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**Volume 88, No. 60 January 17, 2007**

## **Center holds stop-smoking aid program**

### **Staff will use hypnosis as part of the habit-breaking therapy**

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Photo illustration: Lindsey Clark

Health Services is offering a free quit smoking service that includes hypnosis therapy.

The health center now offers a free program to help students, faculty and staff quit smoking.

Smokers who want to quit will discuss what smoking habits are, why they want to quit, methods of quitting and medicines and aids to help them. They will also be given access to medical providers and a hypnotherapist, needed in order to set their cigarettes down for good.



Student development specialist Hillary Timmers, who works on health education at the center, will lead the program.

“The person who was in my position before I came had started helping people quit smoking on campus because college students tend to start smoking in college,” she said.

Timmers developed the idea by researching successful tobacco-detox programs offered by the American Lung Association, but ended up keeping ideas she learned from the American Cancer Society’s Fresh Start training.

“Right now I have several people who come in for individual sessions, so we really don’t have enough people for a group,” she said. “Since students are just coming back, I’m hoping that in the first week of school, after people have made their New Year’s resolutions, they will see the sign and call up and we’ll have a group.”

As part of the program, counseling specialist Lori Leach will act as a hypnotherapist to people needing an extra push.

She hopes to help others reach a better lifestyle physically and mentally by teaching them to tap into the subconscious mind.

Leach uses an American Society of Clinical Hypnosis technique, which she said has a 40 percent success rate, focusing on the individual, teaching him to address his issues, to think of self-helping suggestions and reach a state of self-hypnosis.

“It really is not mind control, although you might get that impression from the stage hypnotist. We use it in a therapeutic sense,” she said. “It’s really a way for the person to make their own decisions about what they want to do. If someone has not already made a commitment to themselves to stop smoking, hypnosis isn’t going to make them want to do that.”

Leach said three to five sessions of hypnotherapy will enable someone to conquer his habits, problems and issues and allow him to independently stay strong if he continues his self-hypnosis training.

English junior Mirage Matthews has smoked for nine years and said she wants to quit due to the increase in cigarette prices but worries about using hypnotherapy.

“That’s going to take some trust. So I guess I’d have to meet with her and see how I feel about her — make sure she doesn’t have any quack in her,” she said.