

## Module 3 - Understanding Tobacco Use Disorder

### Clinical Application Exercise for Tobacco Use Disorder Module

(Vignettes adapted from originals composed by Anna Kukafka at the Massachusetts Smoker's Helpline)

#### Anita:

*When I run out of cigarettes, it doesn't matter if it's five degrees outside and I have to walk three extra blocks to an ATM for cash -- I stop whatever I'm doing and I go buy a pack. I feel relief the minute I start peeling off the wrapper. When I light up and inhale I feel like myself again. Smoking relaxes me. I love the taste, the smell, everything. This might sound weird, but cigarettes are my best friends.*

*The thing is, I'm not getting any younger. I've been coughing stuff up in the mornings, and my teeth are stained yellow. Last time I saw my doctor she told me I had bronchitis again and needed to quit. I ended up stopping for six days because I was so sick. As I got better I started to miss smoking. I felt depressed. Like something very important was missing. I thought to myself, I'll just have one or two. I'll smoke less than I was before, and start going back to the gym.*

*That idea failed. Since then I've tried to quit several times and I just can't seem to do it. For someone with a college degree, I feel like a real idiot. I'm still smoking a pack a day and I know I have bronchitis again. I can feel how clogged my lungs are. I cough all the time. I get out of breath going up a flight of stairs and I'm only thirty-eight. As much as I think I need cigarettes in my life, I don't like what they're doing to me. I want to stop smoking. I'm embarrassed to admit it, but I need help with this.*

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**Kevin:**

*My brother and all his friends smoke. I'm trying to quit, but I'm living in his apartment. I can't tell him not to smoke in his own living room. I'm just sick of this. Half my paycheck goes to cigarettes. I'll never save money and move out of here if I keep smoking. I know that if I quit, I'll play better basketball. My chest gets tight sometimes when I run, so I don't play that much anymore.*

*Yeah, smoking is lame, but I like it. I smoke menthols. They're not as bad for you as regular cigarettes and I like the taste. When I get stressed about stuff, smoking calms me down and helps me think. I started out just smoking a couple now and then, getting them off of friends. Then I started buying my own pack, and before I knew it, I'm up to a pack a day. I never thought I'd smoke like this. My mom wants me to quit real bad, so I lie and tell her I'm down to 5 a day.*

*I feel like a chump when I go out with my girlfriend. She doesn't like me smoking, says I smell bad. I can't even afford to pay for the movies. She pays. I light up the second we get outside – I love the cigarette right after the movie. I want to stop now, like today. Just throw the pack in the garbage and be done with it. But the last time I tried, I felt so lousy by the third day, all nerved up and my girlfriend told me I was being real nasty. So I broke down and bought a pack.*

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**Norman:** *I'm a recovering alcoholic, sober almost four years. Now I feel like I'm ready to give up cigarettes. I started smoking after I started drinking, just once in a while at the bars, but I've been at a pack and a half a day for like 10 years. I'm really trying to quit. I thought quitting smoking would be easy compared to quitting drinking, but every time I try to quit, I get so anxious and depressed that I go back to smoking. Last time I quit, I gained like 15 pounds. I don't want that to happen again. Most of my friends still smoke, and I don't know how they'd react if I was to quit.*

*It looks like I need to go back to basics. After all, the only way I was able to give up drinking was to take it one day at a time. But I went to detox and a program when I quit drinking, and I've never heard about any programs for people trying to quit smoking. Last week, my boss told me I was taking too many breaks at work, but I can't help it, after a while, I really need a cigarette. I don't know what I'm going to do. Plus, for the past few months, I've been coughing like crazy in the morning, and sometimes my heart beats really fast right after I smoke. My problem is I've always been a worrier. I have this fear that I won't be able to get through any kind of tough situation without smoking. I mean, what will I use as a crutch?*

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**Francine:** *My doctor says I have the beginning stages of emphysema. He and my husband say I have to quit smoking. I know I should, but I'll never be able to quit. I've been smoking 2 packs a day for 40 years. I've been enjoying smoking for such a long time and I don't know how they expect me to just give them up.*

*When I was young they didn't tell us cigarettes were bad for you. In fact it was very glamorous to smoke. I've tried to quit a few times over the years, but never did. One year I did that Smokeout day, but I had such a headache and couldn't stand it – I didn't even make it till the afternoon. I never want to go through that again. Almost all my girlfriends smoke, and we've been playing cards together every week for years. I'm not giving that up. As it is, I can't play bingo anymore, they changed it to non-smoking. I don't know what to do. My breathing is getting bad, I know it's the smoking, but how can I ever quit?*