





It would be another decade before the first warnings appeared and they were aimed at the smoker himself. Quitting wasn't an option for Dad. He was thoroughly addicted and perhaps he was hoping that maybe these experts were wrong.

I married a non smoker at age 19 and began to notice a difference but only at home. More than half the country smoked and they smoked everywhere. The teachers' lounges in the high schools, where I taught, were smoke filled. Teachers smoked in their classrooms and offices when students weren't present and the smell stayed in the air. Even students could smoke in "designated areas" with parental approval if they were over 16.

Slowly the tide turned. As more and more of my world became smoke free, my lungs improved accordingly. I could teach in a real smoke-free environment. I could go to restaurants. Now I really was an athlete. I could run a half marathon in a very respectable time.

Dad eventually did quit smoking. They asked him in the ER as he was having his heart attack, "Do you smoke?" He answered, "I quit this morning" and he really did.

When Dad was 75 I went with him to the Senior Olympics. He won the gold medal in Bowling. "Next time," he said, "I'm entering more events." He was a competitor til the end.



The end came too soon. There were no more competitions after this one. I wish smoking restrictions had been put in place earlier. I wish society had made it more difficult for my Dad to smoke. I miss him.

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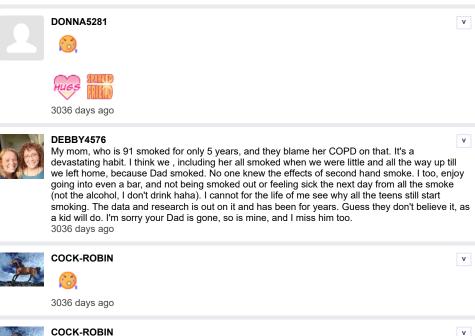
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LIZZIE888

You are so right... everyone smoked when I grew up. My dad smoked all the time and as kids we'd sit on his knee while he had a cigarette. Pipe smokers, cigar smokers - they were all around.

I started work in the 1980s, when the dangers of smoking were well documented, but smoking was still permitted in all the hospitals I worked in. In fact they had "no smoking" zones where you weren't allowed to smoke, the rest of the world being a smoking area.

Funny thing is... even though there are less smokers now and the number of places you can smoke has shrunk exponentially, there seem to be more cigarette butts on the ground than there ever have been. Is this because people who choose to disregard the health advice about smoking have a more devil-may-care attitude about everything anyway? Or is everyone just much less bothered than they used to be? 3036 days ago



3036 days ago

BAMAJAM

I am so sorry you lost your father too soon....As Dawn posted, I do not understand why young people of today start smoking! I have grown sons and when they were young pre-teens, there was a neighbor who chained smoked. His cancer made it necessary for his voice box to be removed. His "labored and froggy" speech made a tremendous impression on my sons. NO sermon against smoking was needed, because this neighbor's sad condition "scared" my kids! They knew the smoking habit caused this illness...

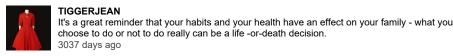
My own dad smoked cigars, and often sent me to the store to buy them. I hated the cigar smoke odor, and there was no escaping the nasty fumes. Thank you for your important blog

3037 days ago



MERRYMARY42

the expense alone should keep most people from smoking, the smell, stinky home, and then you think about the health problems, I did smoke, one time, not alot, and quit in my 30's I do not know why I did, the smell bothered me, the smoke bothered me, and after I did quit, I started coughing and that continued for about 6 months, maybe a very good think that I did quit, my husband and I both quit the same day, our son is not a smoker and neither is his 2 boys, Thank Goodness 3037 days ago



choose to do or not to do really can be a life -or-death decision. 3037 days ago



CELIAMINER

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As Suzy said, you blog touches hearts...I can see that from the comments. My dad quit, too...when he lapsed into a coma in his final days of dying from mouth and throat cancer at age 64. That was 1989. It took me a long time to stop being angry at him for killing himself that way. If he were still alive, he would be 88. 3037 days ago

CD8467616

You certainly touched a chord here. My dad smoked cigarettes, then a pipe, then finally quit. I smoked from age 18 to age 30, then quit. I used to smoke in class in college, when cigarettes were 25 cents a pack at the student union. I smoked during my pregnancy -- no one told me not to! When I was in the hospital after having the baby (who turned out perfectly, thank goodness) there were ashtrays on the bedside tables. Actually, that was the day I quit. It just suddenly seemed totally disgusting and I never smoked again. I consider myself very lucky that the compulsion was lifted in one go. I never completely lost the compulsion to overeat, however, Still working on that one

3037 days ago



KA_JUN

Touching blog. As someone who used to partake and quit, one of the best things I ever did. Sad that we have this product being marketed to us that has no socially redeeming qualities whatsoever. May your father rest in peace. 3037 days ago



JANET552

What a loving tribute to your dad! Smoking was so commonplace back in those days. We should all be thankful isn't anymore. 3037 days ago



MNNICE

Quitting was one of the hardest thing I've ever done, but I'm so proud that I did it and have been smoke-free for 14 years. Even while watching my dad suffer through and die from emphysema, I couldn't quit. It is truly a horrible addiction, and I pray every day that I quit early enough to prevent adverse health effects. 3037 days ago



GINA180847

Having studied why people smoke I do understand it. People can opt out by lighting up and that is understandable only because life gets intolerable sometimes and we feel the need to leave. My experience was that I could not stand the taste in my mouth any more so went to a hypnotist and by quitting became a very different person. I would smoke in my dreams and wake up in a cold sweat thinking I had started again and it was terrifying. 3037 davs ado



GINIEMIE

v My dad was a 4 pack a day smoker. When he cut back on cigarettes he switched to the pipe. As a child I lived in a smokey environment. My mom smoke during the war, but I don't remember her smoking when we were little. My father blamed himself for my mom's death-but there didn't seem to be a link for her metastisized melanoma and his smoking. He quit a year and three months after mom's death when he had a heart attack.

I experimentally smoked as a teen, quit then picked up social smoking in my early thirties-I was trying to lose weight and active in a theater group where many smoked. One day my, then, eight year old daughter snatched a cigarette from my hands and stomped on it, screaming at me that she did not want me to die. I quit right then and have not smoked since. I have allergy induced asthma now and along with perfumed products (air fresheners/perfumed hair products/deodorant/etc) I am allergic to cigarette smoke.

I hear you and thank you for making us recall and refresh why WE SHOULD NOT smoke or accept smoking in our homes. I'd be in the emergency room if someone lit up in my house.





3037 days ago

SUZYMOBILE

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Your blog will touch many hearts today. Most of us had parents who smoked and were killed by it. I certainly did. One of the smartest things I ever did, and the best possible thing for my health, was to quit smoking once and for all, 8 years ago. I'm afraid Bill never will and, worse, he smokes in the house now. I can only hope that he stops both, but I certainly can't MAKE him do so. 3037 days ago



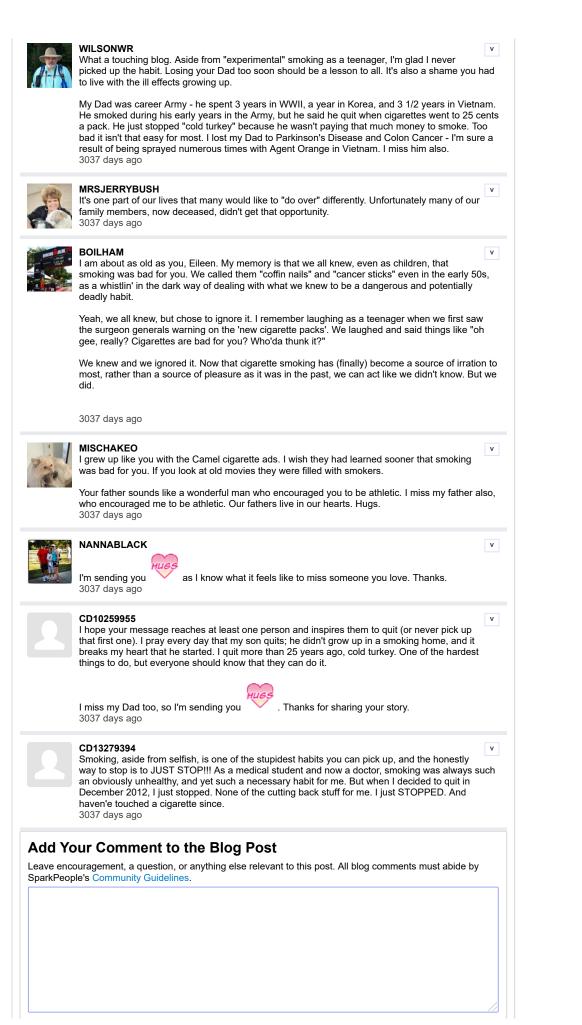
MJZHERE

My dad died from emphysema - he chainsmoked his whole life. Fathers who smoked is one thing I wish we didn't have in common. It was such a horrible way to die - I don't know what they do now but because of the condition of his lungs, they wouldn't give him any pain medications (even with several gallbladder stones). I know I am probably over the top in this area, but I tell people (especially young people) all the time about how horrible his death was from smoking. I think it is only fair that they have all the information. 3037 days ago



CD11026554

I remember both my parents smoking back in the 60's, kids could even buy sweet cigarettes and tobacco! With so much awareness of the health issues together with the stigma now attached to smoking, I can't understand why so many teenagers still take it up. Great blog! 3037 days ado



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