

# Nicotine

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the availability, the greater the use," she said.

The Black cab driver describes it as being a psychological game in which the cigarette fills the voids in his life.

"It helps our thinking," he said, agreeing only to give his first name, Dan.

He illustrates: "You take a puff." His left hand on the

steering wheel, he feigns a pensive look, puts an imaginary cigarette to his mouth with his right hand, drags deeply and breathes out slowly.

"The cigarette helps your thinking. It's like a fictional person... The cigarette is a major player in affecting the situation," he tells his customer, this reporter for the NNPA News Service.

The drag is often to a dead end, according to statistics reported by the Center for Disease Control and the American Heart Association:

— Of the more than 4.5 million Americans who die from smoking-related diseases every year, 450,000 are African-Americans.

— Twenty-two percent of all adult African-Americans smoke. The smoking rate of

Blacks is approximately equal to that of Whites, although African-Americans make up only 12 percent of America's population and Whites make up 80 percent.

— Heart disease and stroke, the leading cause of death in America, account for about a third of all deaths among African-Americans. It is estimated that as many as 30 percent of African-American deaths from these cardiovascular diseases are a result of tobacco use. About 42 percent of Black men have high blood pressure (which leads to stroke), compared to 31 percent of White men.

— Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the U.S. and among African-Americans. Of African-Americans, 5,853 women, and 10,030 men died of lung, trachea or bronchus cancer in 2001, cigarette smoking being the main cause. In 2003, 50 percent more Black men died of lung cancer than White men.

The U.S. Agency for Health Care Research and Quality reports that, based on research, "Quit rates are higher for Whites than for Blacks and Hispanics. Black smokers appear to be more dependent on tobacco than Whites; that is, they are more likely to light up within the

first 10 minutes after waking in the morning," states a report by the agency.

"Race and sex may play a role in a person's ability to give up smoking," it continues. "Although Black smokers smoke significantly fewer cigarettes, start smoking later than Whites and report more desire to quit, they have more difficulty quitting."

Kevin McDonald, a chef, who quit smoking two years ago after smoking consistently for 25 years, says he simply got tired of the dependency. "I got tired of waking up and the first thing I'd do is light a cigarette."

But, he agrees with Dan. "I guess it does soothe. I guess it calms you in some sense, maybe the nicotine," said McDonald, 51. "For me, it was between [smoking] and coffee. But, I find that to be a weak excuse."

Researchers have also pointed to the fact that Blacks prefer mentholated cigarettes, which are harder to quit.

A report by the Journal of the American Medical Association refers to a *Science Daily* article that states: "Menthol and non-menthol cigarettes appear to be equally harmful to the arteries and to lung function, but smokers of menthols may be

less likely to attempt or succeed at quitting."

The Journal continues, "For a variety of historical and cultural reasons, including targeted advertising by the tobacco industry, African-American smokers are much more likely to smoke menthol cigarettes than European-American smokers [approximately 70 percent for Blacks to 30 percent for Whites]."

Doctors speculate that menthol, a type of alcohol, has a numbing affect on the upper respiratory system after a few drags, causing the smoker to drag deeper to get the cool sensation that comes from menthol. The result is deeper, increasingly toxic inhalation and greater dependency on the nicotine.

"The tobacco industry has used targeted advertising to effectively drive up their sales and profits. In doing so, it drove up the death rate of African-Americans," concludes a study, *Being a Black Smoker*, a Joint Project of the National African-American Tobacco Prevention Network and The University of Dayton School of Law.

McDonald, who smoked mentholated Newports, says he quit cold turkey two years ago for a simple reason: "I wanted to live."

## Your Horoscope Says...April 12-18

### ARIES

You may feel restless this week because you have an excess of mental energy. You can channel that into productivity by applying your fine mind to tasks that you have been putting off for a while. You'll feel more settled at the end of the week.

Soul Affirmation: All things work together for good.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 16, 30

### TAURUS

Wear your smile as if it were your favorite fashion accessory this week. You're sure to feel better when you see how many times your smile is returned to you. Do what makes you happy. This is a good week to embrace your uniqueness and celebrate your individuality.

Soul Affirmation: The slowness of my week gives me time to refresh my energy.

Lucky Numbers: 20, 40, 55

### GEMINI

Luck will be with you if you allow positive vibrations to accompany all of your activities, especially this week. Keep away from naysayers. Considering your options for too long could cause self-defeating hesitation. Trust your impulses and move ahead.

Soul Affirmation: I realize new strengths and make them habits.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 17, 32

### CANCER

Exercise will be needed to work off some of your excess energy this week. Take a walk and remember that your world is made up of many beautiful parts. The part you are focusing on so intently this week is not your entire world. Proceed accordingly!

Soul Affirmation: I give my mind a big rest again this week.

Lucky Numbers: 26, 32, 36

### LEO

This is a terrific week for putting your thoughts about people and projects on paper. Spend some time writing things down, and you'll find that you feel more balanced, centered and on track. These are definitely the days to follow your own drumbeat and ignore anyone who wants to tell you that your plans won't work.

Soul Affirmation: I appear to others what I know myself to be.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 8, 10

### VIRGO

You are gifted with excellent analytical abilities this week. Those abilities will prove very useful to you, as you may want to analyze why certain people are acting in a certain way. Be discreet if you see something you weren't supposed to see. Be cool if someone tries to get on your nerves.

Soul Affirmation: I take things slow and rest often.

Lucky Numbers: 40, 20, 12

### LIBRA

A partner may be prone to up and down mood swings this week. Stay positive and listen closely for what you need to hear. Take it easy and don't fret over every tiny detail of a conversation. Keep the big picture in mind and a positive outlook will ensue.

Soul Affirmation: I let go and let the spirit take control.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 17, 32

### SCORPIO

Someone with a sloppy attitude toward a project that is important to you may annoy you this week. Let yourself feel free to protect your own interests. Guard against quick answers and sharp remarks. Live and let live is the message you need to keep in mind.

Soul Affirmation: I use my mind to work in my best interest.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 16, 17

### SAGITTARIUS

Health, self-management, and independence are on your mind this week. Keep your workout goals and you'll find that you are getting some great ideas for the future as you improve your physical self. You are in harmony with all your desires. Move with ease towards what you want.

Soul Affirmation: I give myself chance to know how wonderful I am.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 22, 41

### CAPRICORN

You have artistic gifts that you are beginning to ache to express. Why not let the force of your talent out of the secret place where you've been keeping it? You'll be pleasantly surprised if you act on that impulse to step out of the rational.

Soul Affirmation: There are no obstacles in my way that I can't get around.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 16, 25

### AQUARIUS

Are you receiving as much as you are giving? Give yourself a break and avoid anyone who seems to expect more than his or her share of you. It's high time that you pampered your beautiful self. This is a good week to focus on love and self-love.

Soul Affirmation: I turn all of my emotions toward the home front.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 24, 47

### PISCES

Treat yourself with tenderness! Buy or make yourself some bread pudding or sweet potato pie or whatever your favorite comfort food is and enjoy it, from preparation to your lips. You are practicing receiving goodness from the Universe. Let it flow over you with abundant prosperity this week.

Soul Affirmation: I let myself adapt to the flow of life around me.

Lucky Numbers: 16, 29, 33



Theme:



Concert - Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> @ 6:00 pm  
Little Peoples Choir - Ages 5 - 12 Workshop - \$15.00

SISTER SHERRAL C. McCALL, LPC Directress



Concert - Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 6:00 pm  
Mass Choir - Ages 13 - 21 Workshop - \$15.00

MINISTER JAMES R. SMITH, YPC Director

**Empowerment Workshop**  
April 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> ~ 6:00 pm  
Free Hot Meals Nightly ~ Pre-registration 5:30 pm

Greater Evergreen Missionary Baptist Church, Host church  
1915 Lexington Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89106 Dr. Welton P. Smith, Pastor



Jocelyn Oats ~ Workshop Coordinator

For further information please log on to [www.cwymw.org](http://www.cwymw.org)  
or call 702.649.3553; 702.277.7312

