



***NOTE TO MEDIA:** Additional "Success Stories" and corresponding photos for regions of New York State (including The Bronx, Brooklyn and more) are available to read or download at the New York State Smokers' Quitline's Online News Room: <https://nysmokefree.com/newsroom>. Please reach out to us any time for interviews to enhance your coverage of New Year's resolutions and wellness stories. Tobacco cessation experts are available locally and online; clients may be available upon request.*

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MANHATTAN RESIDENT ACHIEVES FREEDOM FROM SMOKING WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NYS SMOKERS' QUITLINE

Marielle F. overcame more than 20 years of cigarette smoking



NEW YORK – Jan. 2, 2023 – Quitting smoking or vaping is challenging; however, people across New York State achieve lasting success every day with proper support. The **New York State Smokers' Quitline** (Quitline) celebrates those who pursue and maintain tobacco-free living and encourages those who smoke or vape to make a quit-attempt in 2023 – whether it's a first time or trying again. The Quitline reminds all New York State residents personalized support from trained tobacco treatment specialists and free resources are available seven days a week by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), texting QUITNOW to 333888 and visiting nysmokefree.com.

Marielle F. (*pictured*), age 38, started smoking cigarettes casually with friends as a teenager and increased to smoking one pack or more a day by age 18. Cigarettes became a part of her identity and were a key accessory for going out on weekends. After relocating to Manhattan from Tampa, Fla. three years ago, Marielle's outlook began to change.

"I thought I was invincible when I was younger," she said. "I developed smoker's cough over the years and recently had a conversation with my sister. She's a nurse and explained to me how painful it is to die from emphysema. I began to realize the gravity of what I was doing to my body."

Prior to moving to Manhattan, Marielle could not imagine herself as a non-smoker. However, not long after her relocation in 2019, she reached out to the New York State Smokers' Quitline for support. She tried again in the early summer of 2022 – this time wholeheartedly, as she now felt "truly ready" to become tobacco-free.

"The second time around with the Quitline, the specialists provided free nicotine lozenges, and that particular medication finally did it for me," Marielle said. "The follow-up calls and just knowing support was always there if I needed it – that was so helpful. I felt accountable and wanted to be able to give the specialists a good answer when they checked on me."

Becoming a resident of Manhattan not only pushed Marielle to become tobacco-free but also to maintain a healthier lifestyle. She especially values having more energy and breath when taking the subway stairs. In addition, Marielle no longer drives a car, which helps her avoid one of her toughest triggers for wanting to smoke. Beyond a change of environment, Marielle believes a key to sustained success involves reframing one's identity.

"Instead of saying, 'I'm trying to quit,' I shifted my thinking and words to say, 'I used to smoke and now I don't,'" she said. "By telling people about my journey, limiting my exposure to tempting social circumstances and seeking outside support, I didn't have to rely solely on willpower to become tobacco-free. For anyone going through this, the important thing is to keep trying. Every cigarette you don't smoke is a good thing."

As a non-smoker, Marielle is more active and enjoys greater endurance for extended cardio workouts. She feels healthier and less prone to developing illnesses such as bronchitis and strep throat. In a single word, Marielle describes becoming tobacco-free as "wonderful."

"I once felt tethered to cigarettes; now I feel free," she said. "I want to be around my loved ones for as long as possible."

Most New York State adults are eligible to receive a free starter supply of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) medications via mail, typically in the form of nicotine patches and often with supplemental nicotine gum or nicotine lozenges. When used appropriately and in combination, NRT medications can double or triple the odds of becoming and staying tobacco-free.

For those who prefer support via text, the Quitline reminds all New York State residents to try the new Learn2QuitNY six-week comprehensive program by enrolling at nysmokefree.com or texting QUITNOW to 333888. The Quitline also recommends all tobacco and vape product users to visit the CDC's "[Resolve to Be Smokefree in '23](http://www.resolve-to-be-smokefree.org)" website, complete with tips, resources, links and app recommendations.

The Quitline wishes everyone a happy, healthy and tobacco-free 2023.

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 tobacco and vape product users to talk with their healthcare professionals and access available Medicaid or health insurance benefits for medication support. All New York State residents can call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) or text QUITNOW to 333888 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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