

Artyom Ovechkin



**F*CK
TOBACCO!**

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F*ck tobacco!

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Аннотация

Hi!) This book will help smokers quit smoking and provide counselors with a forceful tool to help them. Tell tobacco to fuck off! My name is Artyom Ovechkin. I am a counselor, and I have smoked for twenty years and quit smoking seven years ago. I enjoy my freedom from tobacco! I placed folk humor about smoking at the beginning of each section of this book and exciting and useful revelations by former smokers at the end of each chapter. So, relax and get ready to have a good time! Here we go!)

Содержание

Chapter 1. How smoking affects the health of smokers and others	10
1.1. Do we realize how harmful smoking is to our health?	10
1.2. How does tobacco smoke affect the human body?	14
1.3. How smoking affects our nervous system	17
1.4. How smoking affects the respiratory system	19
1.5. The effect of smoking on the cardiovascular system	22
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	24

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“Watson, do you smoke Russian cigarettes again?”

“But how on Earth did you get out of it, Holmes?”

“Elementary, my dear Watson! You smell like a Russian spy.”

Translator Svetlana Sidorenko

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Hi!) This book will help smokers quit smoking and provide counselors with a forceful tool to help them. Tell tobacco to fuck off! My name is Artyom Ovechkin. I am a counselor, and I have smoked for twenty years and quit smoking seven years ago. I enjoy my freedom from tobacco! I placed folk humor about smoking and cigarettes (jokes by unknown authors) at the beginning of each section of this book and exciting and useful revelations by former smokers at the end of each chapter. So, relax and get ready to have a good time! Here we go!)

Most smokers prefer not to think about the price they pay for their “habit”. And the price is indecently high. Every cigarette, slowly but steadily, deteriorates the most valuable “property” of a smoker – his health.

The problems have become acute all over the world. Nowadays, it is almost impossible to find a country where people do not smoke tobacco or tobacco products. Tobacco smoking was recognized as a plague of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, and not without reason. According to the report of the World Health Organization (WHO) on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2015, there are about 1.1 billion smokers in the world.

Tobacco consumption is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced, killing more than 7 million people a year across the globe. More than 6 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use, while around 890 thousand are the result of non-smokers that inhaled tobacco smoke. About 80% of smokers worldwide live in low- and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illness and death is heaviest.

In low- and middle-income countries, the prevalence of tobacco smoking declines more slowly than in high-income countries, while the popularity of smoking is increasing in low-income countries. The world will suffer 8 million deaths a year by 2030 unless we take action to reduce the number of smokers¹.

Consider this: about 5.7 trillion cigarettes were smoked

¹ <http://www.who.int/ru/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>

worldwide in 2016.

Russia is among the top ten countries with the highest rates of smoked cigarettes per person – 2.295 cigarettes².

Studies conducted in the field of smoking prove the severe harm it causes. We will discuss it in detail in the first chapter of this book. Moreover, polling shows that many people either underestimate or do not know about the consequences of this “bad habit”. For example, more than 60% of the population of China is unaware that smoking can cause heart attacks. More than half of adults in India and Indonesia have no idea that smoking can cause strokes³.

Due to the endurance of our body established by nature, it often takes years and even decades for a smoker and his loved ones to realize the negative health effects of smoking. However, there are many other examples when smoking kills much faster. Smoking is not a “bad habit”, as people use to say, but the most popular and widespread type of drug addiction, which affects millions of people around the world.

A smoker enjoys smoking cigarettes because it suppresses symptoms of nicotine withdrawal caused by smoking of a previous cigarette! It’s a vicious circle of smoking. A strong desire to smoke usually occurs after eating, when drinking alcohol, when negative emotions arise, and when

² <https://tobaccoatlas.org/topic/consumption/>

³ <http://www.who.int/ru/news-room/detail/31-05-2018-world-no-tobacco-day-tobacco-and-heart-disease>

working under mental or physical pressure. A cigarette allows a person to get distracted and snap the tension out, to take a break from work, or postpone negative thoughts and emotions for later.

When smoking, the following harmful substances enter our body: carbon monoxide, ammonia, arsenic, hydrocyanic acid, as well as radioactive elements – polonium, lead, bismuth, and other compounds that can cause malignant tumors. Tobacco addiction, or so-called nicotinism, is specified in ICD-10 as a chronic disease. Many people cannot quit smoking on their own and need professional medical and psychological help.

Here I'd like to clarify the critical issue. Why does a person continue to smoke despite all the warnings, social advertising, and realizing the health harm? A person quits smoking, then starts smoking again, and the whole thing is like a vicious circle. The answer is simple: all tobacco products contain nicotine, which is a highly addictive substance.

In Philip Morris documents, a cigarette is defined as follows: “The cigarette should be conceived not as a product but as a package. The product is nicotine. Think of the cigarette pack as a storage container for a day’s supply of nicotine. Think of the cigarette as a dispenser of a dose unit of nicotine. Smoke is beyond question the most optimized vehicle of nicotine and the cigarette the most optimized dispenser of smoke.” (Philip Morris, 1972)

The dependent position of the smoker affects the way other people perceive him or her. They usually consider a smoker as

a weak person with an unhealthy “habit”, who cannot give up the pleasure of smoking even after physicians repeatedly reported about the disastrous consequences, including cancer.

Ironically, smoking is almost the only cause of death in the world, which could be easily eliminated. But according to WHO, about half of smokers die due to using tobacco products.

Ongoing support and the assistance of a counseling psychologist are critical to successfully quitting smoking. In my view, a counseling psychologist, who provides such support, should have first-hand knowledge not only about the influence of tobacco smoking on health but also about crucial issues of psychological counseling for clients who want to quit smoking. These topics are the subject of this book. I am delighted that I managed to quit smoking seven years ago, and I do not need to smoke any longer! I believe that this book will help other people to quit smoking too!

Oleg, 32

First, it was hard to quit smoking because I chose the wrong strategy. Each time I denied myself a cigarette, I felt sorry for myself: “Poor me! I’m suffering. It’s so hard, but I have guts, so I’ll put up with it.” Now I realize that I had to think differently: “I was a fool, I ruined my health. Fortunately, I decided to change my life, and now I feel better every day!” When I adopted this mindset, it became much more comfortable to restrain myself from smoking. I decided to quit when I was going through a difficult period in my life, and I was drawn to smoking due to my nervous breakdown.

But I decided that it was not worth waiting for better times to come along because we live here and now. If you start waiting for a favorable moment, good mood, vacation, or something like that, then you will never change your life. I don't smoke, I do sports, and I am happy with myself!

Any smoker can quit smoking! FUCK TOBACCO!

Chapter 1. How smoking affects the health of smokers and others

It's normal to ask a stranger for a spare cigarette. And if someone is eating a chocolate bar and you ask for a piece, they look at you like you are nuts.

1.1. Do we realize how harmful smoking is to our health?

You'll probably never find a person who doesn't know that smoking is harmful, even if he or she doesn't use to speak to experts and physicians. Nevertheless, not everyone can answer the more important question: what harm is it? Surprisingly, sometimes a piece of expert advice helps quit smoking. People quit and do not smoke for a year or longer. Many people admit that even though this information could be a powerful motivator to quit smoking, no more than half of the smokers had got it.

Hence, the potential effectiveness of informing a person about the specific threats of smoking for his health by any counseling psychologist becomes quite obvious since it increases the probability of successful quitting. For this reason, every counseling psychologist, every person who is about to quit, must

know the information presented in this chapter.

I am going to provide a somewhat detailed description of the harmful effects of smoking on human health in this book, and I consider it justified and necessary. Knowledge of the dangers of tobacco is a powerful tool; it should be successfully applied in everyday life and counseling.

Cigarettes cause a lot of physical and emotional pain both to smokers and their relatives. Therefore, sometimes when I look at thousands of people with a smoking cigarette on the streets of my city, and at thousands of people who relatively indifferent look at these smokers, I begin to wonder if the people are in their right mind and aware of what they are doing. I used to be like this for eighteen years. Sometimes I hated myself for not being able to stop smoking, but then I managed to quit smoking for a short while. But then I returned to smoking because I did not have the knowledge that I have now. To emphasize once again the importance of this chapter, I'll quote here the words of the famous tobacco addiction counselor Allen Carr: "Just for a moment take your head out of the sand and ask yourself, if you knew for certain that the next cigarette would be the one to trigger off cancer in your body, whether you would smoke it. The thing is that any cigarette can trigger it off! It's a sort of Russian roulette! What is going to happen to your family and loved ones, your plans, and your dreams? I often see the people that it happens to. They didn't think it would happen to them either, and the worst thing about it isn't the disease itself but the

knowledge they have brought it on themselves.

They then see the “habit” as it is and spend the remainder of their lives thinking, “Why did I kid myself I needed to smoke? If only I had the chance to go back!” (my comments are written in italic. – A. Ovechkin)⁴.

We’ll talk about the feeling of guilt and regret in the second chapter, and now I turn directly to the dangers of smoking and its effect on human health.

Eva, 40

I started smoking in high school, and by the age of 30, I had been dying to quit. I got tired of this nasty addiction. I got tired of the need to hide it from my loved ones. Even being an adult, an independent person, I used to hide from my grandparents to smoke because they would never understand it. I never smoked when my little daughter was around. At work, I also had to look for time and place to smoke a cigarette. My boss did not smoke, and I was embarrassed to ask him for a smoke break. I decided that I should quit smoking before health issues started. The idea had been brewing in my mind for a while. I went to bed and woke up, thinking about it. But I just couldn’t quit cold turkey. Eventually, I pulled myself together and did it. I haven’t smoked for 5 years. I wish I had done this earlier.

Any smoker can quit smoking! FUCK TOBACCO!

☺ Sergeant: “Why shouldn’t a soldier march across a parade ground with a burning cigarette?”

⁴ Allen Carr: EASY WAY TO STOP SMOKING PENGUIN BOOKS – 208 p.

Rookie: “Quite right, sir! I can’t realize it too! Why shouldn’t he?”

1.2. How does tobacco smoke affect the human body?

It doesn't matter how many cigarettes you smoke a day; it doesn't matter if the cigarettes are "light" or not; it doesn't even matter what you smoke: cigarettes, cigars, a pipe, and so on. Smoking sooner or later will lead to diseases. The diseases caused by smoking are as follows: chronic bronchitis, coronary heart disease, emphysema, bronchial asthma, bronchiectasis disease, cancer.

Smoking doesn't cause but triggers it, provoking the development of such diseases, while reducing the protective functions in the body. Smoking changes in blood composition. Red blood cell count decreases, and blood vessels age faster.

Nicotine demands a large amount of oxygen, while carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke reduces its flow rate. Yeah, it sounds like an oxymoron. And if we consider the fact that part of hemoglobin combines with carbon monoxide and forms oxyhemoglobin, which cannot supply the body tissues with oxygen. As a result, smokers start suffering from a lack of oxygen. The reduction of oxygen in the body deteriorates a state of health of a smoker. The metabolic rate decreases too. The body content of vitamin C of a non-smoking person is two times higher. But the worst thing is that the body content of vitamin C of passive smokers decreases as well.

Memory impairment, performance decrement, headache, short temper, and insomnia are also “bonuses” caused by smoking. In addition to the negative impact on the mental state in general, neurasthenia is likely to develop. Long-term smoking can lead to a decrease in visual acuity, deafness, trembling hands, impaired smell, and taste. Smokers have a weaker sense of smell than non-smokers and cannot enjoy the sweet taste to the full. Attention concentration also decreases. After smoking a pack of cigarettes, you’ll need two extra hours to complete any task. Smoking adversely affects functions of the endocrine glands, such as the pituitary gland, adrenal gland, thyroid gland, and others.

Marina, 33

I have not smoked for a year and a half, and before that, I tried to quit smoking at least ten times. I gave myself a promise, restrained myself from smoking for several days, and then broke down. I smoked a pack of cigarettes a day by the age of 32. During one of my attempts, I started reading a book by Allen Carr. It helped me a lot, but I can't entirely agree with some of his tips and conclusions. Allen claims that quitting smoking does not cause any side effects. I felt poorly. I regularly suffered from headaches, dizziness, constipation, insomnia, mood swings, irritability. The author also advises not to change lifestyle. But it didn't work out for me. When I met my smoking friends, I even lit a cigarette.

I slightly corrected Allen Carr's ideas and succeeded.

1. Remedies, like sedatives, laxatives, analgesics, helped

ease quitting side effects. Taking the Valerian root extract helped me cope with insomnia and irritation.

2. Long walks. I went for a walk even when I had dizziness and convinced myself that it was a sign of recovery, and not an ailment.

3. Quit drinking.

4. Drink a lot of water.

5. Do not focus on the problem. Do not tell everyone in your environment that you decided to give up the bad habit. Do not discuss your health state.

It took me two weeks to quit smoking. I felt that a strong desire to smoke didn't haunt me as often as before. Awareness of the fact that a smoker suffers without smoking even more than the one that quits helped me to suppress nicotine hunger attacks. After all, we cannot smoke on a bus, in the workplace, in the cinema or the theater. This observation supported me and helped me not to get back to this addiction. The attacks last only a few seconds, and one can easily endure it. Two months later, I happily realized that I didn't feel the desire to smoke anymore, and I hadn't smoked my usual 6 cartons of cigarettes at that time. What a significant health benefit!

Any smoker can quit smoking! FUCK TOBACCO!

☺ Smoking is like walking through a minefield.

It is inappropriate to refer to those who were lucky to escape.

1.3. How smoking affects our nervous system

The nervous system of a smoker suffers severely. Failures in its functioning cause dysfunction of the digestive tract and cardiovascular system. The adverse effect of nicotine is that initially, it excites the nervous system, increasing its activity, and then inhibits it. That is why smokers suffer from sleep disturbances, become quick-tempered and restrained. They may also experience a loss of appetite.

Depending on the degree of the poisoning of the body, acute or chronic, the nervous system transforms. Long-term smoking affects spinal nerve roots. Untimely termination in menstruation, male sexual dysfunction is caused by inhibition in the nerve centers that control the reproductive system. Consequences of smoking include polyneuritis, sciatica, neuritis, and others.

Fainting, dizziness, vomiting due to vascular spasms of the blood vessels of the brain are often caused by intensive smoking. A smoker's brain nutrition is reduced as a result of cerebral vascular sclerosis, which in turn can lead to convulsive seizures. Brain illnesses are most likely to occur in smokers, and the probability of the hemorrhages is three to four times higher.

Alevtina, 36

I quit smoking a year ago, and I felt that it improved my health. I have neither headaches nor tachycardia

anymore, and my bad breath has also disappeared. People close to me noticed that my face skin improved, and some wrinkles disappeared. I have more energy now. I want to move forward, do something. Drowsiness has disappeared. Quitting smoking improved the quality of my life.

Any smoker can quit smoking! FUCK TOBACCO!

☺ Many people ask me how I quit smoking. It's unbelievable, but I just stopped to put cigarettes in my mouth and light them. And it worked out!

1.4. How smoking affects the respiratory system

Do not underestimate the influence of smoking on your respiratory system. Chronic lung diseases, bronchitis, and pharynx diseases are frequent companions of smokers. Tobacco smoke, as it passes through the upper respiratory tract, adversely affects the mucous membrane of nasopharynx, bronchi, and trachea, which causes increased salivation and mucus production. The presence of accumulated mucus in the bronchi causes frequent coughing.

Pyridine (a toxic substance found in tobacco smoke) also provokes morning coughing and irritates the mucous membranes of the eyes, tongue, and throat. In combination with other harmful substances, it causes bronchial spasms and increases in the volume and mass of the mucous membranes of the glands that secrete excess sputum. It significantly reduces airway resistance to infections. And since tobacco is not clean-burning, combustion products (soot and tar) enter the respiratory tract. Laryngitis may develop, making your voice hoarse. Chronic bronchitis, pulmonary emphysema, and tracheitis are among the other gruesome diseases caused by smoking. Secondary infection of the respiratory tract due to excess mucus production is more common in smokers.

Last but not least, smoking may cause cancer of the

respiratory system. Most deaths from cancer of the larynx and lungs, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema are associated with smoking. I guess everybody knows what the human lungs of a smoker look like. There are a lot of pictures and scary images on this subject on the Internet.

Smoking also decreases the protective function of the ciliated bronchial epithelium, which can lead to the occurrence and development of pulmonary infections. Smokers are more likely than non-smokers to develop tuberculosis disease since harmful substances contained in tobacco smoke change (and not for the better) deteriorated respiratory function. Besides, smoking hinders medical treatment of the disease. Therefore, it might be evident that the lung function of a smoker is impaired, which results in the narrowing of the airways. The respiratory metabolism deteriorates too, which leads to oxygen deficiency. The good news is that if you quit smoking, the impairment of bronchi ceases. If you quit smoking at a young age, you can achieve a complete restoration of lung function. A great bonus of giving up long-term smoking is decreasing of cough and shortness of breath.

Sergey, 40

I do not have a short breath anymore. It disappeared as soon as I quit smoking. Besides, I also got rid of bad breath. My wife is glad that all the money now goes to the family.

Any smoker can quit smoking! FUCK TOBACCO!

☺ Paphnutiy saw “No smoking!” sign in the plane and

asked a stewardess for a smokeless cigarette.

1.5. The effect of smoking on the cardiovascular system

Nicotine increases the chances of cardiovascular disease and stroke. We should also remember that smoking may trigger ischemic/ hypertensive heart diseases and cause myocardial infarction and atherosclerosis. Harmful substances contained in tobacco smoke penetrate the bloodstream and spread through the tissues in literally half a minute (time necessary for one entire cycle of the blood circulation). Therefore, they almost immediately affect the human body. Spasms that are experienced by small blood vessels after smoking two cigarettes in a row last about half an hour. Accordingly, if you smoke twenty times a day or more, blood vessel spasms have persistent and chronic nature.

Fragility and frailness of arteries, loss of elasticity are also consequences of smoking. Nicotine provokes narrowing of blood vessels, so the gap between the small arteries becomes smaller, and this results in a tissue perfusion disorder. A disastrous outcome is almost inevitable, because every year, the gap becomes smaller and smaller, and constant spasm is a significant factor in the development of hypertension, thrombophlebitis, and atherosclerosis.

Due to nicotine, the gap also becomes smaller in the vessels of the brain, which makes them age faster and decreases the elasticity of the blood vessels. The blood flow to the brain

decreases. It causes circulatory disorders and may lead to a brain hemorrhage. Smoking is responsible for accelerating the heart rate by twenty beats per minute. The heart is forced to work harder, pumping blood, and spasms of the vessels that feed our heart lead to the inhibition of heart function. As a result, the smoker complains of chest pains and heart beating fast.

Complaints of nicotine-addicted persons about dizziness and nausea, when smoking too much, indicate that the blood vessels of the heart are cramping. But dizziness is just the beginning. The more severe consequence of the spasms is myocardial infarction. And if a large area of the heart deteriorates, it may cause death. A heart attack occurs three times more often in people addicted to tobacco products at the age of forty to fifty, compared with those who do not smoke.

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