

Spotlight on Cynthia Pomerleau, Author of *Life after Cigarettes: Why Women Smoke AND How to Quit, Look Great and Manage Your Weight*



Author Cynthia Pomerleau will be giving a talk about her new book, at the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room on Thursday, October 7th at 7pm. For more information, see the Calendar Listing in the Author Events category.

(Cynthia Pomerleau is Research Professor Emerita in the University of Michigan Department of Psychiatry. She has written over 100 articles and book chapters on smoking, and also contributed to the 2001 Surgeon General's Report on Women and Smoking. Cynthia has two grown daughters and two grandchildren, and lives in Ann Arbor with her husband and two cats.)

Rachel Pastiva: Your website, www.lifeaftercigarettes.com, mentions that you served as the director of the Nicotine Research Laboratory at the University of Michigan from 1985 until your retirement last year. What attracted you to research this particular field?

Cynthia Pomerleau: Long before I became involved in research on smoking, I had an interest in women's issues. I wrote my doctoral dissertation on

autobiographies of English women in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and later served as director of an Oral History Project on Women Physicians, based in the Library of the Medical College of Pennsylvania (MCP was historically a women's institution that had recently begun accepting men). This project resulted in a book entitled *In Her Own Words*, which remained in print for many years and can still be readily obtained.

In the early 1980's, I entered a master's program in psychology and began working in my husband's laboratory. He was a psychologist doing research on addiction and regarded smoking as an ideal model for laboratory research because it is legal, has a short addiction cycle (around 30 minutes in highly dependent smokers), and doesn't cause behavioral disruption such that it would be unsafe for participants to drive home after ingesting their drug of choice. At that time he was studying only men because their behavior was not "complicated" by cycling hormones. Studying women smokers was my contribution to the laboratory, and of course we had to start by studying the impact of the menstrual cycle on smoking. We then went on to study the effect of weight concerns and of various psychiatric disorders upon smoking and quitting. Studying women's smoking turned out to be a wonderful career choice for me because the topic is both critically important to public health and fascinating in its own right.

Rachel Pastiva: It's interesting that your book, *Life After Cigarettes: Why Women Smoke AND How to Quit, Look Great, and Manage Your Weight* is geared specifically towards women. Do women face stressors that make them more susceptible to smoking than men?

Cynthia Pomerleau: Since the smoking rate in men and women is currently very similar—around 20%—it is probably not the case that women are more susceptible to smoking than men, although there is a fair amount of evidence that women find it a little harder to quit than men. In response to your implied question about my book being "geared specifically towards women," however, the important thing to note is that factors that influence women to initiate and continue smoking differ from those that influence men, especially with respect to weight concerns and depression. Taking those special considerations into account and tailoring our prevention and intervention efforts to the special needs of women will increase our ability to help women become and remain smokefree.

The subtitle of your book suggests that appearance and weight concerns are key issues for women who are trying to quit smoking. Can you elaborate on how these issues undermine their ability to quit?

Cynthia Pomerleau: Nicotine suppresses appetite and revs up metabolism, with the result that smokers typically weigh around ten pounds less than people who have never smoked. For some women—for example, women who "use" nicotine to manage a tendency towards binge-eating—the differential may be even greater. Most women have some degree of concern about or dissatisfaction with their body weight; for many women smokers, this concern is so intense that they will not even consider quitting smoking, or they will not make it beyond the first few days of abstinence as the needle on the scale begins to creep up.

Many so-called experts, mostly male, have a hard time relating to these concerns and either actively or implicitly "dis" women for putting them above concerns about health (as though men didn't take unnecessary risks with their health!). My book, by contrast, makes clear that there is nothing wrong with wanting to be the most attractive "you" you can be, and to have the sense of well-being that goes with looking and feeling good. The problem is, smoking also has many negative effects on appearance as well as on health. My book's message is that there are far better ways to take charge of weight and appearance.

Prayer (continued)

Explore Diverse Prayer and Meditation Styles with Melanie Fuscaldo and Craig Harvey • Part 1: Sept. 29, Part 2: Oct. 20; 7-8:30 p.m. • Play with a range of prayer and meditation methods. Share the experience with others. Add your unique gifts to the mix. Feel the joy! \$10 per session. You may attend Parts 1 and 2 separately. Call Melanie at 668-2733; mfuscaldo@gmail.com or MelanieFuscaldo.com.

Power of Your Word: United Centers for Spiritual Living Curriculum with Erin Fry • Wednesdays, Sept. 15-Nov. 3; 5:30-7 p.m. • Learn the basics of affirmative prayer, focusing on two types: conscious, directed prayer emphasizing affirmations and treatments and unconscious, indirect prayer emphasizing known and unknown beliefs. By donation. Call 277-4858; erinfry.rscp@gmail.com or a2som.com.

Professional Enrichment

Natural Spiritual Healing Diploma Course with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Sept. 26-Oct. 9 • Help yourself and others towards wholeness of mind, body, and spirit with this comprehensive professional program (weeks 1 and 2 of 5). Lodging and meals available. \$990 includes lunches and refreshments. Call Joanne at 517-641-6201; SRMHCMichigan@cs.com or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

HTI Professional Development Series with Diane Wardell • Oct. 16, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. • Increase your repertoire of healing tools with a variety of different healing approaches that will aid in balancing the body, decrease symptoms from muscle-skeletal disorders, and provide the client an opportunity for deep healing. Explore sacred geometry and the foundations of energy medicine. Open to all experienced energy workers. For cost, call Barb McConnell at 517-914-4133; mcconb51@bigplanet.com or healingtouchmichigan.com.

There are many books, CDs, medications, and so on, designed to help people quit smoking. What unique tools does your book offer women to help them quit for good?

Cynthia Pomerleau: I have never seen *Life After Cigarettes* as a quit-smoking book per se. (As you say, there are already lots of them, and though many are of questionable value or based on unsubstantiated methods, a few of them are pretty good.) You will notice that my book does not contain self-tests for smoking typology or step-by-step behavioral prescriptions for the reader to follow. It also does not try to scare the reader into quitting by telling her upfront about all the morbidity and mortality associated with smoking.

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In my original manuscript, in fact, information on quitting smoking was relegated to an Appendix, since I wanted to be sure the book would also appeal to former smokers who had already quit but hoped to go back and “get it right” with respect to weight and depression. When my publisher insisted that the subtitle include the words “how to quit,” however, I decided that truth-in-advertising required me to add a chapter providing comprehensive, up-to-date information about approved behavioral and pharmacological interventions for smoking. I think this turned out to be a good addition to the book and hope anyone seeking guidance on how to quit smoking will find it helpful. But the unique contribution of my book is its focus on problems that often deter women from even trying to quit -- in particular, concerns about weight and abstinence-emergent depression:

- *Life After Cigarettes* provides motivation to quit and stay quit based on realistic observations about the likelihood of weight gain, encouragement to accept a modest weight gain, and evidence-based information on how to avoid large weight gain. The emphasis, for both quitting smoking and managing weight, is on finding the way that is right for the reader, the one she can and will carry out.

- Smoking is more common among people with a tendency towards depression, possibly because of nicotine’s antidepressant effects, and these people are particularly susceptible to experiencing depressed mood as a withdrawal symptom when they quit smoking. Because depression is around twice as common among women as it is among men, this aspect of smoking and quitting is particularly relevant to women. My book includes suggestions for coping with depressed mood after quitting and, in severe cases, encouragement to seek professional help.

What can women expect to learn from your book event at Crazy Wisdom on Thursday, October 7th?

Cynthia Pomerleau: Please note that my presentation will be framed to appeal to people with a general interest in women’s issues, not just smokers. Topics to be covered include:

- How has the tobacco industry attempted to encourage women to initiate and maintain smoking, both in the US and globally?
- How does nicotine act on the body and why are its effects particularly relevant to the needs and concerns of many women?
- Is weight gain upon quitting smoking inevitable, and how can it be managed?
- What is the connection between smoking and depression?
- How can a woman smoker become not just someone who no longer smokes cigarettes, but one who has actively embraced her nonsmoking status and feels good about herself and her world?

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(Cynthia Pomerleau lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her email address is cspom@med.umich.edu.)

HTI Professional Development Series: Healing Disruptive Energy Patterns with Diane Wardell • Oct. 17, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. • Chronic pain often involves an injury that creates a pattern of memory that is retained within the body. Learn how to work with these energy patterns through an extensive review of the body system. Assist in re-creating a healing pattern to release the cellular memory, and re-pattern the energy for a higher level of functioning. Open to all experienced energy workers. For cost, call Barb McConnell at 517-914-4133; mconb51@bigplanet.com or healingtouchmichigan.com.

Skills for Facilitating Workshops with Renee Stevens • Sept. 27, 9 a.m.-Oct. 1, 3:30 p.m.; Oct. 25, 9 a.m.-Oct. 29, 3:30 p.m.; Dec. 6, 9 a.m.-Dec. 10, 3:30 p.m. • This is a course designed for those who lead others and who wish to better understand and practice the art and skill of empowering groups. The course entails all three sessions, listed above. Call Weber Center at 517-266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

The Accelerated Healer Development Program: Legal Healer Practitioner Certificate with Eve Wilson • Beginning in Oct., one night every other week, 7-10 p.m. • Work with ascended masters, etheric surgeons, archangels, Qabalah, identify and treat root cause of disease of body, emotion, mind, and spirit; auras, soul contracts, DNA, ascension, people and pets. Includes five private healing sessions and class materials. \$2,900 pay as you go or \$2,750 in advance. Call 248-545-3928; evew@spiritualhealers.com or spiritualhealers.com.

Prosperity & Abundance

Life Skills, Abundance, and Energy Series with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Nov. 8-10, 7-8:15 p.m. • We all have the ability to take charge of our lives and choose to flow or not flow with life. When we flow with life, we have more energy for ourselves, our families, our work, and pleasurable pursuits. We can then experience life’s abundance. These workshops will help each individual see what blocks get in their way from living the life that is possible for them. \$90. Call Joanne at 517-641-6201; SRMHC-Michigan@cs.com or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Living an Abundant Life with Dave and Pat Krajovic • Sept. 28, 7-9 p.m. • Learn tools and techniques to enhance abundance in your life. We will explore Randolph Price’s 40 Day Abundance Program and focus within as the cause of all that is and all that we have. We will also weave this concept into the law of attraction, affirmations, and energetic clearing. \$37 plus \$7 book. Call 734-416-5200; info@bodyworkshealingcenter.com.

Prosperity Embrace: Revelations on Debt and Distress with Deb Foggio and Jane McClaren • Nov. 12, 7-10 p.m. • Systemic constellations work can reveal hidden blocks to your peace and prosperity. This powerful work can reveal dynamics that have been operating in the past and release them. \$25. Call Jane at 248-705-1111 or Deb at 248-702-7064; Lightworkscenter@att.net or integrativewellbeing.com.

Harness the Tools of Prosperity with Jill Blixt and Joyce Koehn • Ten Tuesdays starting Sept. 28, 6:30-9 p.m. • Feeling the security and delight of having the financial prosperity you desire is priceless. Yet often, we encounter the discomfort of scarcity and avoid using the tools available to harness the energy of prosperity and create abundance. This workshop is for anyone who wants to combine the tools of manifestation with the knowledge of financial planning to create their own unique path to prosperity. \$30 per week. Call Jill at 665-4577; jillblixt@aol.com.

Reiki

Intro to Reiki and Energy Therapy with Mariah Newborne • Sept. 22, 7-9 p.m. • Part of April Wellness Center’s “Boost and Balance Your Energy” month. Our bodies are energy systems. Through the ancient method of self healing with reiki, acupressure, Jun Shin Jyutsu, and conscious breathing, we can harmonize, recharge, and rejuvenate our systems and experience renewed energy and health. \$20. Call 657-4652; mariahnew@charter.net or aprillwellnesscenter.com.

Reiki I Certification with Mariah Newborne • Oct. 23, 1-5 p.m. and Oct. 24, 1-4:30 p.m. • Experience a hands-on weekend on the ancient healing art of reiki, translated as “universal life force energy”. Facilitate deeper healing for yourself and others you touch in this transformational workshop. \$150. Call 657-4652; mariahnew@charter.net or aprillwellnesscenter.com.

Free Reiki Share with Andrew Anders • Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 21, Dec. 19; 3-4 p.m. • Reiki Share is a gathering of local reiki enthusiasts to share information, practice techniques, and trade energy. All reiki students, practitioners, and masters welcome. Energy workers and anyone interested in learning more about reiki are encouraged to come also. Free. Call 678-4523; bmswc.com.

Reiki Classes with Jennifer Flowers • Learn how to access universal life force energy to heal others or yourself. Reiki works on all levels by integrating and balancing the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of your being. In each class, you will receive attunements and learn the history of Reiki, hand positions, and practice on yourself and classmates. \$154 for each class includes materials. Call 734-416-5200; info@bodyworkshealingcenter.com.

Reiki I • Oct. 2, 4-8 p.m. and Oct. 3, 9-3 p.m.

Reiki II • Nov. 13, 4-8 p.m. and Nov. 14, 9-3 p.m. • Learn the power symbol and absentee healing.

Reiki III • Dec. 4, 4-8 p.m. and Dec. 5, 9-3 p.m. • Learn the Usui master symbol and increase energy flow with breathing exercises as well as how to clear aura energy blockages.

Reiki Share • Second Thursday of each month, 6:30-8 p.m. • Come and practice your skills by working on others. By donation.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar will be posted online starting September 8, 2010, at crazywisdom.net.