

Dropping a Habit and Picking up a Hobby by Lance Nichols

Clay will be smoke free for 60 days on July 28th!! Three months ago Clay told his Program Manager, Lance Nichols that he wanted to quit smoking completely. Although Clay wanted to go “cold turkey,” Lance encouraged Clay to develop a plan to reduce over a period of time since he had been smoking 3-4 packs per day. The plan was that Clay would begin by smoking only one cigarette every two hours.

The first few days were hard for Clay, but he stuck to the plan. By the end of the first week, Clay decided he was ready to smoke only one every three hours!! After two weeks, Clay was ready to quit smoking completely and he did it!! Lance helped Clay learn to use creative visualization when he was craving a cigarette. To do this, Clay creates a visual image of what he wants from his life. This helps him use his inner energy to meet the target goal. Together they would discuss how to create a mental picture so that Clay had something besides cigarettes to focus on. Visualization creates the motion to succeed. Lance uses the “little engine that could analogy”... I think I can, I think I can and then I KNOW I CAN.

Clay decided having a hobby would help him kick his habit, so he explored various board games. He quickly became interested in chess.

Lance helped him get a small chess set and they began playing on a regular basis. Right out of the box, Lance noticed naturally used lots of good tactics, but he still left himself open on some moves. Lance taught him some established strategies and had him study some things on the internet. They discovered the Tulsa Chess Club and Clay began a two night a week Chess club. Since then Clay got a computerized Chess board, which is like being able to play 600 people that should develop some skills!! Clay has a book on Chess principles and a DVD set on developing strategies and tactics of the game. He studies these regularly. On his off nights, Clay gets together with chess club friends to study the reasons Chess players lose, as well as practicing tactical exercises to aid in winning. Clay will be in his first Chess tournament August 1st at View Acres Baptist Church in Tulsa. After some tournament play, Clay will earn a rating.

Just like quitting smoking, learning chess is a process...Clay calls it a work in progress WIP! In the beginning Clay would move the Chess pieces without thinking about his moves, just like he gradually reduced the number of cigarettes per day. Now Clay uses his brain to think about his moves and then his hand to make the movement, just like he uses visualization to help him make the best choice for his health — no smoking!



Clay and Lance playing chess.