

My name is Hikmet Yondemli and vaping has changed my life.

I started smoking cigarettes when I was 17 years old and successfully quit at 27 years of age. 10 years of smoking cigarettes was literally killing me... I would constantly be on antibiotics because of recurring chest infections. My immune system was almost non-existent and this affected my life in every way - I was unable to keep fit from the pressure on my lungs, I was unable to work consistently and only take the 10 designated sick days off, which in return saw me being let go of a number of jobs.

The prime of my life was spent sick because of cigarettes. Then at 27, my husband came across vaping from his colleague. Being a smoker of 10+ years himself, he decided to give it a shot. Before we tried vaping, we had tried 'quitting' cigarettes but always ended up back at it. My husband successfully quit smoking and never looked back. After 3 months, and seeing the affect it had on his health, his physical appearance and this new look on life, I had to try it. I must say, hand on heart, I have tried 2 cigarettes since I started vaping (out of pure habit and curiosity) and both times I felt physically sick. I couldn't believe this poison that I was addicted to for so long, apart from being lethal, was in fact revolting.

It has been over 3 years since I quit cigarettes for good and have been vaping. It is the BEST decision I have made in regards to my health, and I actively encourage my friends and family to give it a go. Seeing the positive effects vaping has made on my life, it doesn't take them long to make the switch.

I no longer have disgusting breath and a constant stench on my skin and clothes. I no longer get chest infections and haven't had antibiotics every other week like I used to. I am fit and healthy now due to the simple fact that I can run a mile and not feel like my lungs are collapsing. My skin is clear and radiant. My insides don't feel like they're rotting anymore. I can't express enough how much vaping has helped me.

Having an addiction is not easy at all. As much as you know how bad it is for you, as hard as you try to stop the cravings, the slightest thing can set you right back up to fail. But vaping allows me to satisfy my addiction without actively poisoning my entire body and setting me up for an early death. If I could, I would stop vaping as well. But I can't, and vaping is the safest and healthiest option for my addiction. If this is taken away from us vapers, we will fight tooth and nail to continue using electronic cigarettes for as long as we can... Because we've seen both sides of the fence, and the cigarettes side stinks of death and disease. No-one wants cigarettes as the only option to our addiction, when it's blatantly obvious they're designed to slowly kill off their users.

I sincerely hope that our Parliament follows the wisdom of the rest of the world and makes Vaping legal. Otherwise, the Government is clearly indicating that they would rather make money off our addiction and watch us die rather than give us a healthier alternative. I hope it doesn't come to that.

I appreciate the time you have taken to read my submission.
Kind regards,
Hikmet Yondemli.