Healing
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Smoking: Quit "Cold Turkey"

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Last month we assessed the affliction of addiction. We saw that the first thing one needs in order to quit smoking is a firm resolve. We'll now look at how to stick to your decision to quit and make it work.

We know that if we can reprogram the subconscious it will be able to bring about the change in habits that we desire as well as to avoid the physical and psychic changes known as "withdrawal symptoms." We must convince our lower self that this is what we really want. There must be no hesitation, confusion, obliquity or equivocation in the transmission of the act of will. If there is, the subconscious will sense this and act only according to previous patterns, or the old program of satisfaction through smoking.

The use of the Nicotine Patch is not advised, as this an equivocation. There is no need for physical withdrawal symptoms as long as the subconscious knows exactly what the middle (conscious) self desires. A firm act of the will is the most decisive and effective tool. A technique of "shouting it out" may help to convince the lower self that a change is really wanted. This technique means that whenever you are alone (even driving in the car) you may shout, "I have stopped smoking" so loudly that the subconscious cannot help but hear and be convinced. If this is done several times a day, the message gets through to the lower mind and one notices an ease developing in overcoming the habitual behavior. This technique also works to overcome other unwanted habits.

Thus I advocate one to stop supplying the subconscious with the pleasure of the ritual, oral satisfaction and chemical dependency all at once-"cold turkey." Daily chanting of the new mantram "I have stopped smoking" several times a day, especially when shouted, helps accomplish the goal. Have frequent discussions with your subconscious, as in prayer, giving it moral support, praise and pleasure and always reassuring it that "This is what I want. It will be good for the body and our whole being." It may help to set a goal in time so that after the change has been successfully accomplished the lower self will be rewarded by some special activity that it enjoys, perhaps a special trip or food. Make the time interval sufficiently long that the behavior will not revert to the previous habit. This will vary with your own experiences. Frequent prayers to Lord Ganesha imploring His help is also advised.

Live as if the goal of stopping this ugly habit has already been accomplished in its fullness. The message to the subconscious must always be "I have stopped smoking," not "I am in the process of giving it up," or "I will give it up." A new habit ritual may be formulated to replace the old one, such as daily exercise, a meditation ritual, reading or whatever will satisfy the insatiable "3-year-old" subconscious. This assures continued success.

In my own case, I had stopped the habit for three years and was again hooked because someone handed me a lit cigarette while my mind was occupied with a floor show. Unconsciously, I took a drag, was hooked again and had to repeat the entire process. Of course, it did not take long the second time to overcome the habit. So we must always be aware of what we are thinking and doing in order to do that which is healthful and happiness producing.

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