

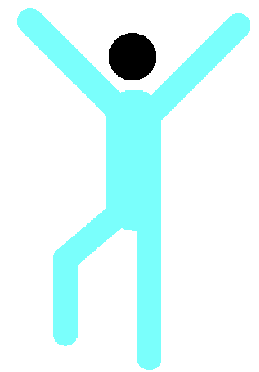
Smoking and Stress

What Smokers Say About Smoking and Stress

- ◆ About 40% of smokers say smoking helps them deal with stress
- ◆ Women tend to give this reason more than men
- ◆ Younger smokers give this reason more than older smokers

The Facts!

- Fact 1:** Smokers report higher levels of stress than people who have never smoked
- Fact 2:** When smokers stop, after about a week they say their levels of stress go *down* not up!
- Fact 3:** If you start smoking again, your stress levels go back up again
- Fact 4:** If you put people who don't normally smoke in a stressful situation and give them nicotine, their stress levels go *up*, not down!
- Fact 5:** Drugs that reduce anxiety do not help smokers to stop



It seems smoking is actually causing stress, not helping you with it. So why are so many smokers convinced that smoking is helping them cope?

More Facts!

We know that after a couple of hours of not smoking, our brain starts to miss its nicotine fix. You get edgy, restless and start to feel a bit down. Your brain has got used to nicotine and is now experiencing withdrawal symptoms because your nicotine levels are falling. You then have a cigarette and 'aaaaah' – blessed relief! So you think that smoking has helped with stress, when all it has done is to restore you to where you would have been if you had not smoked.

Smoking is merely tricked you into thinking it's helping you with stress and stressful situations!

Turn over...

Dealing with Stress

There are plenty of other ways to tackle stress that actually do work. You could try:

- ◆ Going into another room
- ◆ Going outside
- ◆ Taking some deep breath
- ◆ Counting to 10
- ◆ Going for a walk
- ◆ Having a relaxing bath
- ◆ Phone a friend
- ◆ Listen to a relaxing CD



I bet you can add some more to this list—what do you think will work for you?

Adapted from The SmokeFree Formula by Professor Robert West, Orion Books 2014. For more information visit www.smokefreeformula.com

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