



WORCESTER, MASS.

GAZETTE

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WORCESTER METROPOLITAN AREA

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Confessions of a Smoker

Non-smokers don't cough as much as smokers. Smokers die younger than non-smokers. There are laws against smoking in public places and there are people who object to having smoke blown in their faces.

The American Cancer Society says 18.2 million smokers joined the Great American Smokeout last Thursday, but about 33.8 million of the country's smokers puffed away, publicity or no.

One person we know had a confession to make Friday morning. For, got about the whole thing until he got home from work. Good intentions and all that.

Another got home, pulled out a cigarette and found that, while he had forgotten, his children had not.

People who claim that cigarette smoking is the number one preventable cause of death and disease may be right.

But it's still hard to get the smoker's attention when it comes to pressure to give up the habit.

In Worcester, high school students got involved in soliciting pledges from people who promised they would quit. In homes around the nation, children pointed concerned fingers at their smoking parents and urged them to give it up.

Some of those who tried to quit because of the Great American Smokeout will make it. But for many, the words of one Worcester resident may rule the day. "I can't quit," the man said.

But it is the words of one who succeeded that ought to be heard. "I just woke up one day, coughing and having problems breathing and said to myself, 'You've got to stop killing yourself.' And I quit then and there," she said.

It can be done.

And it's worth the pain and strain.

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