



Ally Guide:

A guide to help you help them quit

Dear _____

I am giving you this guide because I want you to be my "ally" (to give me support) while I quit smoking. Quitting will be much easier if I have your help.

Support from people like you is an important part of my quitting plan.

When I have set a quit date, I will let you know. I will also tell you when I want other people to know my quit date.

For now, please read this guide. It will help you to help me quit.

Thanks, _____

Someone you care about has just asked you to help them quit smoking. Your support is important and could play a big part in helping them to quit smoking successfully.

This guide is for you. It explains how you can help your friend or family member make a change that will last a lifetime.

Quitting smoking is hard work. But it is the job of the person quitting to do that work, not you. As their ally, it is your job to be understanding, supportive, and caring.

Your friend or family member is in good hands. This program has helped hundreds of thousands of people quit smoking for more than 25 years. But we need your help to be there when we can't.

Thanks for being part of the team!

How You Can Help

For most people, quitting smoking does not happen overnight. There are many steps that a person will take to get ready to quit. The type of support you give may change with each step. Your friend or family member will tell you what kind of help is needed and when it's needed. Try to be there for them when they need you. Be ready to listen and let them tell you what they need.

Remember, it is the person quitting who makes the rules. Try not to offer advice or tell them what you think is the problem. Don't nag them. **Just ask how you can help.**

Ways You Can Help

You can help take their mind off smoking by keeping them busy. Suggest things you can do together. Take a walk, do chores, go to a movie, go shopping, or have dinner in a smoke-free restaurant.

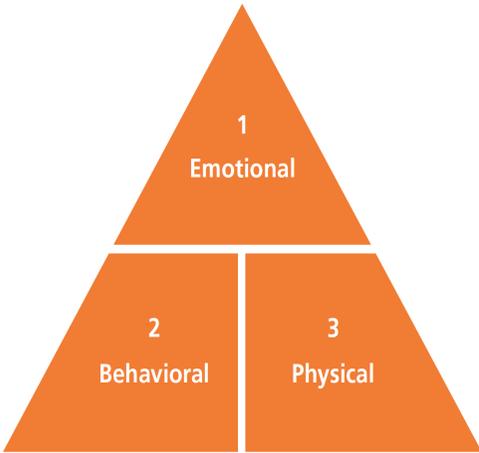
Ask them to think about things that have helped them keep from smoking in the past. Make a list of those things and try to do them often.

In the first two weeks after quitting, help them with things that may cause stress. You might want to run some errands for them, take care of their kids or help them out at work.

Most people smoke because they are addicted to nicotine and cigarettes are part of their daily routine. Nicotine in tobacco smoke is very addictive, while certain feelings and activities trigger urges to smoke. When people quit smoking, they are learning to live without something that their body wants badly and that they are used to having as part of their daily life. Maybe you were once a smoker and remember how hard it was to quit.

Try to be patient. Be ready for your friend or family member to be grumpy or nervous. Don't take their bad mood personally—it is a normal part of quitting and will soon get better. If you are not sure how to help, just ask.

Triangle of Addiction



People who smoke are addicted physically, behaviorally, and emotionally. That's why it can be so hard to quit smoking.

Tell your friend or family member that you are proud of them for trying. Tell them you will support them no matter how long it takes.

You and Tobacco

If you are an ex-smoker:

- Do let the person quitting know how your life has improved since you quit smoking. Your real-life experiences can help them feel inspired and motivated. Just knowing that you quit yourself will mean a lot to them.
- Don't try to push them to quit the same way you quit. Everyone is different, so what was easy for you may not be easy for them. And what was hard for you may not be hard for them.

If you have never smoked:

- Do think of some other big changes you have made in your life like losing weight or facing a big fear. That will help you to know how hard it is to quit smoking.
- Don't try to give advice or nag the person quitting to do things differently. Just listen and ask how you can help.

If you are a current smoker:

- Do smoke only in places that the person quitting can avoid. Try to smoke outside of the house, car, restaurant, or workplace. Keep your cigarettes and lighter out of sight.
- Don't offer them a cigarette, even if you are only joking! Ask your friend or family member what to do if they ask you for a cigarette.

Slips and Relapses

Many people trying to quit may slip or relapse.

A **slip** is when a person has one or two cigarettes after they quit. A **relapse** is when a person begins to smoke again as they did before they quit.

A slip or relapse usually happens because the person quitting was not ready to deal with a certain situation. It does not mean that the person is weak. A slip or relapse usually teaches a person about how they can do things differently next time they are in a similar situation. Your friend or family member is in a program that will help them see what went wrong and get back on track. You can help too:

- Be positive about slips. Slips can be part of the quitting process and help for next time.
- Tell them that you won't judge them or scold them if they slip.

Stay Quit For Life

The first two weeks after quitting smoking can be the hardest. Give your friend or family member lots of praise if they have stayed quit for this long. But the hard work is not over. Living without tobacco is still very new to the person who has quit. The program they have joined will teach them many new skills for staying away from tobacco for life. Your support over the next weeks and months will help too. It might even be the one thing that keeps them on track.

Quitting smoking is a big deal. Tell your friend or family member how proud you are of them!

© 2016 Optum, Inc. All rights reserved. Optum is a registered trademark of Optum, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

300-0006-0316