

## 5

## OUTLINE

## Understanding How Tobacco Fits into my Life

*Knowledge Topic references are located in a separate section of the Baby Steps Help Guide e-resource.*

*Participant handout references are not included, but are available upon request by contacting the tru@ahs.ca.*

<b>Goal</b>	To help participants identify their pros and cons of tobacco use, and how they put value on it as an important part of their life.
<b>Objectives</b>	By the end of the learning session, participants will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. be able to identify the reasons why they use tobacco</li> <li>2. be able to identify the reasons why they might want to change their tobacco use</li> <li>3. be able to identify how the value placed on using tobacco changes as they prepare to quit</li> </ol>
<b>Presentation approach</b>	As a one-to-one service provider or group facilitator, decide how you will share information and support reflection by participants. You may wish to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• print and hand out the information sheets</li> <li>• share the information sheets using a laptop, tablet or cell phone</li> <li>• visit the websites and links with participants, to point out where they can find additional information</li> <li>• engage in a large or several small discussion groups (if in a group setting)</li> <li>• have participants write down what they have learned on the handout sheets provided, or share their learning verbally</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitator/ service provider backgrounders</b>	There is one facilitator activity sheet, two facilitator background documents and two participant resources for you to review as preparation on this topic: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understanding How Tobacco Fits into My Life</li> <li>2. Stages of Change</li> </ol> <p>The appendices “Girls, Women, Health and Tobacco Use” and “Using a Principle-Based Approach” may also be helpful to review.</p>
<b>Facilitator resource</b>	Play money (in the zip-up case in the “Resource” section) for the “How Tobacco Fits in My Life” activity
<b>Participant Resources</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choosing to be Tobacco-Free</li> <li>2. Choosing to be Tobacco-Free (worksheet)</li> </ol>

# 5

## FACILITATOR ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

### Understanding How Tobacco Fits into My Life

This activity will help clients determine how much value they place on continuing to use tobacco versus quitting. It is intended to be just as meaningful for clients who use other forms of tobacco or cannabis. If participants don't use tobacco, they can think of other behaviours they are trying to change and substitute that behaviour instead. For example, a client might choose to think about getting more exercise. In that case, they would need to think about why they don't exercise and why that's okay for them at this point (the pros); what the effect of not exercising has on them (the cons); and how they can turn the cons into pros (e.g., "When I don't exercise, I gain weight" becomes "If I exercise regularly, I will be able to control my weight better").

1. Provide participants with a supply of sticky notes, as well as play money in the following amounts:

- 2 - \$5 bills
- 2 - \$10 bills
- 2 - \$20 bills
- 2 - \$50 bills



2. As a group, have participants brainstorm reasons why people use tobacco. Participants who use tobacco need to have their reasons acknowledged and to recognize that its use fulfills a need for them. These reasons need to be explored before they can start to value reasons for becoming tobacco-free. Explore issues surrounding the following three aspects of tobacco use:
  1. **Nicotine addiction:** The craving for nicotine that results from the body's dependency on tobacco, and its effects.
  2. **Habitual connection:** Activities, situations and events that the person links with tobacco use (e.g., morning coffee and a cigarette).
  3. **Emotional connection:** The links between how the person feels and their corresponding tendencies towards tobacco use (e.g., smoking and coping with stress, smoking to relax), and the cigarette as a source of comfort.

There are many individual pros people will list for using tobacco and tobacco-like products. Some common themes include:

- "It helps me relax"
- "When I'm in a new/different situation and I feel unsure of myself, I have a cigarette"
- "I use tobacco because it's my right to choose what I want to do"
- "If I have to have one bad vice, this isn't the worst one in the world"
- "Smoking helps me control my weight"
- "My cigarette (or e-cigarette, cigarillo, etc.) is my friend—it never lets me down"
- "If I smoke, then I get a break (from work, from the kids, etc.)"
- "It keeps me alert"
- "I like the taste or feel of the product (holding it, sliding it out of the pack)"



3. Now have participants brainstorm the cons about their tobacco use. Again, people will list various reasons why someone might want to quit using tobacco.

# 5

## FACILITATOR ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

### Understanding How Tobacco Fits into My Life

Some common themes include:

- “I don’t like my kids seeing me smoke”
- “Sometimes I have to decide whether to buy tobacco or food”
- “My clothes, home and vehicles smell”
- “I have a bad cough”
- “I can’t smoke or vape in many public places anymore”
- “I know it’s bad for my health”
- “My friends who don’t smoke don’t visit anymore”
- “It stains my teeth”



4. Have participants think of their own pros and cons for tobacco use and write them on sticky notes (to a maximum of eight pros and cons total, to match the number of play-money bills they have been given). If participants do not use tobacco products, get them to think of another health-related behaviour they would like to change or improve.
5. Have participants attach each sticky note to one of the play-money bills in order of its importance, with the \$5 bill of least importance and the \$50 bill of highest importance. Participants will have to decide how to distribute their reasons among the denominations of bills they have. Have them put the money representing their pros for tobacco use in one pile, and the cons in another. Ask them to assess which pile has more value right now.
6. Facilitate a discussion using these questions:

**a) If a person is not ready to change their tobacco use, do they think their “pro” pile has more value?**

*Answer:* Yes. People who use tobacco have reasons for using it. Tobacco is helping them in some way, whether it makes them feel good, helps them cope with stress, or helps them avoid the consequences of withdrawal.

**b) If a person is thinking about quitting, what might happen to the value of their two piles?**

*Answer:* The two piles will move closer to having equal value, as their pros of using tobacco no longer seem to make sense or have as much value as they used to.

**c) Will there be a time when the con pile has more value than the pro pile?**

*Answer:* Yes, when the person is ready to or has actually taken action to change their tobacco use and their behaviour or routines associated with it. At that point the person places more value on becoming tobacco-free.

**d) How can the person who is using tobacco use their cons in a positive way?**

*Answer:* The cons become the person’s reason for quitting. When someone identifies their own reasons to quit, it is harder for them to argue against changing their behaviour. For example, if a person identifies that they don’t like their kids seeing them smoke, this can become a pro of becoming tobacco-free: “I would like to model a healthy behaviour for my kids.”

7. Have participants complete their activity sheet so they can take their ideas home with them. Explain how participants can use the handout to help them continue identifying reasons why they use tobacco and reasons why they don’t like it. Encourage participants to turn their reasons for not liking tobacco into reasons for changing their tobacco use.

# 5

## FACILITATOR BACKGROUND

### Stages of Change

Understanding these stages of change can help providers support the next steps their clients may take in a tailored way. While the timeframes for change mentioned here are not as relevant for pregnant women, the overall framework can be helpful for providers to keep in mind as they support paced and achievable changes with their clients.

For specific strategies that are used with clients at each state of change, see the next topic, "Finding Support."



**Pre-contemplation** is the stage in which people do not intend to take action in the foreseeable future, which is usually measured as the next six months or more. People may be in this stage because they are uninformed or under-informed about the consequences of their behaviour. Or they may have tried to change a number of times and become demoralized about their ability to change. Both groups tend to avoid reading, talking or thinking about the harmful behaviour(s). They are often characterized as resistant, unmotivated or not ready for help or making change.

**Contemplation** is the stage in which people intend to change soon (usually within the next six months). They are more aware of the pros of changing, but are also acutely aware of the cons. This balance can produce profound ambivalence and emotional discomfort that can keep people stuck in this stage for long periods of time. We often characterize this phenomenon as chronic contemplation or behavioural procrastination. These people are not ready for action-oriented programs.

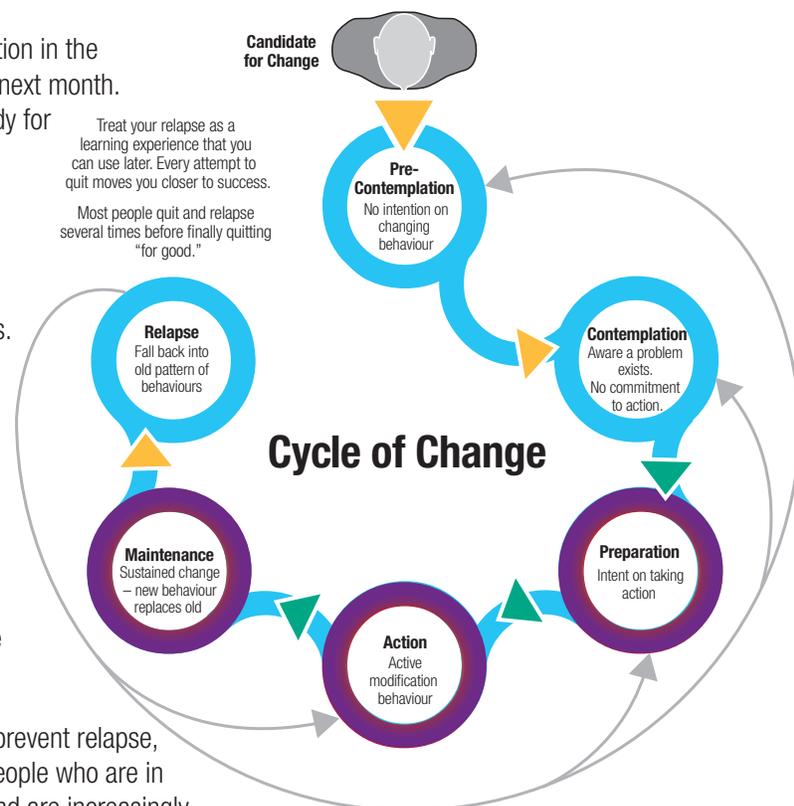
**Preparation** is the stage in which people intend to take action in the immediate future, which is usually measured as within the next month.

They have typically taken some significant steps to get ready for making a change in the past year. These individuals have a plan of action, such as joining a health education class, consulting a counsellor, talking to their physician, buying a self-help book or relying on a self-change approach. These are the people who should be recruited for action-oriented cessation, weight loss or exercise programs.

**Action** is the stage in which people have made specific overt modifications or changes to their behaviour within the past six months. Since action is observable, behaviour change is often equated with action. In the Stages of Change Model, action is only one of the stages. For tobacco use, reducing the number of cigarettes smoked or starting medication or nicotine replacement therapy are important action steps. The Action stage is the stage where vigilance against relapse is most critical.

**Maintenance** is the stage in which people are working to prevent relapse, but they do not apply change processes as frequently as people who are in the action stage. They are less likely to relapse over time and are increasingly confident that they can maintain their behaviour change.

Please keep in mind that people do not move in a linear way through these stages of change, and usually cycle back through the stages a number of times.



# 5

## PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

### Choosing to be Tobacco-Free

**Pros:** Have you ever thought about the good things tobacco does for you? Most people see using tobacco as benefiting their lives in specific ways. Understanding why you use it will help you personalize your quit plan and find ways to replace tobacco when it is gone.

Here are examples of what women say about why they use tobacco:

- “When I’m angry, I go for a smoke break”
- “Tobacco helps me keep my weight down”
- “It’s the one thing I can choose to do for myself”
- “My cigarette is my friend”
- “It gives me time for myself”

We call these the pros of tobacco use. Right now, they may be much more important than any reasons you can come up with for quitting.

**Cons:** Most people can identify a few concerns they have or don’t like about their tobacco use. These are called the cons. As you begin to think about quitting, it helps to identify things in your life that could be better if you didn’t use tobacco. Some examples of cons might be:



- “I don’t like my kids seeing me use tobacco”
- “Tobacco can hurt my health”
- “I don’t like how much money I spend on tobacco”

While you may be able to think of a number of cons of using tobacco, they may not be as important to you as the pros. The more you think about changing your tobacco use and the closer you actually get to trying to quit, the more important these cons will become. You may even come up with more cons along the way.

**Change:** As you come up with cons of using tobacco, stop and ask yourself how you can turn that statement into a reason for change. For example:

**Con:** I don’t like my kids seeing me smoke  
**Reason to change:** I will set a good example for my children by not smoking

**Con:** Smoking hurts my health  
**Reason to change:** I want to be healthy so I can play with my kids and maybe even my grandkids someday



For information on how smoking affects your health, as well as the health of those around you, visit the AlbertaQuits.ca page “How Smoking Affects the Body”:

<https://www.albertaquits.ca/quitting/smoking-body>

It’s a good idea to write down your cons as you think of them, and then write down how you can turn those cons into reasons for change. Once you have more reasons to quit than reasons to keep using tobacco, you are on your way to strengthening your commitment to change. By thinking of how you use tobacco and your ideas about change, you are building a tobacco change plan for yourself.

# 5

## **PARTICIPANT HANDOUT**

### Choosing to be Tobacco-Free

Sometimes we feel pressured to quit by others. While their reasons for you to change may be well meaning, they are not always the ones that are important to you. It's easier to work on changing your tobacco use if you have your own reasons to do it. Any reason can be a good one, no matter how small it may seem to others.

Thinking about the pros and cons of using tobacco starts you on the way to changing your picture of yourself, from someone who uses tobacco to someone who is tobacco-free. This is a big change, and a big concept. It's okay to feel uncertain and even fearful of some of these changes. Keep looking for more information about the benefits of being tobacco-free. Talk to people who have stopped using tobacco. Be aware of your surroundings and who uses tobacco and who doesn't. Instead of looking back on what it was like to use tobacco, look forward to the time when you will be tobacco-free and what life will be like then. Feel good about the changes you are making. Try to see yourself as someone who is free from tobacco. And remember the old saying: "Fake it till you make it!"

The Participant Worksheet will help you capture your ideas about change.

# 5

## PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

### Choosing to be Tobacco-Free

This table provides space for you to see your pros and cons for change. It will help you build a more successful plan for changing your tobacco use.

Reasons I <b>like</b> to -----	What I <b>don't like</b> about -----	What might be better if I -----

Keep your list handy so you can add to it every time you come up with a new reason.