

YARNING ABOUT QUITTING

Smoking triggers and strategies information and exercise

What are smoking triggers?

Apart from physical dependence, behavioural rituals closely associated with smoking provide opportunities for secondary conditioning. These rituals become associated with smoking and lead to craving. Examples might be: having a coffee and a cigarette, driving, drinking alcohol, watching TV, talking on the phone, or running into particular friends who you always smoke with.

We call these **'pairings'** and the person comes to believe that they won't be able to do these activities without smoking or at least craving a smoke. The way for the person to break the 'habit' of smoking is to work on breaking these pairings, one at a time, *usually in the weeks before they give up.*

Strategies to manage smoking triggers

Help your client to problem-solve and figure out at least two strategies for every trigger. Examples are:

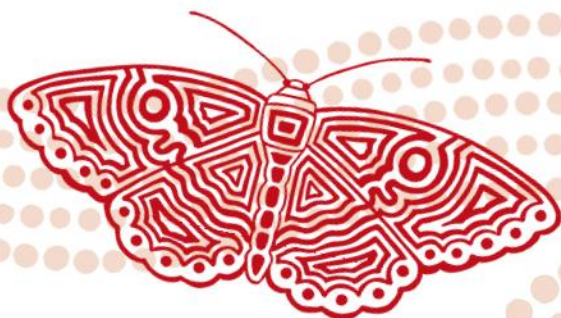
Coffee: A couple of weeks before a quit attempt, encourage the person to have a

cigarette then wait 15 minutes before they have a coffee - always in that order. If they do it the other way around they are more likely to get a

bit too 'flexible' with the 15 minutes and make it 10 minutes and then it won't work as well. If they do this for two weeks, the association between coffee and smoking will be diminished.

Driving: Suggest to the person that they put the cigarettes and lighter in the boot of the car and tell them if they want a cigarette they have to stop, get out and smoke the cigarette by the side of the road, return them to the boot and continue their journey.

After dinner: Ask them to still keep cigarettes in the boot of the car (or in an outside laundry if they don't have a car) and they have to make a conscious decision to go and get them if they want to smoke. A small amount of glucose in the form of one jellybean has also been found to interrupt the surge and drop in insulin, which contributes to a craving after eating.



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Triggers and Strategies exercise

If you have time during your *Yarning about Quitting* training workshop, you can complete the following exercise with participants:

- Ask participants to work in small groups (e.g. 4-6 people at each table).
- Allot two to three “triggers” to each group and ask them to write down at least **two behavioural** strategies for every trigger.
- Then go around the room asking someone from each group to read out their strategies.
- You can use the template below, which includes common triggers to choose from.
- Participants can also take this template away to use with clients.

| Trigger | Strategies |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Drinking coffee, cola, etc. | |
| Alcohol | |
| Driving | |
| Watching TV, sport | |
| First thing in the morning | |
| As a reward after activities | |
| Running into friends who smoke | |
| Being on the phone | |
| After meals | |

