



Why not give up cigarettes for the day? *Maybe forever?*

By Jill M. Williams, MD

That's the message of the American Cancer Society. They want you to know they care about your smoking.

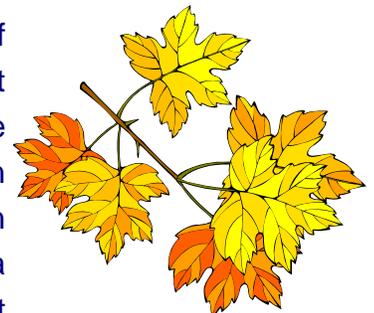
Each year they sponsor a nationwide event called the Great American Smokeout to help Americans all across the country quit smoking. This year the Great American Smokeout will be held on November 16, 2006. The Great American Smokeout encourages smokers to quit for at least one day, in hopes they will quit forever. For many people, the thought of quitting for only one day seems easier to do.

The Great American Smokeout developed out of community volunteers who wanted to help smokers to quit, even for one day. Different events have been planned in the past including health fairs and celebrations. Some smokers have chosen to donate the money they would have spent on cigarettes that day to a local charity. There are some special events being held in New Jersey. Learn about activities near you -- or organize them yourself. Local American Cancer Society offices will help volunteers who want to have health fairs, or school and shopping mall events. To get more information on events in your area, call the American Cancer Society at 1.800.ACS.2345 or visit cancer.org.

If you already quit smoking, maybe you'll want to help out at one of these events. It's also important to help people who are quitting. It's important that we all help smokers to get assistance and support so that they don't feel alone.

To celebrate the Great American Smokeout, the CHOICES program will be having a booth at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the NJ Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association being held on November 16 and 17 in Edison, NJ. The NJPRA conference is a great event promoting psychiatric rehabilitation and recovery oriented services for people experiencing serious mental illnesses (Go to <http://www.njpra.org/about.htm> for more information). We will be sharing information about resources in NJ where smokers can go for help. We look forward to seeing you there.

Fall is a great time of the year to think about quitting smoking. The Great American Smokeout on November 16 is a great chance to start planning and get ready to quit.



The Mercer County Tobacco QuitCenter

By Donna Drummond, MS, LPC

In a world of quick fixes and one size fits all solutions, the Mercer County Tobacco QuitCenter is different. We customize a quit plan to fit YOU. We have counselors and prescribers who have extensive experience working with smokers. In fact, our specialty services for treating people with mental illness means that we have professionals who have more than a decade of experience dealing with problems of daily living, substance abuse, and tobacco dependence.

We want to know about your particular smoking patterns so we can best prepare you to quit. We'll ask you questions about when you are most likely to smoke, what you are doing at the time you are smoking, what you were feeling at the time (another way of saying your "triggers," your "links" or "associations" to smoking, your mood) so that we can identify those patterns of

smoking that need to be overcome. We'll work on a time table that reflects your needs.

The QuitCenter uses state of the art methods. You can be counseled individually or in a group setting. Some clients choose to combine both. Our prescribing medical staff will collaborate with you to decide on which nicotine replacement products, if any, will be most helpful to you. Your personalized plan will help you to get ready to quit, will teach you strategies while you are going through the process, and will continue to support you to maintain your new smoke-free life.

We have 3 locations in and around the Trenton area with both day and evening hours. We are currently able to provide our services without a fee.

Call us at (609) 396-7707 or look us up on the web at: www.mercercountytdp.com

NEW JERSEY QUITCENTERSSM



Counterclockwise from top left: Joanne Malek, MS, LPC; Ivy Pearlstein, APN; Marc Steinberg, Ph.D.; and Donna Drummond, MS, LPC

Tobacco treatment locations in the Trenton area:

Downtown Trenton

222 East State St
Trenton, NJ 08618
609-396-7707

Capital Health Care System

446 Bellevue Ave
Trenton, NJ 08618
609-394-4340

RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness

3100 Quakerbridge Rd
Mercerville, NJ 08618
609-584-5900

Donna Drummond is a clinician and Tobacco Treatment Specialist for the Mercer County Tobacco Dependence Program. She has had intensive training in the area of tobacco treatment and has been counseling smokers for the past five years. She welcomes smokers in any stage of the quit process, from "thinking about quitting" to "ready to move forward."



I never meant to be a “real” smoker.



This is how it started. I was 15 and my friends and I would meet together after school in front of the drugstore. I'd smoke when one of my friends offered me a cigarette, but I didn't buy my own. By age 17 we would go to parties at friends' houses and there was always beer and alcohol there. I would puff on a cigarette and drink. At home, I didn't dare smoke. My parents were non-smokers and were very much against it. But eventually, I went from smoking just when I was drinking or hanging with my friends, to two in the morning on my way to the bus, and one before bed, when I gave our dog its last walk of the night, and one or two in between whenever I could manage it. Pretty soon, I was out of high school and working. Now I needed cigarettes to wake me up in the morning and on breaks during the day, after work, and all evening when I was out with my buddies. I used to think I could quit any time I wanted to. I realized I couldn't when I was up to a pack and a half of cigarettes a day.

Today I am 56 years old. I had a heart attack two years ago. My doctor says it is a “classic smoker's heart attack.” I quit right away, but went back after three months. It was stress on the job, or maybe it was the fact that my wife smoked, too. Anyway, my wife quit last year and I quit again four months ago. This time, I'm trying to do the things that I didn't do last time. No more bumming cigarettes, no more asking for “just one drag.” I am convinced that I can't have even one, or I'll be right back where I was before, puffing away all day and night. I'm exercising, staying away from smokers at work, talking to other smokers on the internet. We keep each other honest. It's the only way for me.

-Paul

Help the Advocate - Power in Positive Thinking



By Yasmin Halim

We as peer advocates are here to help but more importantly to help you help yourself. Ultimately, you and I control our own destiny and when struggling with our respective mental illnesses, it's easy to forget.

I know for myself, the natural inclination is to feel powerless, hopeless, and like a failure. How will I get anywhere in life or relate to other people if I believe that most of the time? A big part, the most difficult part of recovery for me, is combating negative thoughts about myself and replacing them with positive ones. There must be a lot of other people out there who feel like this. I don't think I had much self-esteem before I knew I had a mental illness but after I found out all those years ago, it really nose-dived.

It's amazing how something that sounds so simplistic can be so hard to accomplish but also can make such a big difference. Many times I am moving along in my recovery and I want to make some long overdue changes in my life. The longer I consider it, I start thinking about what could go wrong and eventually get severely depressed and have to start all over again!

If I want to change, I have to have a strong desire and be committed if I want to move past the fear part, which many times ends up not being as bad as I thought it was going to be. I have to believe I can do it. I can't go in half-heartedly. I am sick and tired of being held hostage by my emotions!

So here is my question: “How do you become a positive thinker and make that part of who you are?”

Write in your answers!

To write to Yasmin contact her via email or regular mail at the address:

yhalim@mhanj.org

Ms. Yasmin Halim, c/o UMDNJ-RWJMS, 671 Hoes Lane, Room D337, Piscataway, NJ 08854

FEATURED STORIES

A poem from Wayne

By Wayne Holland

Read the words from the
lips on my face.
Now wherever there's
smoking
Find a different place.
A smoke-free space
Leave the smoke without a
trace

Whether it's smoke
straight up or secondhand
Eventually this could be a
smoke-free land

Everybody is making a
positive choice
Everybody is angry
You can hear their voice
They're making a noise

The tobacco world was big
and strong
But its popular days won't
last long
People will be singing a
song
That tobacco is wrong

Listen to the message I'm
trying to send
Be strong against tobacco
And never bend.
It's the time and day smok-
ing sees its end.



To smoke or not to smoke

By Diane M. Beck

My name is Diane M. Beck and I am a new addition to the CHOICES team as a CTA (consumer tobacco advocate). Although I have never smoked I am battling an addiction. I am a food junkie and have been attending O.A. (Overeaters Anonymous) for several months. In the past year and a half I have lost 65 pounds. This article though is not about me. It is about you and your addiction and how you like me can overcome it. I believe that with Hope all things are possible. My belief in God is what helps me but some people prefer to rely on other sources of inspiration (a Higher Power, meditation, etc.). Recovery from severe mental illness is possible and recovery from tobacco addiction is equally as possible.

Wherever you are sitting right now whether at work, in a day program, at home, or somewhere else recovery is possible.

Perhaps you might think of joining Nicotine Anonymous or using the patch or nicotine gum, or all three. Just know that whatever path you choose we are right there with you. The choice is entirely up to

you, yet we are backing you up all the way.

Perhaps you've spoken with Wayne, Yasmin, Kathy, Martha or myself and you are vacillating or even pondering quitting. Well now may or may not be the time, but there will be a time when you will say you've had it with the addiction. Only you and your decisions will help you break free of the chains that bind you. When you are ready your chances of quitting improve if you use tobacco treatment medication coupled with counseling. So instead of lining the tobacco companies' pockets, if you quit and stick with it, you will be able to line your own pockets. The extra money you save from not smoking can be used for something positive.

Just have faith in yourself that it is possible and act as if you can do it, and it may come true--- to be smoke free and truly be free. Remember the choice is yours.



CHOICES Bulletin Board

Art by Bill Newbold



Are you interested in participating in a research study on smoking or nicotine?

You may be eligible to earn some extra money by participating in one of our research studies. For more information call 732-235-9711.

Help us make our newsletter better !!!

We've come a long way in the last year, but we're always looking for new material. You don't have to be a brilliant author, we'll help. Send us a story, an idea, a poem, a riddle, etc. Send an e-mail to Nancy@njchoices.org or szakodna@umdnj.edu.



William V Newbold 8-28-2006



Meet our New Consumer Advocate: Kathy Murphy

My new position with the CHOICES program is more rewarding than I ever could have imagined. I have worked in the non-profit field for the last seven years, it truly is where my heart lies.

When I heard about this job from a fellow colleague I was very interested, and when I was offered the position I was delighted. I started with the CHOICES program back in August, the beginning of the second grant year. CHOICES has gone from two consumer advocates to four this year. It is so inspiring to be part of a grass roots project in its infancy.

My father died as a result of years of heavy tobacco consumption, along with many other relatives and friends. I smoked for a couple of years but stopped when I became pregnant for my daughter. I feel that by working with the CHOICES program I get to make a difference.

Our intimate CHOICES family is a pleasure to work with, so supportive and encouraging. I have learned so much from our veteran advocates, Yasmin and Wayne. They welcomed me with open arms!

If you're a smoker and you want to learn more about CHOICES and what we're all about, visit our website at www.njchoices.org



c/o Martha Dwyer
 UMDNJ-RWJMS, D-337
 671 Hoes Lane
 Piscataway, NJ 08854
 732-235-4873—dwyermh@umdnj.edu

STAFF
 Jill Williams, MD
 Medical Director & Founder
 Martha Dwyer, MA, LCADC, CTTS
 Program Director
 Marie Verna—MHANJ
 Consumer Tobacco Coordinator
CHOICES Consumer Tobacco Advocates:
 Diane Beck
 Yasmin Halim
 Wayne Holland
 Kathy Murphy

Join our FREE MAILING LIST— Please Print:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

Send this form to: CHOICES c/o Martha Dwyer,
 UMDNJ-RWJMS, D-337, 671 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08854

CHOICES is a partnership between the UMDNJ-RWJMS Division of Addiction Psychiatry, the Mental Health Association in NJ (MHANJ) and the NJ Division of Mental Health Services and is supported by grants from the American Legacy Foundation, the NJ Division of Mental Health Services and the Cancer Institute of NJ. These materials do not necessarily represent the views of the American Legacy Foundation, Foundation staff, or its Board of Directors.

Women & Smoking

If you don't use tobacco products, please share these facts with those you love who do:

- Since 1950, lung cancer deaths among women have increased by more than 600 percent.
- An estimated one in five American women 18 years or older are current cigarette smokers.
- Cigarette smoking kills an estimated 178,000 women in the United States every year.
- Smoking can increase your risk for heart disease, heart attack, stroke, osteoporosis and cancers other than lung cancer.
- Smoking can affect your ability to get pregnant.
- Smoking when you are pregnant can increase your chances of having a premature birth and having a baby with low birth weight.
- Make your home and car smoke free, if you smoke, smoke outside only.



Adapted from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, <http://www.4women.gov/>

CHOICES
 UMDNJ-RWJMS
 671 Hoes Lane, Room D-337
 Piscataway, NJ 08854