

So you want to quit smoking! Or do you?

by Larry Garrett CH

“Of course” you say you want to, but if you dig deep inside, you will find a part of you equal to your motivation to quit or greater that does not want to quit smoking. Is it not a reality that we are in control and we can do what we want in most areas of life? Of course! Then why is it that you still haven't quit smoking. There lies the power of hypnosis. Because in your unconscious or subconscious mind you really don't want to quit smoking! So you really are in control, you are just choosing on another level of consciousness to not quit yet. When a thought or habit of contradiction to your conscious mind exists in your subconscious or emotional mind it overrides all motivation toward success in your rational or conscious mind. When emotions and logic are in conflict, emotions will always win.

You may say to yourself, “I know I want to quit smoking” and at the same time, you hear a voice inside of you that says, “But I really feel like smoking!” So a great phrase is, “what we know is not always what we feel, but what we feel is what runs our life.” This statement is so true in many areas of life. We often hear a statement such as, I know I am ok, but feel inadequate. I know I look good, but feel unattractive, I know I have enough money, but feel as though I don't!” These types of statements are the reasons why we are not always successful when there is a contradiction in our subconscious mind. The messages in our subconscious mind are like the programs in our computer's hard drive. They have been written or imbedded to run our bio-computer. What we see on the screen is not always what will be written in our memory. The conscious mind is the screen and the unconscious is our hard drive.

The hard drive was written many years ago when we began to smoke. It was written as though cigarettes were good. They made us feel confident. They helped us deal with issues of life and maybe even made us appear more attractive. The subconscious mind uses old messages to run life today. Observe when you hear a song play on the radio that was popular when you were 16 and with your first love. Immediately you will begin to recall all the memories of that time. Not only will you think of that time, but you will begin to actually feel the emotions of that moment. You may recall what you were wearing, who you were with and what the weather was like on that day. You may even recall the last cigarette commercial on TV which was Dec. 31st, 1970. Time to the subconscious mind stands still.

This is called an anchor. It implies a memory with a feeling. Another example of an anchor is of smelling an odor that was important to you at a younger time in life. It could be a perfume or the smell of your mother making dinner when you were younger or your grandmother baking cookies for you. Immediately you will be there as though it were yesterday. I defy you to not recall those memories when that stimulus exists. It is nearly impossible. The song plays and your mind goes to that time without any thought. That is exactly what is occurring when you think of a cigarette. A traffic jam, you light up, after a meal you light up, a moment of stress you light up, celebrate and a cigarette is desired! These and other stimuli will bring the memory back of a time when a cigarette was important at an earlier time in your life. I defy you to not think of a cigarette when this stimulus occurs.

The power of a memory of this type is beyond our conscious thinking. A conscious thought is when you think of not smoking and the unconscious thought then does just the opposite. If I suggest to you to not think of an elephant, what is it that you think of? Most likely an elephant! This is called “The law of reverse effect!” It implies, the harder you try the be hinder you get. This is also what occurs when you attempt to quit smoking. All that you could think of is a cigarette. The more important it is to

not, the more your mind will bring it to the surface. If I suggest that it is worth \$50,000 to not think of an elephant, the need to do the opposite becomes even greater. If you are told that you will lose your position of employment if you don't quit smoking or that your health is impaired, the need to smoke becomes even greater.

So what are we to do if we are out of control to such a large degree? If the more you attempt to quit, the more you crave cigarettes how can you possibly quit? There is an answer to this question and it is quite easy. Learn to reach the inner part of your mind where the habit exists, not the outer part that has no power. I have given some great examples of how powerful your unconscious mind can be. It has been said that mind could make or break us. If we view the mind as a musical instrument, then with enough practice we can learn to control it as we would a fine instrument. We can learn to redirect our mind to a better place in life. We can teach our inner mind to improve our well being rather than destroy it by smoking or taking on other habits of life that are not positive to us. Even health can be improved by learning to communicate to our inner mind. Have you ever wondered where disease comes from? It comes from absence of ease. When we are not at ease, we are in dis-ease!

Now here comes the answer to all of your questions. By learning to relax internally we can communicate a new message to our subconscious mind. Not just take it easy and relax, but truly learn to go inside of our inner mind as we quiet the outer mind and then and only then will we be able to reach the habits of life at their core and remove or redirect them. This can be done in many ways. Some may choose prayer or meditation or biofeedback or self hypnosis. All of these have a way of reaching the subconscious mind. The skill is; how we use these techniques. Much like the instrument, anyone can learn to play a song on the piano. However, it will take practice and skill to play it well. After all, it is your mind. You can learn to redirect it better than anyone else. It is your mind and you have the control.

If we pray hard enough will our inner mind hear us? Most likely it will and we will accomplish our goal. If we use self hypnosis to quiet the outer which seems to always be thinking of many thoughts simultaneously we can communicate to the inner mind directly. Without a doubt this is possible. Self hypnosis is to me the most powerful way to reach the subconscious mind. It is like a direct link to rewriting the messages that are no longer appropriate to our life. With self hypnosis you can actually communicate and change a habit quickly. This doesn't imply that the habit will never come back, but self-hypnosis can give us that relief to begin to use our rational mind to continue the success. The reason for this success is that you are not resisting your own motivation and goals by communicating to the inner mind. As I explained earlier, you often will think of a goal and contradict that goal as you are telling yourself. You may tell yourself that you want to quit smoking and at the same moment tell yourself that you doubt if you can. Or that if you quit, you will most likely gain weight so why bother. Maybe you tell yourself that you have tried many times and always go back or fail, so it is useless. Each time you attempt to change that old message, you seem to have a reason of why it won't work. I even theorize that the old message gains strength as you continue to tell yourself to quit. We have been taught that by thinking positive we can accomplish anything. The challenge is that the positive thought is contradictory to subconscious conditioning. Even though we may tell ourselves many times to quit smoking the words often go to deaf ears. Maybe a family member or friend tells you that you should quit smoking and you become irritated that they made that statement even though you know they are accurate. You may even have an urge as they make the statement.

By being hypnotized and then learning self-hypnosis to reinforce the hypnosis, you can immediately remove a habit such as smoking. I personally believe that hypnosis is not designed to quit smoking. That is up to you to quit. I feel that hypnosis is excellent to remove the cravings, the habit, and the associations of smoking. If you can squelch those cravings, then with you original conscious motivation, you will be successful in removing the cigarette from your life. The decision is up to you if you want to quit smoking consciously.

Let's assume that everything I have told you of the success in smoking cessation is available to you with hypnosis. Let's assume, it will be easy, you won't substitute and you won't have severe withdrawals. Then would you be motivated to quit? This is what is needed for success. You consciously choose to quit if the urges are removed. That is our deal. You use hypnosis to assist with the challenges that you may have experienced in the past and the hypnosis will have you gliding to success without the usual difficulties. There is no doubt of the success of hypnosis removing the urges, as hypnosis neutralizes the inner conditioning or programming that used to exist. It does this by quieting the outer mind from thoughts and then the inner mind relaxes and allows new programming. It is much like your computer telling you to close all programs before a new one can be installed. Quiet your outer mind and then you can reprogram your inner mind. It is simple! There are a few guidelines to follow that will allow this process to exist. Your motivation to quit is imperative. There is an old phrase in hypnosis that says, "You can't hypnotize someone to do something they don't want to do!" The other side of that statement is, "The more they want to do it, the stronger the hypnosis!" I truly believe that this statement offers a variable that may say, "The more you want to quit, the greater the success and obviously, the lower the motivation, the less success you may expect!" The next issue is your ability to follow instructions. To be hypnotized, you need to put aside all that you have ever heard of hypnosis. Even if you have been hypnotized before without success, it has absolutely nothing to do with your expected success. Hypnosis has so many variables that will allow success or dis-allow success. Hypnosis is a very subjective experience. Everyone may explain it differently. Every hypnotist will choose their own method. None are right or wrong, but like art, it is what they may choose. They may be the best hypnotist in the country and a friend told you to go to them. However if you are not comfortable with their style, or presence, you may not do as well as your friend. So be positive and find another hypnotist that meets your expectations. I have heard too many times, "I have tried hypnosis and it just doesn't work for me!" I believe that anyone can learn to be successful with hypnosis as anyone can learn to play a musical instrument. I recall when I was younger attempting to learn to play an instrument. I was about 10 and maybe not the best student. The instructor scolded me continually and I would get nervous and do worse. I often wonder if I would have had a gentle instructor if I would have learned to play. Next, you must have an expectation that is positive. This means to remove from your mind any logic or criticism that would hold back your success. Often people using hypnosis attempt to intellectualize or criticize something they have no knowledge of. I have heard phrases such as, "I don't think I can be hypnotized or I don't think this is going to work for me!" How can you doubt or criticize something you have absolutely no knowledge of. In conclusion, prepare yourself to be a non-smoker. Imagine what it would be like to not crave a cigarette. Learn to experience what is occurring within your mind related to a cigarette. I trust that if you are ready to quit smoking the hypnosis will do the rest. You need only to think of one goal. What is it that goal you would like to experience after you have been hypnotized to not need to smoke? At first this may sound like a trick question. It isn't! I might bring to your attention the fact that you know what it feels like to crave a cigarette. What I am asking you is to think of what it would feel like to not crave a cigarette. When you have that answer, you will be successful.

I feel that hypnosis doesn't do anything except remove the need to smoke. You will need to remove your want to smoke!

Then after you have been hypnotized, you will need to practice the self hypnosis every day for a couple of weeks. I usually suggest from 2 to 4 weeks. The more important cigarettes were to you, the longer you will need to practice self hypnosis or maybe be hypnotized again. Some smokers may require up to 3 sessions for success. Self-hypnosis is your eraser of the pencil. It is erasing your urges and habits of smoking. The deeper it is imbedded, the more erasing you will need to do. You can do self hypnosis any time from early in the morning to just before bed. I usually suggest initiating self-hypnosis before bed. Self-hypnosis is much like a discipline. Many of us don't like disciplines, rituals or practice times. We cringe at the idea that we have to do something regularly. By using self-hypnosis at night as you lay down to go to sleep it becomes more pleasurable. Self-hypnosis requires a quiet time. Usually lying down is important and a period of time to

accomplish a level of relaxation that lies in our consciousness just before sleep and hold it for a few moments. All of these experiences exist with little or no difficulty just before sleep.

Lie back and close your eyes. Within your mind, create a feeling as though you have removed all desire to smoke. This is called "Intent!" Intent is that magical energy that seems to say, "You have done it!" The word intent is used often in our language to imply we have done it. Intent to purchase or intent to kill are binding legal statements that say you have in your mind done it. Create intent as you close your eyes that you no longer smoke. This is the power of your mind. Feeling as though! Take a few deep breaths resembling inhaling. Inhaling has been the critical part of your smoking for many years. Have you ever attempted to smoke without inhaling? I assume a person takes about ten drags on each cigarette. If you smoke a pack a day, that is about 200 times a day you inhale. Any habit that you reproduce 200 times a day will have great power. By beginning your self hypnosis with a few deep breaths, you will experience the relaxation that cigarettes may have given you in the past with a new association of not smoking. This will be the ability of creating your own anchor or emotional memory of removing the need to smoke. It is the first step to rewriting your hard drive. After taking a few deep breaths, slowly begin to relax your body from your feet to your head. Maybe you are more comfortable from your head to your feet. Either technique will bring you into the same experience that you had when you were hypnotized. This is the reason it is called self hypnosis. You are doing hypnosis to yourself. This is much like practicing the musical instrument every day. Without the practice, you will soon forget the experience of the hypnosis as you would forget the experience of the music lesson. Most likely you will fall asleep before you are finished. I feel that this is excellent to fall asleep. I have a good example of why falling asleep is excellent for success in smoking cessation.

The experience you have as you fall asleep will affect the dreams you have. The dreams affect the way you feel when you awaken and the experience you have when you awaken will affect your day. You may have noticed in the past if you fell asleep worried about something it was difficult to relax and fall asleep. When you woke in the morning you were most likely tired. Your day following was most likely stressed. Then imagine falling asleep with your mind removed from the idea of smoking. You will awaken without the thought of a cigarette. I have a wonderful statement for you. "I promise you success, if you promise to follow the instructions!"