

How super stress-busters deal with stress.

In studies of people in high-stress situations researchers have found four common traits. Can you cultivate one or more of these traits to help ease your quit?



TRAIT ONE **Quick to take responsibility for handling the problems that come along**

COPING TIP **Use nervous energy to TAKE ACTION!**

Try to channel your quitting anxiety into constructive, beneficial activities. Read about life after smoking from other quitters. Sign up for group counseling. Learn more about the nature of smoking addiction. Some researchers believe that meeting challenges head on – whether competing in sports or quitting smoking -- produces “good stress” which gives us a rush or a “high” feeling. Try to make stress work for you.

TRAIT TWO **Confident of their ability to deal with life’s challenges**

COPING TIP **Don’t think about what you might feel—just do it!**

Some researchers contend the most effective way to reduce a fear and build confidence is to repeatedly face the scary situation. If you’re afraid of swimming, go swimming every day. If you’re afraid of quitting, try to stop smoking for 4 to 8 hours. You’ll see for yourself that the imagined awful consequences don’t actually occur.

TRAIT THREE **Actually able to assess the situation accurately, get help as needed, and devise a good plan, after considering many alternative approaches**

COPING TIP **Search for your stress triggers**

Looking for the root causes of stress in your life is time well spent. Consider making up a ratings scale for your anxiety. Whenever the stress increases, record what’s happening in your journal. Where are you? What are you doing? Who are you with? Try to figure out the causes. Remember some reactions to stress may be inherited. Also, chemicals and physiological conditions, like poor sleep, diet, premenstrual changes, and low blood sugar cause emotions too.

TRAIT FOUR **Effective in carrying out a plan, learning and growing with each problem so they can face the future with optimism**

COPING TIP **Identify irrational thinking**

We all know smoking is harmful, yet we still smoke. That’s because we smoke for emotional reasons. Once we identify our irrational thinking, we can begin to think logically about quitting. You might think: “It would be awful if I had a bad day at work and couldn’t smoke.” But not being able to smoke is just a temporary disappointment. Cravings don’t usually last more than 5 minutes. But it’s times like these when irrational thinking leads to self-doubt, shame, depression, anger and eventually stress. Ask yourself: “What effect will these cravings have on my life a year or more after I quit?” Happily, the answer is probably “not much!”