

I am 43 years old and I have recently given up smoking.

At the age of 9 years I started smoking to be like my older sister. I have smoked daily since that age and was smoking 30 - 40 a day before I quit.

The addiction to Nicotine was stronger than the words of the medical profession telling me I had to stop because of my health; I never listened and ended up having heart surgery.

My addiction ruled my life; I couldn't walk up a hill without getting breathless. I was inactive yet I still smoked. My daughter who is 3 years old has always moaned about the smell of the smoke but I never listened to her, I needed my Nicotine intake. I shut my daughter away by telling her if she didn't like the smell to play in her bedroom, which hurts me now because she got withdrawn and even if I tried to call her out of her bedroom she didn't want to come out, she got used to playing in her bedroom and it was my fault.

I made the decision to quit for my health and my daughter, now I can chase her up a hill and play with her without getting breathless, and she's so much happier now running freely round the house and she cuddles and kisses me so much more now.

Because of my addiction I made my daughter suffer, she never had a choice but I did so I quit and we are both smoke free.

It was hard work but Nicotine replacement therapy got me through it.

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I started smoking when I was 12 years old; I started smoking because all the girls were smoking at school, I followed suit as you do. All through my teenage years and into adulthood I was smoking. I didn't even think of the damage I was doing to myself.

Even through my first pregnancy I was still smoking, once again not realising the damage I was doing not only to myself but also to my baby, and I continued to smoke during my second pregnancy - nothing to be proud of.

Eventually the time came when I decided to give up smoking - not only for my health but also for my children's health. I tried to give up last year but unfortunately I started smoking again. I then started a programme at the North Downham Training Project and so far it has worked.

Since giving up for the second time I've noticed that my daughter and my baby's health has been a lot better and that my baby isn't coughing any more.

If I can do it anyone can. I am now a non-smoker.