### Keep the Conversation Going

#### Responses to Common Pushback Statements about Tobacco/Nicotine

<table>
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<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<td><strong>“I don’t want to quit.”</strong></td>
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  - “What do you like about smoking? What does it do for you?”  
  - “Is there any way at all in which you would be better off if you quit smoking?”  
  - “Would you be open to discussing coping strategies for those times when you are unable to smoke?”  
  - “Tell me about your day as a smoker.” |
| **“I’m probably never going to quit, it’s hopeless. At least I’m staying away from a drink/drug.”** |  
  - “It’s great that you are staying sober!”  
  - “You feel like it’s hopeless. What makes you think that?”  
  - “Are there any tools you currently use to stay sober that might be helpful for those times when you can’t smoke?”  
  - Ask about past quit attempts (if any) and highlight motivations, strengths, learning opportunities |
| **“Smoking is too big a part of my life—everyone around me does it.”** |  
  - “How does smoking fit into your life?”  
  - “What ways does smoking not fit into your life so well?”  
  - Identify individuals who do not smoke  
  - Explore awareness of the biological (physical addiction), psychological (habits, triggers, paired activities), and social (friends, group contexts) aspects of smoking  
  - Identify the role of smoking in the client’s life |
“Why are we talking about smoking when I need to focus on getting a job/place to live?”

- “I know that is very important to you. How do you think smoking might impact your job/apartment search?”
- “How much do you spend on tobacco/nicotine each month? What else could you do with that money?”
- Discuss the costs/benefits of smoking: Ask how the costs ($ and others) may affect how the client reaches their goals for a life in recovery
- “What difficulties have you had in relation to your smoking?” (health/financial/relationships)
- Potential points to make: many employers don’t want to hire smokers; housing options will be restricted

“Maybe I’ll quit/cut down later, after treatment. It’s just too much to think about right now.”

- “What feels safe about continuing to smoke?”
- “Can I share some information about smoking and stress with you? [If answer is yes] Research shows that nicotine increases anxiety and tension levels and that smoking is not a stress reliever even though it may feel that way sometimes.”
- “I understand that it feels overwhelming to give up a lot. What role does tobacco play in your life right now?”
- “How might quitting/cutting down be easier when you leave treatment?”

“I’d go crazy and relapse if I had to stop smoking—it’s the only thing keeping me together. It’s my only reward.”

- “I hear what you are saying. It’s important to have ways to reward yourself. Would you be open to thinking about some additional ways to reward yourself?”
- “It sounds like you are worried about managing stress without smoking. Would you be open to discussing alternative coping strategies?”
- “Can I share some information about smoking and recovery with you? [If yes] Quitting smoking can actually enhance your recovery and lessen the chance of relapse.”

Thanks to the tobacco education coordinators for your input and suggestions!