

Interview with Jay Reeve

Interview by Dave Gibson

How would you currently describe your smoking status?

Well I used to consider myself as being a social smoker but I just used to pretty much compress what a smoker would do in a week into like a Friday or Saturday night. I used to eat durries on the weekend when I was drinking. To me it was kind of like fish and chips you know, like I couldn't do one without the other and then I actually set a New Year's resolution not to smoke and I've never ever kept a New Year's resolution but this one's actually stuck and I haven't had a ciggy since literally 20 minutes before the countdown of the 2009 New Year's.

Congratulations.

Pushing through mate.

So would you say you were a deluded social smoker and now you are an ex-smoker?

Totally. I have this argument with people all the time, they go, 'Oh no, I'm a social smoker' or you ask them, 'Are you a smoker? No, no, I am not a smoker, I am a social smoker' but you are still having ciggies, which effectively makes you a smoker or a dickhead or both because you can't make the differentiation between the two.

Gold. Do you think smoking is as common now as it used to be a few years ago?

I think people are definitely pulling back on it, ever since cigarettes were taken out of bars and stuff like that. Over winter it trimmed smokers down big time you know cause it's just too cold to have ciggies outside. When you go to like Australia where they can still smoke in bars you realise how disgusting it actually used to be when you are in a pub, especially if you weren't a smoker. For me, I was a smoker so I didn't really care but when you're not a smoker and you're in that environment you just can't really get away from it but I definitely think it's on the decline aye. I think it would have to be the smokefree campaigns that are running currently.

I think you're right. After my band and I quit and we went overseas and could smoke indoors again we didn't like it cause it was like, 'This is quite disgusting'. We'd forgotten what it was like.

Yeah, cause we did it in Germany too when we went over for the Euro Music Awards and in Germany you can smoke anywhere, we were smoking in elevators, and in our rooms, it was just horrible. The novelty wears off pretty quick aye?

Do you think smoking is as socially acceptable as it used to be?

I don't think it's as socially acceptable as it used to be, predominantly because people are aware of what it actually does to you. I could understand my grandparents being smokers because everyone smoked back then and that's all they knew and no-one attributed having a heart attack to smoking or anything like that so they just kept eating durries like they were going out of fashion but now both of them have emphysema and are dying. A couple of generations on and we can see the full effects of what smoking actually does. So I think it's definitely becoming more socially unacceptable. Nowadays people feel inclined to walk up to a smoker and go, 'You know you're killing yourself by doing that' so I think that people are definitely starting to take it upon themselves to make a positive change for everyone. If people can't do it themselves and they need a kick in the ass then someone needs to give it to them.

What could that kick be?

I guess for me there were a few reasons why I quit smoking, I hate the thought of being controlled by anything, like a person or a job or whatever, I just hate being controlled and for me to think, 'I have to smoke, I am addicted to smoking' was enough for me to go, 'No, I'm going to do it just to prove to myself that I am still in charge of my life.' Secondly, my grandparents dying is massive you know, dying of emphysema cause that's effectively what's happening, is a pretty disrespectful thing for me to do for them and also for my dad who has never smoked and he can see his parents dying and he doesn't want to watch his son dying of the same thing, would just do his head in. If my dad ever saw me with a ciggy in my mouth he would just knock my head off my shoulders and he is quite a big fellow so I don't want to have that happen. And thirdly, my lovely lady, I just didn't really want to cheat her out of it, like effectively if we were to sort of carry on a life together and then have kids and grow old and then have me pull the pin at 45 or something of a heart attack from smoking it's quite a selfish thing to do when she sort of does everything that she can do to make sure that her body's in pristine condition. The last thing I want to be doing is ripping her off. Smoking is definitely a selfish thing to do because those people that are around you like your partner or your parents or your grandparents, the people that love you have absolutely no choice that you're taking yourself away from them in a round about way.

The other thing about that is like your junk. A fellow's junk is made up of loads of capillary veins and they are the smallest veins that you have in your body including the ones in your eyes, they are the ones that go pretty much first and clog up from smoking and you can't get a full bar up and to me that just speaks volumes. I would way rather have sex with a big hard todger than to smoke and not be able to have sex. It was kind of 'have good sex or smoke' and far out I prefer sex over smoking any day.

How long did you smoke for?

I stole my first pack of cigarettes when I was about 10 and smuggled them up from New Plymouth inside a pillowcase, stole them off my parents' friends and so I pretty much smoked and then stopped once I got busted and then started when I was about sort of 14. I just turned in to a piece of shit pretty much.

How much money do you think you would have spent on smoking?

Friends of mine smoked so I would kind of be on everyone else's ciggies, which is kind of worse again, like I am the cancerous cancer, I am just dangling off the side of everyone else's roly pack but I guess I could probably boof two packs of 20's on a weekend and they wre probably \$12.50 for my Marlborough Lites.

So at least \$25?

Yeah \$25 a week so \$100 a month, \$1200 times 10, \$12,000, shit.

So that's \$1000 a year actually.

Yeah so over 12 years, \$12,000.

I see what you're saying.

I don't even own a bed. For \$12,000 I could buy a decent car cause at the moment all I've got is a \$400 ex-crack addict Corolla.