

## Leaving smoking behind

Dear editor:

Re: Editorial, 'Smokers - a dying breed?...

This line could come across as very serious, or at the same time it could be viewed as a positive sign that things are getting better for some, particularly for those who have such an aversion to second-hand smoke that so freely drifts about, landing wherever it wants to. However, if smokers are forced into hiding, could they please take with them those hefty guys and girls, with their ear plugs in, along with their leaf-blowers that twirl the leaves around the ground in a manner that brings to mind the cigarette smoke twirling around in the air, as if in competition to assault unwilling ears and nose. And if those who poisonously fill the air with one chemical or the other would join the exodus, this could turn into a very small town surely to make the news for its pureness.

But really, where can folks find pure, fresh air in today's environment where people appear unwilling to leave things in their natural state choosing instead to 'perfect, beautify, freshen, sanitize, adulterate, sophisticate' all things nature produced. Homes, offices, public buildings, and even bodies, are not immune from the constant chemicalizing that comes from what is now a habit of buying beautifully packaged products and letting them loose everywhere. Even walking down the street subjects a person to inhale fumes of all sorts including those from auto exhaust and laundry, and the rest. And people wonder why humans are landed with new, increased and unbeatable diseases that they prefer not to face up to or even mention for fear of sounding 'negative', or 'unsophisticated?'. It really is a battle when some yield heavy bank accounts from those who reserve their long-term thinking. Yet, maybe those packaged bags of fresh air that are being sold in that far away eastern country will make their way here along with those masks worn in the streets in a vain attempt to save their lungs even if they resist changing their life style.

Smokers are not the worst polluters among the masses. And chances are, unlike other polluters, their smoking may not be from vanity. If they need their ciggis to relax and calm them, they should be the recipients of kindness, or even compassion for having been unfortunate enough to become addicted. Look around the world and see the ungodly results of people being set against people. Those who benefit from such division of the people are hardly visible and always safely protected and enjoying their massive profits. It is not worthy to enter into war zones with smokers, although it could be tempting to approach the beautiful, well-groomed lady, or gent, who drops the butt on the sidewalk, grinds on it, leaves it there and moves along.

Maybe the battle should be taken up with the tobacco companies that ought to be doing better for their customers. If they can produce cigarettes that will not set ablaze the sofa when left unattended, then they should be able to produce cigarettes devoid of drifting second-hand smoke, that are not addictive and don't leave the smokers likened to a sewage to others' sense of smell causing them to leave, change seats, avoid the track just left by the smoker, or offer mints, but then people react similarly to those who are drenched in one form of perfume or another, even if it is disguised in the heavy laundry detergent soaked into clothing and leaving a trail similar to that of a smoker.

Smokers seem to know that they are losing money, time, and respect due to their addiction. Some are making serious attempts to leave smoking behind. Other polluters are convincing that they have not the slightest idea that their habits and lifestyle are not in harmony with a good, clean environment.

Gloria Ramnath,

Shelburne