“DEADS Strategy” for
How to Deal with Cravings

D-Delay

The most important thing to remember is that an urge will go away whether you smoke or not. Waiting out an urge, especially if you begin to do something else, is easier than you may expect. Believe it or not, the urge will fade after about 5-10 minutes, even if you don’t smoke. It also helps if you have a positive attitude about the urge disappearing. Think “This won’t last, the urge will go away” or “I would like a cigarette, but I am not going to have one, because I don’t need one.”

E-Escape

Remove yourself from the situation or event that led to the urge. If you’re in a room where others are smoking and an urge hits, get up and take a short walk. You can walk around the building or outside until you feel ready to re-enter the situation without smoking.

A-Avoid

Avoid situations where you’ll be tempted to smoke. This will be particularly important in the first days and weeks after you quit. For example, if you regularly go places where there’s a lot of smoking, it’s best to avoid them for a little while to allow you to get used to not smoking.

D-Distract

Get busy and get back to what you were doing before the urge hit. There may be other things you enjoy doing that are incompatible with smoking. You can try working in the yard, reading a book or magazine, walking, taking a shower, or working on a crossword puzzle.

S-Substitute

When you feel you want a cigarette, substitute something else for a cigarette. Try sugar-free candy or sugar-free gum, especially if you are watching your weight. You could also eat a piece of fruit or drink a glass of water. Chew on something like a straw or a toothpick. The trick is to come up with something you like that can be easily substituted for a cigarette.