

Are giving up smoking and becoming a non-smoker the same thing?

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**Tobacco Control Seminar, Lower Hutt
June, 2018**



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OF AUCKLAND**
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Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world. I know because I've done it thousands of times.

Mark Twain

What happens in a successful quit attempt?

Grounded theory

A methodology that allows developing a theory from the ground-up

What is happening here?

Acknowledgements:

14 participants who successfully quit smoking

Peter Adams, Peter Huggard, Karen Hoare

Giving up smoking

I started focusing on giving up smoking

Except for one, all participants had previous attempts

The difference was not in methods nor in reasons for having quit

So, what was different?

Alex:

there were always smokers around, and it was totally normal, so it was quite hard

Chloe:

And why didn't it work? ... I think **a lot of it was, just everyone around me smoked**

Smoking environments

Also...

Alex:

the first thing that comes to mind is the environment

Peter:

the people you are surrounded with, play an important role in quitting, starting and quitting

Non-smoking environments

But...

Tanya:

“I don’t think people know of the social implications before they tried to give up”

“it’s that constant fight with your cravings, yourself and your friends that smoke”

Alex (about previous attempts):

“it feels more like a struggle than like a liberation”

Nevertheless...

All participants agreed in that the context facilitated their processes of becoming non-smokers

At one point or another, all participants found themselves in a **non-smoking environment**

So, what role did the context play in the process?

(apparently, not in making it easy to quit)

Assumptions that needed revision

Giving up smoking

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Becoming a non-smoker

Looking at it from the other end

James:

...at the GP ... that's the only time now I think about when I used to smoke, if that makes sense. Apart from that, I never really think about it, I am just [James].

Being a non-smoker did not require self-control
(self-control: effortful regulation of the self by the self. Duckworth, 2011)

Focusing on becoming a non-smoker

Context had a lot to do with it

Non-smoking

It is not just about **not doing something** (smoking), it is also a **certain kind of doing** (one that doesn't require effort)

Becoming a non-smoker

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Naturalising of non-smoking

Smoking cessation is part of it. You also, need to normalise non-smoking and socialise as a non-smoker.

So...

1. Giving up smoking is part of becoming a non-smoker
2. Becoming a non-smoker also involves the naturalisation of non-smoking
3. The naturalisation of non-smoking requires participation in an environment that provides the necessary conditions
4. It involves developing a new identity

Suggestions...

Talk about non-smoking too: How will it be like? Who will you interact with? Would it change the way you see yourself? How about how others see you?

Non-smoking environments are key, but also having access to them (and being able to develop one's life in them)

What if we think of the process of becoming a non-smoker as a relational process?

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