

#befreeachievemore

TOP TIPS

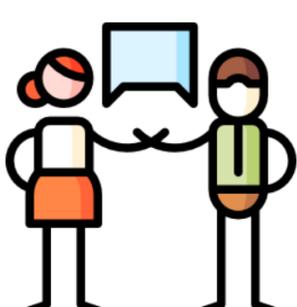
To be smoke-free, HAPPIER and achieve more



Be smoke-free

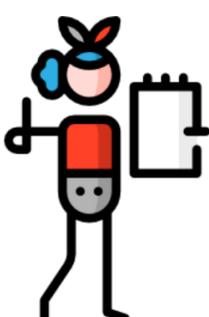
Not smoking has well known benefits to your physical health, and stopping smoking is also linked with improvement in mood and the symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. As well as feeling healthier, you will save a lot of money!

If you smoke and are thinking of quitting, visit www.quityourway.scot for information and advice.



Support network

It's important to know where to go for support for any mental health concerns. Whether you just want to talk to someone, or need help with a specific issue, there is always someone to offer support and advice. Friends and family are often your first contact. Try to be honest with them about what is going on, and share your problems with each other. If you feel you need extra support, find a local organisations that can help.



Volunteer

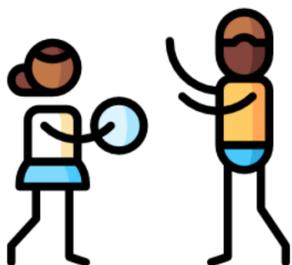
Make the most of your spare time and do something fun. Volunteering isn't just something good to write on your CV, it's a great way to make new friends, learn new skills and do something for others.

More information can be found at www.volunteerscotland.org.uk



Good mood food

Eating five pieces of fruit or veg a day is not just good for your bodies but helps prevent you feeling sluggish and tired. For someone who has recently quit smoking, reaching for a healthy snack when feeling a craving for a cigarette is a useful distraction. Cravings usually only last about 5 mins, so having an apple, nuts or some grapes will help while the craving passes.



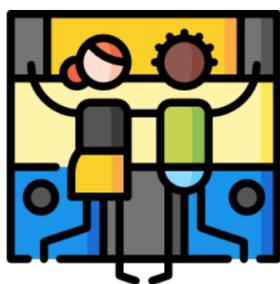
Exercise

Nicotine withdrawal can make you feel stressed, irritable and you might find it difficult to concentrate. Physical activity reduces these feelings, boosts self-esteem and improves sleep. It also releases a feel-good hormone called dopamine. Ok, so sweating it out at the gym every day may not be everyone's idea of fun, but walking more, dancing, yoga or gentle exercise can actually make you feel happier.



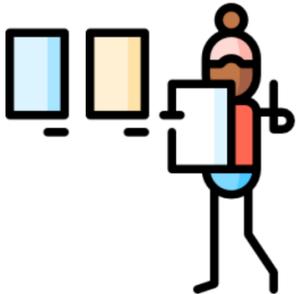
Get some sleep

Aim for about eight hours every night. Poor sleep may lead to mood disorders like depression and anxiety. Research with young adults also found that smoking is associated with poorer quality of sleep and not smoking can improve sleep issues. Going to bed the same time each night, avoiding caffeine in the evening and having some social media free time can help your brain relax before bed.



Socialise

Socialising can also be beneficial to you, and meeting new people and exploring new places can be great fun and reduce boredom. This doesn't have to involve alcohol or smoking either. Alcohol and smoking should not be used to escape from worries or mental health concerns because although you may think it helps you forget your worries, it can actually do the opposite and negatively impact your mood.



Live well

How you feel is influenced by your surroundings, so try to make your living space a smoke-free zone and somewhere you want to spend time. Put photos on your wall, make your room cosy and comforting. Managing your money is really important too, debt and financial difficulties are very stressful - a person who smokes a pack of 20 per day will save about £250 per month if they no longer smoke.