I have an injury. So yoga becomes my back-up plan. I feel healthier when I quit smoking, and I want that to become my routine. I have also started to spend time with the friends I play with, none of whom smoke, so there is no temptation. There is positive reinforcement when I am able to spend quality time with healthy people, in both body and mind.

The Health- Belief Model is made up of four key components. They are

susceptibility, severity, effectiveness and cost. In my case, this is the following study:

Perceived susceptibility- I realised the consequences of my actions when I first started to play tennis. The lack of stamina helped concretise the idea that had been pointed out to me for years.

Perceived severity- Playing tennis helped me with my initial realization that I needed to quit smoking. The relapse was another awakening for me since I understood that I had to work harder to beat nicotine addiction.

Perceived benefits- Once I started to play I felt healthier and cleaner within. It gave me a lot of energy to do a lot of things I had otherwise ignored. I made a lot of new friends and am engaged in a lot more activities than before. This is acting as a positive reinforcement for me to get rid of my smoking habit.

Perceived barriers- Since I relapsed with my smoking a couple of times already, I am worried if this will happen again.

Cues to action- I am surrounding myself with my new friends and getting engaged in a lot of activities so that I am distracted enough to not want to take that drag.

Self- efficacy- Once these new habits that I have acquired set in, smoking will be a thing of the distant past, and I will have gained control over the nicotine.

Quitting a habit that has long been a part of one's system is not an easy task. I have had help from a lot of my friends and family to kick this habit and I will always be grateful to them for taking me to places that don't allow smoking, for making sure my ash trays were always kept hidden so that I

wouldn't be tempted, for not letting me buy full packs of cigarettes and sometimes for not letting me buy any at all. The sport is one of the main reasons I quit smoking. It is necessary for a player to have healthy lungs and good stamina. Exercises in general should help one to reduce, if not quit, smoking.

Reference

Prochaska, James O., Redding, Colleen A., Rossi, Joseph S., Rossi, Susan R., Velicer, Wayne F. (2000). The International Electronic Journal of Health Education. Health Behaviour Models. Retrieved from http://drzaius.ics.uci.edu/meta/classes/informatics161_fall06/papers/10a-Redding_HealthBehaviorModels.pdf