

MICHIGAN TOBACCO QUITLINE SUCCESS STORIES
Summer 2013

Maureen – Flint, MI (1145661)

“My whole day was centered on smoking,” said Maureen. “I avoided certain people or places because I couldn’t smoke there. I was embarrassed.” Smoking had become a chore and Maureen was determined to break away from her addiction. After three persistent months battling her tobacco habit she eventually won and her victory has transformed her life. “I feel great!” said Maureen. “I have enough energy to do anything I want. I don’t smell like cigarettes anymore so my husband is hugging me all the time. I also enjoy being able to taste the food I’m eating and smell my own perfume.”

Maureen discussed her previous quit attempts with the coaches and shared lessons learned from those experiences. “I decided to take it slow and not push myself too hard,” she said. “I wasn’t going to let myself give up. The text messages I received encouraged me to keep trying.” Maureen identified her morning routine and other smokers as her biggest challenges to remaining smoke free. She developed avoidance techniques and alternatives to increase her confidence in her ability to stay quit.

“The Michigan Quitline helped me so much,” said Maureen. “The coaches were awesome. They provided great support and the nicotine gum they sent out took the edge off the most intense cravings.” The ferocity in which Maureen tackled her toughest obstacles in quitting tobacco combined with her love of a smoke-free lifestyle has her set on a course for healthier living.

Greg – Kalamazoo, MI (1135269)

“My taste buds are exploding! I don’t pour a ton of salt on my food like I used to,” said Greg. Quitting smoking has helped to awaken Greg’s dormant senses. “I can smell a cigarette from a mile away and it stinks,” he said. The past month as a non-smoker has allowed a transformation to take place in Greg’s life. “I’m breathing easier and that’s helped me to walk further,” he explained. “My back has quit hurting, too.”

Greg is determined to stay quit not only for himself but also for his 5 year-old grandson that he’s now raising. “I need to be around for him,” he said. “The doctor told me I have COPD to go with my sleep apnea. That’s scary.” Thirty-five days after kicking his tobacco habit, Greg’s attitude has shifted. “I’m feeling a lot healthier and positive about where my life is going.” He said.

Greg’s tobacco use hasn’t been the only change he’s been working on. “I haven’t had a sip of alcohol since New Year’s Eve,” he added. “Every time I had a drink there’d be 2 cigarettes in my mouth. I knew I needed to quit drinking.” In addition, he’s consulted his doctor about his diet to control his diabetes and has lost 20 pounds!

The extra money saved from quitting smoking couldn’t have come at a better time. “I’m closing on a brand new home next week,” he said. “I’ve got plenty of other things to spend my money on.” Greg’s will to quit smoking along with other adjustments to his lifestyle have set him on a path to

healthy living. "I am absolutely done with smoking and doing harm to myself. I don't crave cigarettes or think about them anymore," he said. "Thank you so much for your help."

Kevin – Lansing, MI (1092522)

"I have been battling this habit for years," said Kevin. "After several unsuccessful attempts to quit tobacco I've come to the realization that smoking a cigarette is not going to make my stress disappear." Watching a close friend suffer a stroke derailed Kevin's progress earlier this year but he's persistent and has now been smoke free for 3 months!

"I feel wonderful," he said. "I'm able to take deep breaths and I have so much energy." Experiencing positive changes since quitting has made it easier for Kevin to maintain his resolve in the face of temptation. "My daughter smokes and sometimes I crave a cigarette when I see her, but I'm not going to give into that urge," he said. "I'm not pushing her to quit. Instead, I'm setting an example and showing her that quitting is achievable."

Kevin's example for other smokers includes exercising as an alternative to tobacco. He began walking his dog after every meal to create a new routine and used Nicorette Gum provided by the Michigan Quitline to help fight physical cravings for a cigarette. Avoiding familiar hangouts where alcohol is served and smoking is allowed was another step Kevin took to ensure success.

"I can't thank you guys enough," said Kevin. "You have a great program that is helping a lot of people just like me. The help from the Michigan Quitline has me convinced that I'm done smoking forever."