

Making the Decision to Quit

According to a survey of Oregon community college students, 59% of students who smoke said they tried to quit in the past year. Students need support from as many people as possible to help them kick the habit.

Researchers have developed a way of thinking about the stages people may go through in the quitting process. This is called the "Stages of Change model." This model is based on the concept that not all people are at the same point of readiness to quit. Here's an overview of the stages people may go through mentally while wrestling with tobacco use and the desire to quit:

Stages of Change

Pre-Contemplator. This is the smoker who is not even thinking about quitting right now or not ready to quit. Most smokers are "in denial" and may not see that the advice applies to them personally.

Contemplator. This is the smoker who is actively thinking about quitting but is not quite ready to make a serious attempt yet. This person may say, "Yes, I'm ready to quit, but the stress of finals is too much, or I don't want to gain weight, or I'm not sure if I can do it."

Preparation. Smokers in the preparation stage seriously intend to quit in the next month and often have tried to quit in the past 12 months. They usually have developed a plan to quit.

Action. In this stage, the smoker has taken action to quit and is in the first 6 months of being smoke-free. Any action taken by a person should be praised because it demonstrates the commitment they have made to a lifestyle change.

Maintenance. This is the period of 6 months to five years after quitting when the new non-smoker is actively engaged in taking steps to avoid smoking again. This usually includes incorporating other healthy behaviors into one's life.

Relapse. A person may go through these stages of change many times before cessation occurs

Source: http://www.tobaccofreeu.org/cessation/preparing_to_quit.asp (The BACCHUS Network)

For free and friendly help to quit smoking or chewing – whether you're ready to quit or just starting to think about it – call the [Oregon Tobacco Quit Line](#):

- **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)**
- Español: **1-877-2NO-FUME (1-877-266-3863)**
- **TTY: 1-877-777-6534**

The Quit Line is open seven days a week, 5:00 AM to 12:00 midnight.