

INTERVIEW WITH SAMUEL FLYNN SCOTT

Do you reckon there has been a change in attitudes towards smoking recently?

It's definitely quite different to say, my grandparents' time, when it was probably seen as beneficial for your health to have a few cigarettes a day. I know that when I was a kid we were always hassling mum to give up smoking. I feel like my older brothers smoke more than my generation, and my younger brother's generation smokes less than my generation. So I think it's going to be a gradual step up. The ultimate end to it all is that smoking tobacco will end up not being a normal part of society. A fringe activity as opposed to something that's perhaps considered a rite of passage for teenagers when really it's just quite a bizarre behaviour.

So do you think teenagers still perceive smoking as rebellious?

I don't know if they do believe that. With my younger brother, hardly any of his friends smoke and it doesn't seem very normal for them to smoke. The vibe is like, 'oh my older brothers smoke and they're a bit lame actually, They're wasting their money.'

If you could say something to those people, older brothers, mums, dads, who are still smoking, what would it be?

Well, everyone who smoked in my family has given up and it was a long journey for most of them. My brothers had to give up five or six times, serious attempts, before they really took it on long term. It shows that you can give up, it just takes time.

What would your advice be to people trying to give up?

If you are trying to give up smoking you've just got to keep trying because it's only going to get easier with every attempt. If you try and give up and it doesn't work for you, just give it another go and give it *another* go until it does, because it will get easier. I don't know a single person who smokes who doesn't want to give up. It's only going to be easier if you do it earlier. If you wait until you're in your thirties to give up it's just going to get harder and harder. You might as well do it now.

As someone who teenagers look up to, do you have any words of advice for them about smoking?

If you're wanting to start smoking because you think it's cool, take that money that you're spending on cigarettes and spend it on some good clothes because it's going to do a hell of a lot more with the ladies.

What role does smoking play in the music industry?

Well as a singer, smoking can really stuff you up. Since smoking's been banned in bars I've been finding that I don't lose my voice as often as I used to, purely from second-

hand smoke. Now when I play gigs overseas where people do smoke in bars it really grosses me out. I think that the one thing that smoking seems to always do is take up people's time. Everyone else is ready to go, ready to sound check, ready to rehearse, and then there's this one person who's like off smoking a fag outside and holding everyone else up.

What are the main reasons why you don't smoke?

I can't be bothered throwing \$10 a day away on cigarettes when I could be spending that on a second-hand piece of vinyl or an old Neil Young record or something. I mean it seems ridiculous to me that to be a musician and struggling to make it and then blowing all your money on something that gives you no enjoyment.

What's the worst thing in your opinion about smoking?

I think the worst thing is just that you're hurting yourself. There are so many other reasons, which are more pertinent to your lifestyle in terms of money and just the stigma of it but the fact that you're actually doing damage to your body for seemingly no benefit other than relieving the addiction itself is just ridiculous.

Smoking is a waste of money. I've been around smokers for fourteen years and I'm yet to see a single benefit from smoking.

Did you try smoking in your younger years?

To me it always tasted disgusting so I never really got into it. I thought that maybe smoking was a way to meet girls or something but that didn't end up being true at all and it just seemed like quite a bizarre behaviour. I've never found anything delicious or satisfying from a cigarette.

Do you think it's accepted amongst young people to be a non-smoker?

I think it's completely socially acceptable to be a non-smoker. I think it's a norm and if anything it's the opposite for smokers who have to go and stand outside every forty-five minutes. There is no such thing as the 'cool smoker's scene'. It's just people who smoke and people who don't.