



**Consumers Helping
Others Improve
Their Condition by
Ending Smoking**

CHOICES NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2020

Volume 14 Issue 1

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CHOICES Team Visiting Smokers Virtually During COVID Crisis

by Trish Dooley Budsock

When we initially discussed starting the process of writing articles about Covid in mid-March, my initial response was, "Nah....this may not be relevant by June."



Well, here we are, three months in, and it's still very relevant. I thought it would be nice to update our faithful readers on our current status and activities.

At this time, we are checking in weekly via web meetings to see how everyone is doing and discuss what projects they are working on as it relates to this new virtual world of CHOICES. We are reviewing a new potential component of our usual presentation, which is based on the text, "Mindfulness Oriented Recovery Enhancement," by Eric Garland, PhD. Our advocate, Azeem, has been studying various forms of mindfulness meditation for about 20 years and has been practicing techniques for more than a year. We have discussed this as a potential addition to our site visits. continued on page 5



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Signs That it is Time to Quit Smoking! by Deidre Stenard

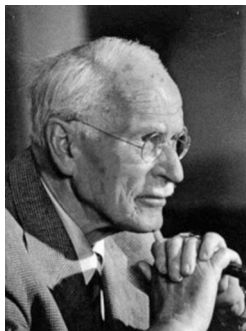
As a smoker, I smoked more and more cigarettes as time went along. I faced very uncomfortable situations as I got to be a heavy smoker. Here are a few that I remember.

When I was a 2-3 pack-a-day smoker, I was on a date with a friend and we went to the movies. I was just getting into the movie, the plot and so forth, and I started to think of how nice it would be if I went outside and had a cigarette. No bother, I thought. I'll just get up and go outside and have a cigarette. I won't miss much of the movie, I thought. So, I got up and walked out of the theater, lit up and smoked away. As I smoked and enjoyed my cigarette, I was grateful continued on page 5

Jungian Perspective on Addiction

By Azeem Sitabkhan

The last several CHOICES newsletters I have focused my articles on examining different types of therapy for helping with smoking addiction and addiction in general. I have covered therapies such as Yoga, Mindfulness, ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) and DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy). Today I am going to examine a different, but in some ways related take on addiction, by the profoundly influ-



Carl Jung

ential Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst from the 19th Century, Carl Jung.

Jung was initially a student of Sigmund Freud, and Freud was considered by many to be the father of psychology. Ultimately, however, Jung departed clearly from Freud's theories

and developed his own model of the human mind.

Regarding addictive substances, Jung believed that drugs didn't just change someone's mood, but actually changed what happened in their inner world. Chemical substances, he believed, worked at a deep level of mental functioning. They gave the user a sense of 'wholeness', a sense that temporarily reduced feelings of separateness and emptiness. Once someone had experienced this, they wanted to repeat it again and again. The wholeness that came with intoxication was not lasting or real, however, and dissolved when someone sobered up. So the search to repeat the experience began, and one wouldn't easily give this search up. Though this experience of 'wholeness' more clearly occurred with stronger drugs such as alcohol, it could also occur in tobacco use, though perhaps on a lesser scale.

Jung also believed that the underlying secret of enduring recovery from addiction involved spirituality. Addiction, he believed, involved a spiritual thirst for a sense of wholeness – the reason why a person can be led into an addiction. He believed that only a radical change to something equally satisfying to the individual at a deep level could bring about full recovery. The group Alcoholics Anonymous was greatly influenced by Jung's ideas, and still promotes a 12 step spiritual path to recovery.

As far as smoking addiction is concerned, I think it is very helpful to take these Jungian ideas into consideration. One could try to address the whole of one's life experience, including psychological and spiritual aspects, and I think this could assist one's healing of addiction from any substance. Jung's theories are very involved and complex, and I cannot begin to cover it in detail in this article, but just acknowledging all levels of one's life, including the spiritual, might help one gain freedom from addiction. Jung certainly believed so.

No Better Time Than NOW to Kick This Habit in the Butt!

By Cleo Zifovski

In the midst of the pandemic, people have had to come up with new ways to connect. Although Zoom is the most popular video conferencing solution for businesses, there are many others where people are meeting these days. Google Hangouts, Google Meet, GoToMeeting, Skype, Cisco Web Ex, Blue Jeans, Slack, Appear.in, and Big Blue Button, can help people participate in a meeting without physically being in the office. However, these days in light of Covid 19, people from all walks of life, ages and genders, are using video conferencing technology and apps to provide a high quality video and audio experience for what seems to be the entire world to gather and meet. continued on page 4

Thinking about COVID-19 and Tobacco Use

By Dr. Jill Williams



Lately, it has been hard to keep up with the daily updates and news about COVID-19. Some of the most important things we can all do is keep washing our hands and practicing social distancing by standing at least 6 feet apart from others. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (a good measure of 20 seconds is singing happy birthday). If you aren't able to wash your hands, you should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. It is recommended to wear a mask when you leave your home or go into public places. Try to keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you get sick, stay home and try to cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue.

Initial reports were that smokers had more risk for COVID-19 and were more likely to experience worse outcomes. Because COVID attacks the lungs, it is an especially serious threat to those who smoke tobacco or who vape. It's not a surprise that people who smoke would seem to be at greater risk, since they are greater risk for having more, and more serious, respiratory infections in general. Smokers also tend to have more coexisting conditions that can increase risk for other serious complications from COVID-19, like heart disease or high blood pressure. Now there are conflicting reports that smokers could be seen in lower numbers than expected, among those hospitalized for COVID-19, although this is controversial and may not really be true. One thing to keep in mind is that it may be too soon to draw any real conclusions until we have more information. This certainly is not a time to encourage smoking cigarettes, using e-cigarettes, or vaping! It is more important than ever, to **NOT SHARE** cigarettes.

continued on page 4

NJ Bans Sale of Flavored Vapes

By Lisa Evans

Before Covid-19, Senate Bill 3265 was passed and signed by Governor Murphy in January 2020. The bill would be effective on April 20, 2020, which occurred during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic in New Jersey. NJ retailers can no longer sell any flavored vaping product, including menthol, except tobacco flavor. The bill also stipulates that the law will “bar the use of coupons and other price rebates for the purchase of tobacco and e-cigarette products.” Residents may not be aware of this new state law as Covid-19 dominates the news and residents may also be surprised to learn of efforts by several local municipalities to ban vape products.



Lindsay Fox from Newport beach, United States / CC BY
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Piscataway, NJ has made it illegal to sell vaping products within 1600 feet of “nursery schools, pre-schools, child or adult or special-need daycare centers, elementary, middle or high schools, universities and colleges, funeral homes, any healthcare facility (such as a doctor or dentist office), parks, playgrounds, fitness facilities and rec centers, assisted living facilities and churches and all other houses of worship,” making the ban effective for about 90 percent of the town.

To limit sales of vape products in Highland Park, NJ, the town required retailers to pay \$1200 for a license to sell the products. Proceeds from the license went to anti-smoking campaigns. In December 2019, Jersey City, NJ banned the sale of flavored vape products. Vape and smoke shops were banned in Bernards Township back in October.

Vaping came under fire last year when over 2,000 young people died as a result of a lung disease associated with Vitamin E acetate found in some vaping products. Additionally, vaping products

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No Better Time Continued from page 2

Companies are not the only ones taking advantage of opportunities to collaborate with people who are distributed across multiple locations. Support groups, psychotherapy groups, classrooms, and even happy hour gatherings are just some of the new groups of individuals using video conferencing on a regular basis to connect and have meaningful conversations using this technology. Although there is a variety of video conferencing tools and depending on the technology they all provide a different conferencing experience. For instance, content sharing, image background scenes, as well as additional features are provided to enhance the conferencing experience and make it feel as personal as possible.



Finally, there are more video conferencing smoking cessation groups cropping up. “Studies show that people who stop smoking together have a six fold chance of success”. In New Jersey, Inspira Health is offering 6-week quit groups via Zoom. Eligible participants can have free nicotine replacement products shipped directly to their homes as part of the program. Call 1-800 INSPIRA for more information. There are similar programs. If you research, you will most likely find a list of meetings, contacts and times based on your interests. If you are trying to quit smoking, there is no better time than now to kick this habit in the butt!

Thinking About Quitting?

If you are an adult smoker with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or schizoaffective disorder between the ages of 18 and 70, you may qualify to participate in this study. Participants are paid up to \$75 over 4 months and also receive;

- * Nicotine patches
- * Telehealth Counseling
- * Tablet computer to use for appointments

For more information:

Call Dr. Marc Steinberg 732-235-4600 or email rusmoking@rwjms.rutgers.edu



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Covid-19 and Tobacco continued from page 3

Also avoid picking up and smoking partially smoked cigarettes to avoid your exposure to germs.

The interplay of nicotine and COVID-19 is still unclear. Some scientists are concerned that nicotine may enhance the penetration of the virus into cells in the lung, and increase risk for illness, but this is not yet proven. It is also possible that nicotine has some anti-inflammatory effects that could be positive. Nicotine is not associated with any reduced risk of COVID-19 infection; however, it is possible that it may reduce risk of a severe inflammatory response (called a cytokine storm) that affects people in later stages of the illness, often resulting in the need for critical care (ICU) and intubation. We won't know for some time if this is the case; much more research needs to be done on all of these questions. If it emerges that nicotine has some benefits, keep in mind that it never has been delivered to people through the toxic effects of smoking, vaping or e-cigarettes. All tobacco users should be encouraged to use nicotine replacement therapy to prevent withdrawal symptoms, help during periods of temporary abstinence, and of course, to help with quitting. Now we just have one more reason to support this recommendation.

Signs continued from page 1

that I was able to get my nicotine fix. However, as I was soon to discover, I was LOCKED OUT of the theater and I could not get back in. I tried every door and nope, they were all locked. So, I had to go home, without my date.

When I was a three-pack-a-day smoker, I was catching a flight to New Jersey from an airport in Florida on what used to be Continental. I was in the sitting area at the gate when the airline announced that the flight would be taking off an hour late. Plenty of time to go outside and smoke a cigarette I thought to myself. So I set off to go outside and smoke, which was quite a walking distance past security. In order to get back to the gate I would be walking quite a distance and I would have to go through security again. So, I went outside, lit up and puffed away. When I came back indoors, I heard my name being called over the intercom system. I listened harder, not sure if I heard myself right. Sure enough, they were calling MY NAME. I panicked. I rushed back to the gate, I was running. I went through security as quick as I could. I got to the gate and all of the other passengers were on the plane already and the plane would have left the gate moments later. I made the plane and sat in the one remaining seat.

Another situation was telling me that it was time to quit smoking. I was working at a Marketing Research Company where I was a telephone interviewer. I smoked 3 packs of cigarettes a day and my lungs were full of mucus and there was some blockages in my lungs and windpipes. I always felt as though I had to cough and I had trouble breathing. I had trouble doing the job because I didn't have enough wind to comfortably speak to the people I was interviewing without coughing and getting out of breath. I was sitting in this little booth and the supervisor didn't want you

to get up. So, it was very uncomfortable because I always wanted a cigarette and I always felt like coughing! This one supervisor told me that it was time to quit!

I couldn't have predicted this, but I did quit smoking soon after that with the help of the Tobacco Dependence Program in New Brunswick. Since I quit smoking I've also stopped experiencing these type of uncomfortable situations.

Tobacco Dependence Program

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CHOICES During Covid continued from page 1

Our thought is that adding a 5 minute meditation near the beginning of our site visits would be a great way to engage consumers in an activity that could potentially reduce stress and anxiety around the topic of tobacco. We have been spending several of our meetings doing some of the meditations ourselves, and thinking about the ideal combination of elements to add to our presentation. Hopefully our participants will enjoy this approach.

Around mid-April, we began checking in with a handful of our programs to see what they were doing in terms of treatment and groups etc. We learned that some were offering virtual support, and then asked if they would be interested in having CHOICES do a presentation. As of May 7th, we began doing CHOICES site visits virtually, in either a web or phone-based platform. We wanted to start slowly, to work out the technology, and so far these visits seem to be going pretty smoothly.

We're not sure when we will decide as a team to hit the road again, so in the meantime, please email me at dooleypc@rutgers.edu if your agency would like us to set up a virtual session! Remember, even during the Covid crisis, mental health consumers have CHOICES!

WORD PUZZLE

A	Q	G	B	C	M	C	O	N	N	E	T	T	E	R	A	G	I	C	E
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Find these words:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Airway Obstruction 2. Carcinogen 3. E Cigarette 4. Lung Cancer 5. Saving Money 6. Vaping 7. Juul 8. Blue E-Cigs 9. Arsenic | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Hydrogen Cyanide 11. Buergers Disease 12. Chewing Gum 13. Emphysema 14. Nicotine 15. Nicotrol Nasal Spray 16. Peptic Ulcer Disease 17. Smokefree 18. Tar Jar |
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Creatively Inclined

CHOICES is proud of our peers who are creatively inclined in the arts, poetry, and writing. Are you an artist, poet, or writer and want to see your work in print? We would love to share your artwork, poem, or story! Please contact us via email at dooleypc@rutgers.edu.

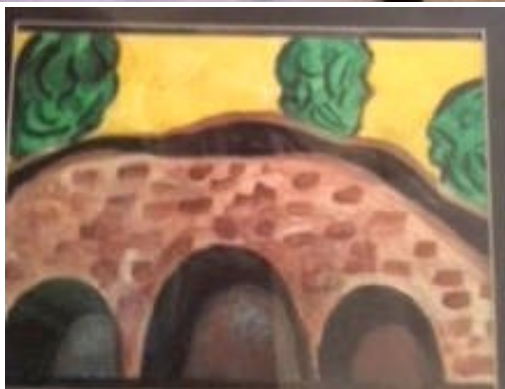
Deidre from CHOICES proudly displays her paintings. After the loss of her long time pet, Snuggles, Deidre decided to try something new. We are sure glad she did! She is very talented.

R.I.P Snuggles By Deidre Stenard

Snuggles was a great cat. He loved sitting in the windowsill at night. He was a great mouser and I used to take him on walks with a leash and he really loved that. It all



came to an end when he got sick, and I had to put him down. It's hard but I think Snuggles is in a better place now.



NJ Bans Sale continued from page 3

are attractive to teens and are considered a gateway to smoking tobacco. The Truth Initiative states that young people who vape are four times more likely to start smoking cigarettes.

Opposition of legislation and ordinances that ban vape products come from individual vape users but also from the American Vaping Association and the Consumer Advocates for Smoke-free Alternatives Association. Both groups believe strongly that vape products should be considered stop smoking aids, but there is no research to support their assertion. Clearly, the state of New Jersey and several of its cities disagree with the supporters of vaping.

<https://patch.com/new-jersey/newbrunswick/piscataway-outlaws-sale-e-cigarettes-vaping-products-town>
<https://www.nj.com/middlesex/2020/01/vaping-is-banned-in-almost-every-corner-of-this-nj-town.html>



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Former: Wayne Holland, Yasmin Halim, Bill Newbold, Eric Arauz,
Diane Beck

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The CHOICES team will come to you! The **CHOICES** team of peer advocates will visit your group or program in New Jersey and provide mental health consumers with education about the consequences of smoking and tobacco products along with information regarding treatment resources available to make quitting easier. Email us dooleypc@rutgers.edu to set up date.



CHOICES is a partnership between Rutgers-RWJMS Division of Addiction Psychiatry, the Mental Health Association of New Jersey (MHANJ) and the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and funded by the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services .