An Experiential Approach to Smoking Cessation

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Collaborations 2009
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Smoking is Personal!

- Prenatal exposure to nicotine
- Family history

- First cigarette @ age 11
- Addiction developed due to
  - Social factors
  - Friend’s mom bought me cigarettes

- Difficulty quitting
  - Socioeconomic Identity!
  - No health coverage of treatment
The model for my quit attempt
• Theories of Reasoned Action/Planned Behavior
Focus more on Norms and Perceived Behavioral Control

- **Attitudes**
  - Fear of extreme or permanent cognitive deficits

- **Social Norms**
  - Posed problems for me in the past

- **Self-efficacy/ Perceived Behavioral Control**
  - Failure to quit → decreased motivation
  - Therefore, could it be that
    - When Self-efficacy ↑
    - Cognitive Dissonance ↓?
Female smokers using active, experiential quit approach have highest quit rates and motivation to quit (Simmons & Brandon, 2007)

- Writing in smoking journal - active
- Starting quit support group - active

Conditioning and methods focusing on social norms and self-esteem more effective than drug therapy (Viswesvaran & Schmidt)

- Some mindfulness techniques = conditioning
- Quit support group = social norms
- Journal writing can ↑ self-esteem
Previous Work cont.

- **Exercise decreases symptoms of withdrawal** (Daniel, Cropley, Ussher, & West, 2003)
  - Self-paced walking and swimming
  - May help w/ lack of energy, weight gain

- **Smoking related to poorer auditory attention performance** (Jacobsen, Picciotto, Heath, et al, 2007)
  - Cognitive affirmations
I hypothesize that by using experiential strategies, I could reach short and long term goals by reducing the amount of cigarettes I smoke by 1 cigarette every 3 days.

- **Short Term Goal**
  - cut down on smoking
  - reduce withdrawal symptoms

- **Long Term Goal**
  - eventually quit smoking cigarettes completely
Experiential Strategies Used

- Social support
  - Asked friends and family to help
  - Quit support group

- Smoking journal and IQ builders
  - Daily in the AM

- Taking vitamins
  - Daily in the AM

- Exercise
  - Every other day

- Cognitive affirmations (PRN)
- Mindfulness techniques (PRN)
Intervention Description

Three stages, each one week

- **Observation period**
  - Research smoking cessation theory/methods
  - Start smoking journal w/out cutting down

- **Intervention period**
  - Reduced cig’s by 1 every 3 days, starting at the mean # of cigarettes smoked during observation period

- **A post-intervention period**
  - Continue intervention and reflect so far on progress and strategies being used
Mental Interventions

- IQ builders, crossword puzzles, smoking journal, cognitive affirmations, conditioning, mindfulness techniques

Physical Interventions

- Exercising, breathing exercises, and taking vitamins

... because nicotine addiction is both physical and mental!
### Quantitative Data

#### Number of Cigarettes Smoked Daily

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Observation Period</th>
<th>Intervention Period</th>
<th>Post-Interven. Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>13 (3)</td>
<td>10 (3.62)</td>
<td>14 (3.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantitative Data

- Success... at least at first!
  - Cut down by 5 cigarettes a day instead of 3

- Rebound effect during post-intervention
  - Smoked more during this period than initially!
  - Possibly due to time confound

- Variability ↑ over time!
Nicotine Withdrawal Rebound Effect!
Qualitative Data

- Most noticeable symptoms experienced
  - Affective
  - Cognitive
  - Physical

- Impossible to know if I was experiencing withdrawal symptoms or reacting normally
Contributions to initial strong effect and then rebound effect

- **Timing**

- Pace! Cut down too fast
  - more withdrawal symptoms
  - feeling overwhelmed
  - backlash effect

- Didn’t prepare prior to quit date
Problems With the Intervention

❑ Some days easier than others
  • Variability and outliers
    ➢ Deviation from the quit plan
      ➢ seemed positive at first
    ➢ Then, led to
      ➢ Confusion
      ➢ Self-efficacy and personal control ↓
      ➢ Withdrawal symptoms ↑

❑ Hard to come up with specific ways to attack attitudes, social norms, and self-efficacy
Problems Cont.

- **Cognitive Affirmations**
  - Seemed cancelled out by withdrawal symptoms affecting mood and cognition

- **Smoking journal**
  - Helped but itself frustrating

- **Social Norm intervention to just stay away from people who smoke**
  - Catch 22

- **Too many interventions**
  - Confusing, time consuming, overwhelming
Plans to Improve Intervention

- **Longer** Observation Period
  - More accurate
  - Buy all needed supplies beforehand
  - Plan it on usual, busy week
  - Start vitamin/exercise regimes and support group 2 weeks prior to quitting

- Increase amount of days by which I cut down by one cigarette *(slower pace)*
  - Every 5 days instead of 3 OR once a week

- Create **specific**, situational ways to focus on attitudes and social norms

- Overall, a great learning experience!


Rude Awakening Ashtray
The real reason dinosaurs became extinct