



**Yukon**  
Health and Social Services

**Quitpack News is published bi-monthly by:**

Health Promotion Unit  
Government of Yukon  
305 Jarvis St.  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 2H3  
Tel: ( 867) 667-8392  
Fax: (867) 456-6502  
Toll Free:  
1-866-221-8393  
Email:



# QuitPack News

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Hi Folks! All good things eventually come to an end, and this goes for the regular production of the QuitPack News. Over the past 4 years, we have provided you with information we thought you may find helpful in your quest to become and stay smoke-free. After 38 newsletters, we have run out of material/topics, and will now start resending the issues of the previously published newsletters in updated and overhauled versions. Every once in a while, we may throw in a special issue when there is new information about becoming smoke-free (we are certain that this will happen sooner or later).

We feel that the newsletters, even the old ones, will continue to provide you with support and remind you of certain things you may have forgotten over the years. However, **if you do not wish to receive any future newsletters and want to be removed from the mailing list for the QuitPack News, please send us an e-mail or call us to let us know.**

It has been fun, and we wish you continued good luck with becoming and staying smoke-free.

*Your Health Promotion Team*

## Mind over Matter: How Mindfulness Can Help You Become Smoke-free



Mindfulness practice has been shown to decrease stress, which often is a trigger for tobacco use. It is also thought to be effective in managing nicotine cravings, withdrawal symptoms and emotional distress that often are associated with becoming smoke-free.

Mindfulness trains our minds to stay focused in the present moment. Through mindfulness practice, we learn to step back and to be more present and focused in our day-to-day lives. Mindfulness teaches us to focus our attention one specific thing rather than get caught in what is happening around us. It brings calmness to our lives. Mindfulness teaches us how to take control of our attention and direct it to where we want it to focus.

Mindfulness can assist you in dealing with slips and help prevent relapses. Slips or a relapse are the result of a reactivation of a pattern of thinking that often happens without even being aware of it. The mind is doing its own thing; it's not your conscious decision or choice (that's what comes next!). To help prevent slips or a relapse, you may want to mentally shift gears and take control of what you attend to and how you attend to it.

Noticing something doesn't mean you have to act on it. When it comes to cravings, mindfulness means that you are aware of the craving, you notice it, but you don't have to "deal" with it. You notice it and think about how to approach it skillfully by saying "I am having a craving; I will get through it."

At first, mindfulness may seem very difficult as our attention tends to wander off and our minds become filled with other thoughts. Remember, this is normal.

In this edition of the newsletter, we will provide you with one mindfulness script that can assist you with decreasing stress and one that can assist you with handling urges to smoke.

## Mindful Eating



Substituting some part of the cigarette can be helpful in curbing urges. Paying attention to the taste of a candy or piece of gum is one way to help curb urges by substituting the flavour of the cigarette with the flavour of candy (or any other food).

You move the mind from focussing on the thought – the craving for a cigarette – to something else – the taste of the candy. The idea is that then you will be mindful of the candy and unmindful of the craving.

1. Sit comfortably in your chair... uncross your legs and have your feet flat on the floor... Allow yourself to be completely supported by the chair... Sit with your spine straight but not rigid...
2. Take a candy from the bag.
3. Settle into a comfortable sitting position in the chair... Sit away from the back of the chair, so that your spine is self supporting...
4. Unwrap the candy...
5. Now bring your awareness to the colour... shape... smell... and visual texture of the candy... and become aware of the sensations when using your senses as you explore the candy...
6. Now put the candy in your mouth and focus your awareness on the sensations of taste... and texture as the candy dissolves in your mouth... As best as you can, follow with your awareness the changing physical sensations as the candy dissolves...
7. If your mind wanders away from the focus on the candy, bring it back to the taste of the candy...
8. Continue exploring the sensations of the candy in your mouth as it dissolves... And any after taste when it is gone...
9. Remind yourself from time to time that the intention is simply to be aware of your experience in each moment while you are eating the candy... as best as you can... using your focus on the candy as an anchor to gently reconnect with the here and now each time you notice that your mind has wandered and is no longer with the candy...

### Music that Relaxes

<http://www.solitudes.com/Default.aspx?sid=613560c5-f2a7-4a9e-acbe-3a0a8fddff45>

<http://www.naturesounds.ca/relaxation-music.htm>

## Mindfulness of Music



In the following exercise, we invite you to focus your attention on music. Pick some music that you find relaxing. It is preferable that the

music does not have any lyrics to make it easier for you to focus on the task.

1. To begin, sit comfortably in your chair... Uncross your legs and have your feet flat on the floor... Allow your weight to be completely supported by the chair... and your head to rest comfortably on your neck and shoulders... Sit with your spine straight but not rigid... Put your arms in a relaxed position on your lap or resting on your chair... At first, you may want to close your eyes, especially if this helps you to focus and block out distraction... Later on, you may want to try and practice with your eyes open so you remain awake and alert...
2. Start music and let it play softly in the background.
3. Once you are comfortable, bring your attention to this CD... Listen to the music... bring your full attention to the act of just listening... If your attention wanders and other thoughts move in, simply notice that your mind has wandered and bring yourself back to just listening to the music...
4. At first, do not push yourself to be mindful for the entire length of the piece of music... Begin by practising for a few minutes and gradually work up to the full duration...
5. Remember that it is normal for your mind to wander, and you may need to bring your attention back several times within a very short period... Have patience and keep practising...