

My name is Patti Reece, I'm 64 years old. I sell real estate and help my daughters. I started smoking when I was 16. Like many who started smoking back then, I thought I could quit whenever I wanted. I found out how wrong we all were.

I quit for the first time when I was around 25 and stayed quit for 15 years. Life brings many stresses and I started smoking again and didn't quit until recently. I had found myself diagnosed with Chronic Lung Disease. I have so much to live for. I have two daughters and a grandson. I also have a new grandchild on the way!

I enrolled in the cessation class at the Miami Valley Hospital provided by Public Health. It was there I not only learned about all the harmful chemicals in cigarettes but that when I smoked, I was free-basing nicotine. I didn't like thinking of myself as a drug user but realized that the cigarettes made by big tobacco were killing me. I learned how to manage my withdrawals by deep breathing and used the patches and lozenges Public Health provide. I wouldn't have been able to quit without them. They saved my life.

I am so thankful that I've been able to quit. Do you want to know what I've been able to do since I've quit? I've enrolled in college this past week. If I can quit smoking, I can do anything. I enjoy exercising and riding my bike. I hadn't been able to go to a movie in years...now I can go and enjoy a movie with my family and friends.

I just got a call from my Doctor that my annual checkup for the spot on my lung is due. I'm nervous. I start to think, "What have I done to myself? I have so much to live for!" I have to be healthy for my daughter who is pregnant. She has type one diabetes. I also have to be healthy for my grandson and new grandchild on the way and of courses my friends.

I am proud to end with telling you that I have friends who are smokers and desperately need to quit smoking. Because I've been able to quit. If you provide the much needed funding for programs around the state like the one in Montgomery County. They are going to go to cessation at Public Health Dayton – Montgomery County and quit.