

Addiction assignment
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How I quit smoking

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Complimentary website:

http://www.iianthropology.org/psychology_visible_invisible_human_world_smoking.html

Abstract

At my age I do not feel addicted to anything. I tried to complete this assignment against candies and chocolate but did not feel any cravings or psychological confusions. However, in my life I had a big problem – quit cigarettes. So, in this research paper I share my experience with this problem and recall my psychological responses to cravings and relapses until I finally quitted. I try to explain what was the function of smoking in my life, whether there were positive elements in it and what helped me to quit. At the end I compare my experience with what the specialists conclude about the cigarette addition and how my experience correspond to these conclusions.

How I quit smoking

Addition problem framing

At my age I am not addicted towards anything that can be apply and give useful information in this case. Probably the only thing that I really like is chocolate but would not say that I am addicted to it. To complete the assignment I stopped eating candies and chocolate. I did not feel anything special. On the third day I bought a chocolate but it was just because I forgot about the assignment. Then, I continue not to eat candies till today. I did not feel any craving, I did not recall moments of past. I was just fine.

However, I know well what is an addiction, because I smoke more that abt 24 years. I tried to quit with cigarettes so many times when I was in Europe, but unsuccessful. Coming to the US, I continued to smoke but the clean (non-smoking) environment and absence of many places where one can smoke, including the place where I lived made me gradually quit with smoking. This was one of the most wonderful things that happened to me and made me believe that we all depend on the environment.

Below it will be described some of the peculiarities of the smoking addition in way it was experienced and how my behavior gradually changed toward no smoking.

How I quit smoking

I began smoking when was at age of 14. Just did not want to be perfect. I didn't have problems at the elite language school when had studied, was dedicated to school and even began writing research paper to have entered the University with it and not by the so boring regular exams. I learned to smoke even living in the next room to our teacher during an excursion and together with one school girl friend felt almost heroes that we smoke "under the invisible hat" of our teacher. We had no idea that all the smoke went to the teacher's room as we learned next day.

Gradually I became addicted to smoking. It was my entertainment. I did not have a boy friend, so smoking was almost even like dating somebody – fun and relaxing. However, within years and especially when I became an undergraduate student I recognized that smoking was not anymore a habit I wanted in my everydayness. I tried so many times to quit, but even after stopping for a while, the relapse occurred within 2 to 3 days or the most within abt 2 weeks. One of the reasons was that in my native country smoking had been very popular. So, I did not have environment where the people did not smoke. Respectively, I also smoked at home. On the whole, addiction can be seen by the specialist as a chronic disease, that has a tendency towards relapse (Gorski, 1989: 157).

In 1997 I arrived in California where cigarettes were not popular. Not only I could not find Café to smoke, but even in the room I rented smoking was prohibited. It happened once to have a beer in the garden of one restaurant on the Campus, and five minutes after sitting a waiter came and told me that I could not smoke. I was almost shocked since it was outside.

The first months I smoke outside the building where lived. Nobody made me a comment but I neither felt comfortable outside nor felt any entertaining pleasure even having a cup of coffee with me. Then, gradually I began to decrease the quantity of cigarettes I smoke daily and respectively reduce cravings gradually? I don't remember when I stopped smoking but going back to Europe I never smoked anymore expect probably for 3-4 cases, just by a half cigarette. Today I don't feel any willing to smoke.

Some applications

Since I have been sharing the most challenging moment in my life, I will try to response to the requested framing questions feeling like everything was like yesterday.

Why did I smoke? One should be a long-term smoker to understand why the people smoke. And they smoke for different reasons. In my case as I mentioned above, I began smoking as entertainment. This moment was always main motivation – just a cigarette with the morning coffee, or one nice (import) cigarette, or just even not realizing that you smoke one after another cigarette being in a company and discussing “big themes”. You believe the cigarettes help and have a positive effect while in the specialized literature can be read that chain smoking is an addiction and a disorder. So, in most of the cases there was a positive motivation. I smoked less when I had bad mood or life crash. In the last cases actually I thought and wanted to quit cigarettes. This was also my first thought when I fell in love – like beginning a new life. But it did not work more than two-three days, the most 1-2 weeks. I was so popular with my willing to quit cigarettes that once was told a commentary behind my back – “She has such periods”.

What did the cigarettes do for me? Nothing. Just a habit of a single who spent the most of the time along with the books or in companies with smokers. But like a drug they seemed to make me feel like I was with somebody.

What did I do in periods when the cravings had increased? During the numerous attempts to quit, the motivation was one and the same when my body wanted a cigarette – just one. But one or two cigarettes made me back to the habit and I even smoked more.

What was my psychological response? In the longest periods when I did not smoke as a graduate student, I felt almost happy. I remember there was one Café for no smokers in Downtown Sofia and I loved it so much because smoking was prohibited. In early 2000s, after quitting smoking, I hated the first feeling when landed at the European airport after the long fly over the ocean since the cigarettes’ smoke was almost the first thing that greeted me there. And I watched with great interest and relief how gradually year after year the smoke was not as

devastating as before since the ruled had been changed, and in the most airports the cigarettes were allowed only in a specific areas, as well as huge and strong air-conditioners were installed.

What did the specialists say? The specialists explain that smoking is addictive because of the nicotine, which is “a psychoactive drug with stimulant effects on the electrical activity of the brain” (Smoking, Online). According to the same website, it looks I quitted cigarettes in late 30s because was at middle-age and I was not pressed from outside. I belong to the 80% of the smokers who started before 18. However, it is insisted that you can succeed regardless how addicted you can be if you do make up your mind (Smoking, Online.). I disagree that it is universal rule. You need to have a special non-smoking environment in order to succeed.

As by other drug additions (Smoking, Online), the psychosocial factors determine my initial exposure to smoking.

References

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