

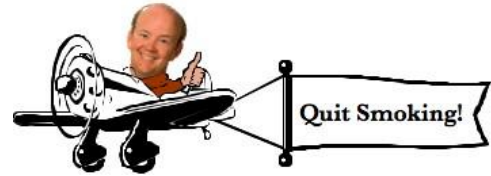


## **Tobacco-free Heroes**

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Everybody needs heroes, although sometimes they seem hard to find. This November 17, Great American Smokeout Day, celebrate a special type of hero you can find everywhere: tobacco-free heroes.



Ex-tobacco users surround us. About one out of every four adults has quit their former use of tobacco. In fact, ex-smokers now outnumber smokers.

Anybody who has ever freed themselves from this addiction has accomplished something heroic. For most, it didn't come easy; nothing epic ever does. Each found unique motivation to tackle this difficult challenge. Most considered health, finances, and self image as reasons enough. Many did it to honor the requests of worried loved ones. Wanting to provide a better role model for children compelled a remarkable number.

Most needed multiple tries. Tobacco-free heroes learned that quitting is an ongoing journey, not a final destination. Heroes know that arising one more time than falling matters most. They encourage current tobacco users to keep trying to quit and to stay quit.

Seek out tobacco-free heroes by asking people you know if they used to use tobacco. Have them tell you about their quitting journey if so. Maybe no one has asked them about it in years. They will enjoy sharing it.

If you want to quit using tobacco yourself, these stories can help. Realize your own time to do something heroic has come. Each year, about 800 Wisconsinites die from heart attacks and lung cancer brought on by smoking. You can heroically save one of those lives, namely your own.

Consider your individual reasons for wanting to join these heroes. What's stopping you? With each cigarette you smoke, think about the benefits that would have come from not smoking that cigarette, compared to what you got from it. Make it your last.

Overcoming nicotine addiction requires every advantage to succeed. See your doctor, who has many ways to help you. Set a quit date, and then tell everybody when it will be. Let them support you.

If you talk to a tobacco-free hero and become one yourself, you may help more people than you could ever imagine.

Our world needs more heroes—like you.