

Materials Navigating Nicotine Dependence Case Studies, chart paper, markers

Learning Outcome Explain the meaning of addiction and substance dependence and develop a plan to quit a substance addiction

Flipped Classroom Strategy (Optional)

A flipped classroom is an instructional model where direct instruction is delivered to students *outside of and before* instructional time. Students are introduced to content that supports the introduction, comprehension, and recall of content and then instructional time is utilized to apply, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate content.

Before implementing this activity during instructional time, provide students with the link to the [Tobacco Addiction: Nicotine and Other Factors](#) video.



Activity Description

If utilizing a flipped classroom approach, begin a discussion about the video that students watched before class asking them what learned about addiction. If not utilizing a flipped classroom approach, watch the [Tobacco Addiction: Nicotine and Other Factors](#) video and discuss it.

Explain to students that the word “addiction” is often used to refer to any behaviour that is out of control in some way. People often describe themselves as being addicted to, for example, a TV show or shopping. Addiction is also used to explain the experience of withdrawal when a substance or behaviour (e.g., caffeine) is stopped (e.g., “I must be addicted to coffee: because I get a headache when I don’t have my cup in the morning”). However, experiencing enjoyment when engaging in the behaviour, or going through withdrawal when not engaging in the behaviour, do not in themselves mean a person has an addiction.

Share with students that the word *addiction* is commonly used in such a vague way, there have been many attempts to define it more clearly. The definition used here refers to problematic use of a substance such as cigarettes or vaping. One simple way of describing addiction is the presence of the 4 Cs:

- *Craving*
- *Loss of Control* of amount or frequency of use
- *Compulsion* to use
- *Use despite Consequences*

Divide the class into groups of four equal groups. Give each group a case study handout provided at the end of this activity. Ask groups to read the case study and use the 4 C’s to brainstorm how this person might make a plan to quit their addiction. The groups may choose to make a short-term or long-term plan. Remember there is no one size fits all plan to quitting.



Each group will have 5-8 minutes to read the case study and write their thoughts on a piece of chart paper. Once the time is up, groups will rotate to another case study and add to what the group(s) before have written. This will allow each group to see, and add to, their peers' ideas. At the end of the activity, there will be a quit plan for each case study.

If students need support coming up with ideas for the quit plan, the following points will provide direction.

- Write a list of reasons for quitting.
- Visualize themselves as someone who does not use tobacco.
- Reduce smoking.
- Find substitutes for smoking.
- Think about what needs smoking meets for her them and how she they will meet these needs without it.
- Identify cues.
- Cut one cigarette a day per week.
- Identify challenges after a day or two of not smoking.
- Change patterns connected to smoking.
- View quitting as constructive and use positive self-talk.
- Understand that quitting is a process.
- Download and use personal habit tracker
- Review past attempts to quit and consider what went well and what didn't go well.
- Practice deep breathing and relaxation exercises whenever a cue arises.
- Find substitutes for smoking by using this Choosing Alternative Rewards document.
- Get support from family, friends, or someone who you respect and trust.
- Consider how the environment shapes your addiction and view How Environment Shapes Behavior + 4 Ways to Break Unhealthy Habits.

Discuss the various plans that the class have come up with together. Ask the class how have they differentiated their approach for each case study.

Healthy Living Competencies

THINK



Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate knowledge about healthy habits, health risk situations, and the short-term and long-term effects of their health choices.

FEEL



Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy living for themselves, others, and their community.

ACT



Practice behavioural skills and strategies that facilitate choices, actions, and habits for healthy living.



Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning. Consider asking students the following questions and discuss the answers together.

- *Is addiction a choice or an illness? Or both? Explain your thinking.*
- *Sometimes people with addictions are stigmatized. What have you learned about addiction that may help you better understand and support a person with an addiction?*

Observing Learning Outcomes

Sample questions to observe learning outcomes include:

- Can the study successfully describe what is meant by addiction and substance dependence?
- Does the student demonstrate the ability to work respectfully and effectively with group members?
- Does the student contribute ideas to the quitting plan for the case studies?

Learning Extension (Optional)

Have students explore [The Canadian Lung Association's](#) website and learn more about smoking, vaping, and quitting. Ask students to note other points that may be added to the quitting plan for each case study.



Navigating Nicotine Dependence Case Studies

Case Study 1 - Raquel

Raquel started smoking at age 14 because they thought it made them look older and more sophisticated. At age 15, Raquel smokes four or five cigarettes a day. They usually gets them from their smoking acquaintances, who sometimes get tired of supplying Raquel with tobacco. Raquel doesn't have a job and can't regularly afford their own. Sometimes Raquel has to go without for a day or two, or over the weekend, without cigarettes because they just can't get any. When this happens, Raquel feels anxious and grumpy, and thinks a lot about how they will get their next cigarette.

Raquel lives with their grandparents who are both proud of Raquel because they are a good student and never gives them any trouble. They usually give Raquel permission to do what they want because they trust Raquel and think they are responsible. Raquel's grandfather has smoked for 50 years and thinks all the "debate" about tobacco control and reduction is ridiculous. However, since Raquel came to live with them, their grandfather bowed to pressure from grandma and now only smokes outside because their grandmother requested this. Raquel's grandfather doesn't know that Raquel uses tobacco.

Raquel finds that they craves a cigarette when they are studying or feeling stressed out about school. Raquel thinks about getting a part time job after school so they can buy their own cigarettes, but is worried about how that might affect their marks. Raquel hopes to be a lawyer someday and places particular importance on doing their best at school. Raquel also craves a cigarette when they are bored, lonely, or misses their mom and dad.

Raquel is not physically active, although they would like to be more so. Raquel used to play softball and take dance when they were younger, but for some reason stopped all that as they got to their teen years. Raquel doesn't have too many friends yet because they changed schools pretty recently when they came to live with their grandparents, and Raquel finds it hard to meet new people. One weekend when Raquel is in withdrawal from no cigarettes, they thinks about what it would be like to quit smoking but doesn't know how they would handle all the stress and loneliness without it.

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Case Study 2 - Rajiv

Rajiv started smoking shisha in a waterpipe or “hookah” 10 months ago at age 16. Rajiv experimented with smoking hookah off and on for three or four years in social situations when their friends and family would use it, but is now using it more often and sometimes by themselves. Rajiv liked how it made them look and feel, and later began to notice that they were craving the nicotine, and would feel bad if they didn't have it. Now Rajiv smokes hookah about 5-6 times a day. Rajiv plays sports and has noticed recently that smoking is affecting performance. Rajiv is not able to catch their breath as quickly and feels like it is more work to run than it used to be. Rajiv's coach has expressed concern about it and offered to help him if he wants to quit. A couple of other people on the Rajiv's basketball team smoke cigarettes, and they've talked about the idea of quitting together.

Rajiv doesn't think his parents are aware that he is using a waterpipe regularly. Rajiv's mom does not smoke and his dad only smokes a hookah occasionally, at social gatherings. Rajiv is afraid he will let them down if they know that Rajiv is smoking regularly. Rajiv's younger sister does not support his smoking, and always tells him Rajiv that they should stop. Rajiv's sister can't believe their parents aren't aware of Rajiv's waterpipe use.

Rajiv squeezes waterpipe smoking into his day when he can. Rajiv usually smokes before school, about an hour after waking up, and one or two more times during the course of the day. Rajiv has one more when we they get home from school, and then must wait until they are out with friends to smoke again. Sometimes Rajiv 'goes for a walk' just so they can smoke during the evening.

Most of Rajiv's friends do not smoke and many are willing to help Rajiv quit. Rajiv has never tried to quit before, but is worried about withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, coughing and headaches, plus ongoing cravings. Rajiv really likes the effect of waterpipe smoking, and has only gone a day or two without it when he couldn't afford it or while on a family holiday. He didn't like the withdrawal symptoms he experienced, and he can't imagine feeling like that for days and days.

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Case Study 3 - Mei Lee

Mei Lee started using an electronic smoking product that contained nicotine (also called vaping) at age 15, when her friend suggested that she try using her vape pen. She really liked the effect and bought one of her own right after trying for the first time. Mei Lee is now 17 and is vaping every day. Mei Lee has noticed it takes more puffs on her vape pen to feel good than it used to, but she has resisted increasing her use too much because she can't afford it. She has recently noticed how easily she gets out of breath. Her seven year old brother always asks her what she is doing when she vapes. He seems curious about vaping, and asks lots of questions about it.

Mei Lee's father smokes cigarettes. He feels he can't say much to her about her vaping, since he smokes himself. Although he doesn't like it, Mei Lee vapes in her bedroom, and uses her vape pen first thing in the morning before even getting out of bed to face the day.

Most of Mei Lee's friends smoke or vape. She has one friend who quit, and who keeps encouraging Mei Lee to quit too, but she doesn't see her much anymore. Mei Lee vapes at home, while walking to the bus stop, at the bus stop, before school, at lunch, after school, and while walking home from the bus.

Mei Lee works in a restaurant as a server. Mei Lee vapes before work and on her 15-minute break outside by the grease bin. She thinks standing out there is disgusting. Mei Lee tried to quit vaping once when she was 16. She lasted three days before starting up again. Mei Lee found the physical withdrawal symptoms to be unbearable. But she believes she started again mostly because she broke up with her boyfriend at that time, and felt stressed out and lonely.



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Case Study 4 - David

David uses chewing tobacco pretty much constantly. David started at age 13 while helping on the farm, chewing occasionally. David liked the feeling he got from the nicotine and began chewing more consistently. David is now 17 and chews about 8-10 times a day, and sometimes goes to bed with tobacco in his cheek at night.

David is in Grade 12 and is an average student. He is not involved in many sports or activities because the work on the farm occupies most of his spare time. David sees himself working on the farm with his older brother after high school and becoming a heavy-duty mechanic. David finds it is easy to chew during the vast majority of the day when working on the farm, because it doesn't interfere with his hands or cause a fire hazard like smoking would.

David has become very dependent on chewing tobacco. If David goes without for even a few hours he begins to feel sick and dizzy. The cost is becoming a bit of an issue because it is so expensive, and David also doesn't like having to spit all the time. When he is out on the farm, it is not a big issue, but in other situations it is often inconvenient for him to spit out the tobacco juice, like while in school or at a movie. Sometimes David swallows the juice, but this leaves him feeling a bit nauseated and disgusted. David's girlfriend thinks it's disgusting too. She often complains and won't kiss him when he's been chewing, which is a lot of the time.

David has noticed some small white sores on his gum in the spot where he puts his chewing tobacco. He's not sure, but thinks it is probably not a good sign, and it scares him a little bit. His father and older brother both chew tobacco too. His mother doesn't like it, and is always encouraging them to quit, especially since his dad had a mild heart attack last spring. David has thought briefly about quitting, but his few, brief experiences with withdrawal symptoms were brutal. He feels quite certain that he would be unable to stay tobacco-free in the face of all that discomfort.