Handout: Losing a Friend When Quitting Smoking

This may come as a surprise but you may experience the loss of cigarettes in very personal terms, such as “losing a friend”. Some people, upon quitting, have noted that the cigarettes were always “there” even when friends were not. It can be incredibly difficult to give up this old, consistent, dependable friend.

You may feel as if you are going through a loss. You may experience feelings of sadness or anxiety as you work to navigate the loss without the support of your old friend.

We encourage you to experience these feelings and reflect on what it feels like, being in the moment. Perhaps you may want to say “goodbye.” This could be just like saying goodbye to a friend who is leaving for good, the way you felt about moving from a beloved home or hometown, or the way you may have said good-bye to a pet that died. Yes, it was a great relationship, but the friendship has its beginning and its ends, and it is time to move on.

Do you relate to this scenario? If so, consider whether doing something to say goodbye might be useful for you.