



***NOTE TO MEDIA:** Nearly a dozen "Success Stories" and downloadable photos for different regions of New York State are available at the Quitline's Online News Room: <https://nysmokefree.com/newsroom>. Inspirational New Yorkers became nicotine-free in 2020 for a variety of reasons: COVID-19 concerns, the birth of a child, improved health, battling cancer and much more. Please reach out to the Quitline any time, any day, for supplemental interviews to enhance your coverage of New Year's resolutions and stories of hope heading into 2021.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO BROOKLYN SUCCESS STORIES PROVIDE INSPIRATION TO BECOME NICOTINE-FREE IN 2021

Despite the challenges of 2020, Sholom G. and Lorinda C. overcame addictions to smoking and vaping with support from the New York State Smokers' Quitline

BROOKLYN, N.Y. – Dec. 31, 2020 – Sholom G. and Lorinda C. are two very different people from Brooklyn yet share a common accomplishment for 2020. Both now enjoy nicotine-free living and better health thanks to support from the New York State Smokers' Quitline (Quitline).



Sholom (*pictured at left*), 26, smoked cigarettes since age 17 and later took up vaping as well. He became a pack-a-day smoker and tried quitting numerous times but felt anxious without nicotine. Shortly after the start of 2020, Sholom found the ultimate impetus to make a lasting change.

"When my wife and I learned we would become parents to a daughter in the fall, that gave

me the final push I needed to become nicotine-free,” Sholom said. “I knew smoking and vaping were doing me harm, and I was cognizant of the awful smell and my shortness of breath. But most of all, I wanted to be ready to spend time around my daughter with no worries.”

In consultation with the Quitline’s Quit Coaches, Sholom developed a personalized quit-plan and received free nicotine patches and nicotine lozenges a few days later in the mail. He will happily celebrate one year of being nicotine-free in January 2021.

Lorinda (*pictured at right*), 52, first tried a cigarette at age 14 and then smoked for 35 years. She successfully quit in 2014 and remained tobacco-free for four years. Then, in 2018, she mistakenly thought she could have “just one cigarette.” Once the COVID-19 pandemic hit earlier this year, Lorinda began using tobacco products more than ever.



“I live on my own and always had excuses to keep smoking,” Lorinda said. “I thought I wasn’t strong enough to overcome my addiction to nicotine. I needed help, so I called the Quitline for support.”

Lorinda, originally from Scotland, moved to Brooklyn in 2000. One year later, she survived the September 11 attacks but eventually developed asthma. “I was part of a 9/11 survivors’ group at Bellevue Hospital and took part in a smoking cessation program,” Lorinda said. “When I became tobacco-free for that four-year stretch, my breathing and sense of taste improved dramatically. I wanted to feel that way again.”

The extra time spent indoors due to the COVID-19 pandemic enabled Lorinda to focus and develop a plan for the next chapter in her life. She wanted to fulfill a lifelong dream to experience living the Netherlands and told herself she couldn’t travel there unless she first became tobacco-free.

“There are so many fantastic health reasons for becoming tobacco-free, but I think the financial benefits are huge, too,” Lorinda said. “With the money I would have spent on cigarettes, I instead put it in a jar as part of my travel expenses. Once I saw how quickly it added up, I almost couldn’t believe that somehow I used to find \$15 every day to smoke.”

Lorinda became tobacco-free in early September and moved to Amsterdam shortly thereafter. She has more energy than ever before and feels more motivated to make the

most of every day. These are two major factors why she recently hopped on a bicycle for the first time since age 8 and now “travels everywhere with it.”

Sholom, meanwhile, is enjoying time with his wife and newborn daughter. In place of smoking and vaping, he now enjoys meditation and breathing exercises.

“Anytime you’re not smoking or vaping, it’s a ‘win,’” Sholom said. “If you smoke and you tried quitting before, try again. Just because you were unsuccessful in the past, doesn’t mean you’ll be unsuccessful on your next attempt.”

Lorinda encourages all tobacco users to contact their healthcare professionals and the Quitline for support. “Track your progress,” she added. “As you start to cut back from smoking, write down how many you’ve had each day and how you’re feeling. This is another way to stay accountable to the process. Just keep going even if you feel like giving up, because it will ‘click’ for good one day.”

The Quitline encourages all tobacco and vape-product users to make 2021 their best year ever by becoming nicotine-free, especially in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. According to the CDC, those who smoke [suffer more severe effects](#) if infected with the coronavirus.

The Quitline recommends tobacco and vape-product users consult a healthcare professional as part of a nicotine-free journey. Healthcare professionals can provide referrals to the Quitline for free quit-coaching and free NRT such as nicotine patches and nicotine gum or lozenges – and nearly all participants are eligible. The Quitline’s Quit Coaches are available seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487) beginning at 9 a.m. or by visiting www.nysmokefree.com and requesting a call.

About the New York State Smokers’ Quitline

The New York State Smokers’ Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo, N.Y. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation and has responded to nearly 3 million calls since it began operating in 2000. The Quitline encourages nicotine users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for stop-smoking medications. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) for coaching and resources, free of charge, seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. Visit www.nysmokefree.com for more information.

About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at www.roswellpark.org, or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org.

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