

RELAPSE

Information and resources

When working with people who have recommenced smoking after attempting to quit your goal is to enhance their understanding of their relapse. Remind them that it often takes several quit attempts before remaining smoke-free in the long term. You can encourage them to believe that it will be possible to successfully quit again in the future.

It is important to encourage people who have relapsed not to consider themselves as having failed. They should be congratulated for trying to quit smoking. Assist people to identify why they relapsed and encourage them to use their relapse as an opportunity to learn how they could have done something differently in order to successfully stay off the smokes. Relapses are an important opportunity to learn and become stronger during the process of quitting.



The following are suggested questions for a person who has relapsed:

- How do you feel about your relapse?
- What was it that triggered your relapse?
- What will you do next time you are in that situation?
- Are you ready to try again?

Continue to encourage them to persist with the changes they have made during their quitting attempt, and to feel proud of their efforts to quit. They may be happy to be referred to a quit program or other supportive resource. It is also worth remembering that if a person returns to smoking it is their choice and not a reflection on you as a health worker.

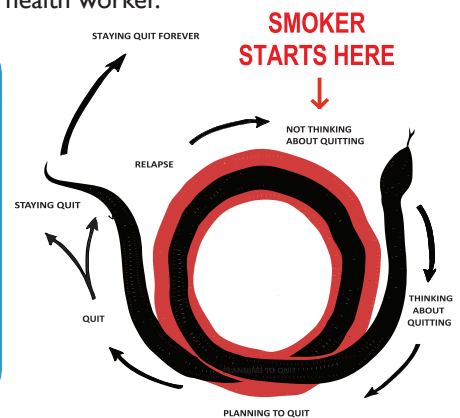
People who have relapsed may once again become:

- People who smoke who are not thinking about quitting (Precontemplation)*
- People who smoke who are thinking about quitting (Contemplation)*
- People who smoke and who are planning to quit (Preparation) or*
- People who are trying to quit again or actively staying quit (Action).*

You are there to support them regardless of which stage of change they are in.

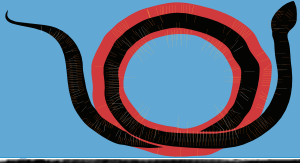
The following No Smokes products are examples of resources that may be of use to people who have relapsed and started smoking again. You can access all of these resources via the hyperlinks or on <http://www.nosmokes.com.au>.

[The Tobacco Story flipchart](#) is available as a free downloadable [PDF](#) or [PowerPoint](#) on the No Smokes website. You can order a hardcopy version of the Tobacco Story Flipchart [here](#). Individual sections of The Tobacco Story can also be used alone as [fact sheets](#).



Recommended FACT SHEETS

- [Addiction](#)
- [Healthy brain](#)
- [Change your thinking](#)
- [Relapse](#)



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No Smokes website resources

People who have relapsed can continue to use the No Smokes website as a resource. Encourage them to explore the website and associated social media sites such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) in their own time.

Quitting:

The [Tobacco Addiction Story animation](#) may assist young people who have relapsed to understand the cycle of addiction, and particularly how nicotine addiction affects their brain. This may help them understand their relapse and also give them ways to beat their addiction if they decide to try to quit again.

In [Relapse](#) there is a video in which people talk about their attempts to quit and experiences of relapsing.



People talk about being supported in their quitting attempts, or supporting others in the video [Helping others quit](#). This could give a young person who has quit some ideas about getting more support from others in future quit attempts or trying to quit at the same time as family or friends.

Stories:

The [Quitting Stories](#) section features interviews with people sharing their personal experiences of quitting and many of these have relapsed several times when trying to quit. These videos may help young people who have relapsed understand that most people attempt to quit more than once.



Indigenous singer-songwriter [Shellie Morris](#) describes her difficulties with quitting as a “never ending story”. Elder [Mandaka Marika](#) talks about the “grief” he has felt during attempts to stop smoking. [Alan Murphy](#) advises people trying to quit to imagine life as a non-smoker. [Bakamumu Marika](#) admits to starting smoking again after successfully giving up and [George Hall](#) says it took three attempts before he successfully quit 20 years ago. Aboriginal Health Researcher [Kalinda Griffiths](#) is now a former smoker but has had to quit a number of times. She remains wary of her

vulnerability to cigarettes.

The video [Keep Trying!](#) discusses the importance of persistence and [Jonathan Pease](#) gives some advice for people who are experiencing difficulties quitting. Young people may find these videos encouraging.