

SMALL VICTORY by Joan Mish 3/13/17

I have a big victory to share! How I quit smoking 40 years ago. My youngest daughter was a big thumb sucker. We tried everything to get her to stop. I even took her to a dentist who tried to talk her into quit thumb sucking. And then being a part time children's librarian at the public library I came across a book about a child who couldn't stop thumb sucking until she and her mom made a deal: If the child would stop sucking her thumb the mom would stop smoking. We did it !

I had been smoking since high school. My parents smoked: my mom cigarettes, my dad cigars mostly. I can remember hiding in the woods by our convent school and having a cigarette with friends. My first job in high school was working in a small clothing store. I received quite a large discount on clothes. I can remember purchasing a cashmere sweater that summer. They usually costed over \$100, even 60 years ago. A smoking friend and I had a cigarette one night while I was wearing this new sweater and as you can imagine a small piece of the tobacco dropped on my sweater and burned a very small hole on this beautiful expensive sweater. I was horrified and I didn't want my mom to see it. So my friend who lived with her aunt had her aunt to fix it. No one ever noticed.

Now the smaller victory is when I started up smoking again before I came out to Colorado. I was so nervous about selling my house and leaving a home I had been in for 40 years! So I had a couple of cigarettes a day. Just to calm me down. I was so ashamed but finally gave it up again over a year and a half ago! So that is the small victory. I have no desire any more. And I have learned to hate the smell of smokers on their bodies and in their hair. There are quite a few smokers that smoke on the streets here in this compound. And I find it disgusting to see all the cigarette butts laying all over. It makes me feel proud of this smaller victory every day.