365 days without smoking

Pre Intro

Hey guys, just wanted to let you know that all the content that follows is pretty much based on my own observations so you might not agree on everything. That’s totally FINE. My initial goal was to use this diary as a personal motivation to stop smoking. On the bottom of every page, I have left some space for you to jot down YOUR thoughts & share YOUR comments. Use this space to tell your story, we are sometimes scared to put down in words our feelings about things, so this space is dedicated to all those hidden thoughts that you kept tucked in until now ☺

Intro

We all go through stages in life. Different people go through different stages at different times. I believe that each person has a unique life cycle but I insist on saying that it is not predefined, you can impact how you wish to see your future self in 10 years’ time. The quarter of a century landmark hit me hard. As we were creeping into 2020, I realized that my smoking stage was coming to an end. I just had this bizarre feeling inside me. Have you ever woken up one morning and been like, I’m too old for this shit? Well, I had this moment with smoking late December 2019.

Before that point, I figured that I had always maintained a somewhat healthy relationship with smoking. That it was just going to be a phase through which I needed to go. But that’s the trap. You see, defining when the phase starts is easy. Your social environment takes the upper hand. Your circle of friends, the beginning of boozing or just out of curiosity, the list of reasons to start smoking is endless. You put all of these factors together and EURRREAKA smoking becomes cool. It becomes a norm. It becomes a part of your routine. It becomes a habit. Now this is when you should become alert. The siren bells should already be banging in the back of your head. But they don’t, because you are living the best life that you have ever had, you are just gliding on the wave.

Because the thing is, defining a habit is tricky. Most people will say it’s something you do on a regular basis. But what defines a regular basis? What frequency of an action makes this action a habit? I ask this question because to feel good about myself when I started smoking, I did what anybody else who has started smoking has done, and that is: compare myself to other smokers. I would still consider myself for the first years (16 – 18 years old) as a “non smoker”, then as an “occasional smoker on a big night out” , then as a “right moment smoker” (smoking when there is an optimal setting , this could be in a park with a bottle of wine, at an outdoors concert or during a friendly get together) , then gradually , you start to feel the need for nicotine while you are drinking your morning coffee & then before you know it you are smoking everyday. And still at this point you deny that you are a smoker. It’s only when you start to seize every tiny occasion to smoke one, whether it may be at a train station or waiting for somebody in a street, that it starts to hit you. You are a smoker. You have an addiction. But even then, I didn’t really panic. Because, it was still part of the phase. It only struck me that this was a stupid idea when I became aware that the phase had no more level. No more added value. The next step was just going to be spending more money on cigarettes, feeling more & more guilty about smoking and hating my stinky self for killing myself a little faster.

So, here I am. Finally, I can break the spell. It won’t be: New Year. Same Bullshit. This time it’s gonna be New Year. New Me. And I mean it!

So, take a good look at yourself & think of who you are & who you want to be in let’s say just in 1 years time. No point setting the bar too high & looking too far out. We can do this right now. We are the hero of our own lives. This is pretty cringy, but I thought it should make the cut of this book. Because, when you realize that you have the power to make the necessary changes to become that better version of yourself, daaamn life just gonna get so much sweeter. Trust me, or at least trust the quote. Anyways, enough motivational blabla for now. Let’s get on with the challenge. Because at the time of writing this part, it’s exactly 4:03 am, 30th December & I couldn’t sleep because I went raving the night before until way to late & my body is still a little bit confused & unstable. The point being, I had this idealistic thought of starting this book on the 1st January, but my head was just buzzing right now & lately, whenever I can’t sleep, I feel that rather than combatting the urge to sleep, I have to make this thought fade away, either by putting it on paper, or recording a vocal message (depending on what the thought was). So here I am, Cyrilou for les intimes, starting my very first book of thoughts about smoking. Not having a flying clue on what the outcome is going to look like.

Every day, I will write down something that I hope can inspire at least one of you kind smokey souls out there to stop smoking for good or give you that 1st mini push that can propel yourself into a change of mindset. Cause you’ll need a change of mindset before having the ability to change a habit., moving on to the next chapter, talk to a friend of yours about a bad habit you have, that has taken an unnecessary spotlight role in your life & tell him or her why you are ready for change. Momentum is built on support, don’t forget this & their wise words could be of great help! Before Don’t give them dates of when you want to stop, just inform that person that you have become aware of this thing which is disturbing you (to a certain extent). Reaching the awareness phase is good. It’s a start. But unfortunately, it’s often the easiest part. But you’ll need this positive energy for the more difficult part. The action phase. This is where the real struggle appears. So, fasten your seatbelt & let’s jump right into it ladies & gentlemen!

Day 1

It’s funny how easily I get excited by a challenge & then unexcited by it. To be honest, it’s quite sad actually. If you too struggle with these waves of motivation, I feel you. It’s hard to explain, but I was really hyped about this project until today. Now that it’s here, I don’t fancy doing it so much. It’s a bizarre thing that happens to me where determination vanishes & procrastination creeps back in. A rather fascinating but ridiculous process. So day 1, is a cheers to every change we have wanted to implement on a new year, with a new self, but that we didn’t do (we can probably get pretty drunk off this list). That’s where my thoughts are on this 1st day. Don’t let the emotional rollercoaster inside you win after just one day, that would be to easy. Give your mind its money’s worth & challenge him a bit!

Day 2

You don’t stink anymore. You realize how unpleasing it is to sit next to somebody that has just smoked one before hopping on the train. Especially on the Swiss trains, where the landscape is just beautiful, and this smoker (that was you just a couple days before) is ruining part of your sensorial journey. You think to yourself, did you really need to smoke one for those 4 minutes you were waiting your correspondence for? Is it really worth ruining somebody else’s train ride to get please my own stinky self ?

Day 3

You won’t need to take a shit so early in the morning. Before, every time I smoked one in the morning, I would have to dash straight to the bathroom directly afterwards. Not an extremely pleasant moment of my morning routine. So now you know, this will happen less frequently once you stop. Even more so if you stop what’s on day 4 .

Day 4

Day 5

Getting sick. Now, if there’s one day when all you smokers out there don’t enjoy the puff, it’s gotta be when you are glued to your bed. That’s cause your body realizes that he’s already in a bad state & knows for a fact (caus he ain’t dumm) that smoking a ciggie right now would be a tad unhealthy. So with this in mind, wake up every morning with the “I’m sick” mindset !

Day 6

Wake up without throat ache.

Day 7

Talk about what you are gonna do in ABUNDANCE. Enough to make people joke about it & prove them wrong.

Day 8

Being Ready.

Day 9

Stealing lighters

Day 10

Hiding the ashtray ( & then forgetting about it)

Day 11

Cleaning up after your house party .

Day 12

When you realize it distorts people’s voices.

Day 13

PRO – SMOKATION

When you got shit to do, & you smoke your way out of it by taking multiple, highly/ultra frequent smoke breaks.

Day 14

Caus you wanna be a snoozer now.

Day 15

Challenge the routine

Day 16

Combatting the fast gratification monkey

Day 17

Pollutin the planet a little less

Day 18

Don’t rely on this social accessory to chat up girls

Day 19

Find a soulmate . You’ll need an angel to guide you through these terrible Iqosness nights.

Day 20

Good vibes guy that will resonate energy & will gladly listen to you. He’s your interactive, non judgmental, diary sort of guy. This can literally be anybody. Dan who runs the kebab

Day 22

Start Fresh.

I really liked the idea of starting on things on a clean slate. So starting this during the holidays was a nice way of leaning back into my new, sharper routine. It just kind of sets the tone. Don’t neglect these little factors, you environment conditions you, tis a fact

Day 21

Smug boy.

There is a rather gratifying , tingly feeling you get when you stop smoking. It’s when your buddy’s think you still smoke & ask you for a ciggie. And you go, Nope can’t be askin me for that anymore. I is only got eyes on the beer now lol But anyhows, this happened to me today (9th January) & I made sure to cherish that moment. But don’t act too cocky about it, caus tis still a long road ahead.

Day 22

All that POWER inside.

Ever not been able to sleep at night ? Even though your super, super super tired ? I don’t get it. Your body decides to go in full action mode, I’m gonna save the world, gonna be famous next year & the whole fuckin planet will wanna dm me on Instagram. You get this rush adrenaline which is unexplainable at this time of night. Like why ? Thanks body, now I won’t be able to sleep for another 2 hours, cheers. My point is, when you get these rushes, I translate it into energy & power. And I have never had nicotine rush like this, so it can’t be that powerful. Mindset > Nicotine. Have a think on that shit.

Day 23

Giving a hug to a relative .

It felt good today to see my sister for the first time in weeks & not be afraid to hear a comment from her when she swang in for a spontaneous hug. I was like, yeaaah , smellin like a normal person sis.

Day 24

Running for the train.

This wasn’t a struggle today, it’s January 10th & I can also see a difference with last month.

Day 25

Fresh air in my lungs.

Day 26

Going for 1 beer with a non smoker.

Keeping things simple. Make the most of your friend. This means being fully focused on the moment & time you are spending with your friend, rather than thinking of the next break where you can go out for a ciggie. There is a shift in the way you perceive this sort of “bro date” . Shoutout to my boy Nathan who inspired me for this one after a beer in Geneva (REM) on the 11th January .

Day 27

Seeing that buff guy at the gym that smokes. I was like…uhhh this is so contradictory. No offense on this lighter version of “The Rock” but it simply doesn’t add up. Smoking & going to the gym are simply not in line , so think about it before you pretend to be healthy (next time post a picture of yourself smoking a ciggie after your workout on the bench right outside the gym instead !, see how many likes that gets you )

Day 28

Don’t be like John. John smokes cigarettes on his bike , while riding without a helmet. What a rebel. But is John really that cool ? Have a think of that friend who is like John. If you can’t find him, it might mean that you are staring at John in the mirror.

Day 29

First football session today. And I had way more energy than usual (14 th January ) It was a good feeling. I wasn’t gasping for air after 30 minutes like usual. Immense satisfaction when you see that your body can handle things better than before.

Day 29

Taking time to discover other people’s passions

I’m guessing that most of you see the smoking break as a “social” moment where you can get to know another smokers life a bit better. This is true, however have you ever thought of the inverse situation ? Staying inside on a cold winter days with a different group during the break could also give you insights on their lives. I recently discovered how one of my classmates loves to fish.

Day 30

Have something to do most of the time. (17th January) These past few days have been pretty intense , school wise as the time to create diamond under pressure has arrived. The most redouté moment of the procrastinators. I would advise all of you procrasts out there to stop reading for a bit & check out the Ted talk from about it. Genius. He illustrates perfectly what it means to adopt the procrastinator lifestyle. Well, anyhow doing a lot of things, is stressful but also a way to take away my thoughts of nicotine & focus them on the things I’m working on which matter.