

Quitting smoking is hard to do.



Todd Young photo

I'm ashamed to admit it, but I smoked for 20 years. I spent more than half that time trying to quit. I tried cutting back, replacing it with patches and gum, quitting cold turkey – I even tried a self-help book and a meditation CD (a true measure of desperation for someone who dislikes self-help products as much as I do). Every time I would fail at quitting, but I'd gain insight into what to do next time.

I took note of where and how I failed, and what withdrawal felt like. I reminded myself that the anxiety and discomfort of wanting a cigarette I couldn't have wouldn't kill me, but that continuing to smoke eventually would. I read that your body's signal for nicotine is the same as for thirst – and it is! – and I drowned cravings with glasses of water. I learned that when I was tired I'd cave, so I took naps and went to bed earlier. I gave myself a pass on my diet while I was quitting; if it took a bag of potato chips or a chocolate bar to replace a cigarette today, my health would still be better for it. Most of all, what really did it was realizing there'll never be enough time on this earth with people I love and I was no longer willing to purposely shorten it.

It's been eight years since my last cigarette. I can't say I didn't miss it, even up until a couple years ago. But it can't compare to all the other wonderful things I've not missed because I quit.

Most smokers don't remember why they started, but everyone has a reason to stop. If you want to quit and need help, you should read our quit smoking feature (p. 62). If there's a will, there will be a way.

Thanks for reading,

Janice Stuckless, Editor-in-chief
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Relationships can be complicated.



Todd Young photo

They revolve around wants and needs, are fuelled by attraction and desire. They create memories and inspire futures, and can be strengthened or strained by difficult times. Some relationships survive the struggles, connected by compromises; others are driven apart by insufficiencies and insurmountable differences.

Such is the relationship between Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and this beautiful, cursable province. I love this place, my soul is buried deep within it. I am staying with it for life, for better or worse, in prosperity and in debt. Everything I want is here; it's given me everything I need. It's beautiful, romantic, safe.

But...Newfoundland and Labrador can be hard to live with. The weather can be trying – raging one minute, depressing the next; it doesn't provide as well as some other provinces; it's a bit high maintenance. I can understand why some people call it quits and go looking for love elsewhere in the world. But to those for whom Newfoundland and Labrador was their first home, it's like anyone's first love: you eventually get over it, but it never really leaves your heart.

This complicated relationship has been going on for generations. In this issue, you'll meet millennials who are grappling with it (turn to page 56). They're here, struggling to make it work, and they really want to stay with this province. They've seen their friends move on and a couple of them even tried to move on themselves, but were drawn back to give Newfoundland and Labrador another chance. I hope it works out. I'm really rooting for them.

With love from NL,

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You can't get by on your looks alone.



Todd Young photo

To be popular, to be successful, you have to have substance, you have to stand out. You have to offer something uniquely “you” to the world in order to turn heads. That’s a truth whether you apply it to your personal relationships, your career goals or, in this case, tourism economics.

That Newfoundland and Labrador is beautiful, romantic, alluring, is not a concept we come by naturally, you know. Prior to, say, the ‘90s, this was a cold, brutal rock plunked down in the middle of the North Atlantic where people left to get a vacation from it. But savvy marketers, buoyed by flattering reviews from those who had visited the province out of curiosity or because they’d run out of places to see, saw an opportunity to change our narrative. They saw what was uniquely us that the world was missing.

Those visionary folks, in government and in private business, took our long history and repackaged it as rich; our poor weather was rebranded as dramatic; our isolation became the secret to being this ultimate getaway. Projecting that image over time drew more and more visitors who, after experiencing the places and people for themselves, often went away raving about their visit, promising to return and bring others with them to witness this wonderful place. That positive buzz nourished our fledgling tourism industry, as operators got behind this magical vision and brought it to life.

In this issue we congratulate 10 tourism ventures that reached deep into their resource pool and surfaced with ingenious projects that changed the visitor experience landscape in Newfoundland and Labrador (page 74). They are not the only ones doing it, but they deserve to be held aloft as examples of how to dream bigger, reach higher and deliver more.

This is indeed a beautiful place, but it is so much more than that.

Thanks for reading,

Janice Stuckless, Editor-in-chief
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