

Self-Hypnosis: Practicing a Tobacco-Free Choice

Use this short practice to settle your attention, imagine a different response to an urge, and rehearse a tobacco-free action.

1. Settle

Allow for a pause. You can choose to let your breathing remain easy and natural or you can deepen your breathing, whatever is most comfortable to you.

2. Focus

You can choose to close your eyes or keep them open with a soft gaze. To yourself, count slowly from 5 to 1, with each number inviting you to become more and more relaxed and comfortable. When you reach the number one, allow yourself to imagine being in your favorite place, a place of comfort and learning.

3. Imagine

Create an image that supports making a tobacco-free choice in response to an urge. These are examples but decide whatever feels most natural to you.

The wave and the stable shore: Imagine an urge as a wave approaching a steady shore. Watch it rise, crest, and change. Picture yourself on the shore, noticing the wave without needing to follow it.

Passing weather: Imagine the urge as weather moving through the sky: a cloud, a gust of wind, or a passing shower. You do not need to push it away. Picture yourself watching as the weather shifts.

The control panel: Imagine a simple control panel. Gently turn the urge intensity dial down a little—just enough to make room for your next choice. You do not need to turn it all the way off.

A fork in a familiar path: Imagine walking along a familiar path and arriving at a fork. One direction leads toward your usual tobacco routine. The other leads toward a tobacco-free action. Picture yourself taking that second path, one step at a time.

4. Choose

Pick a phrase that feels believable to you. You may use one from above or try:

- “I can pause before I act.”
- “An urge does not have to decide for me.”

- “For this moment, I choose not to use tobacco.”
- “I can take one tobacco-free step.”

Then imagine yourself doing one specific tobacco-free action:

- Taking a sip of water.
- Stepping away from the place where you usually use tobacco.
- Taking a short walk.
- Reaching out to a supportive person.
- Returning to an activity with your hands.

Picture the first small movement: reaching for the glass, standing up, or picking up your phone.

5. Return

When you are ready, count slowly upward from 1 to 5, gradually bringing your attention back to the room and your everyday activities. When you reach the number 5, you should feel fully alert, energized, and ready to continue forward with a tobacco-free action.