



VOLUME 124 NO. 128

The Phoenix

SATURDAY

January 14, 2012

Serving The Phoenixville and Spring Ford School Districts

PhoenixvilleNews.com

Hypnosis session helps Phoenixville man quit smoking

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PHOENIXVILLE –

For 27 years, Michael Piergrossi was a smoker.

On Jan. 15, the Phoenixville resident will be smoke free for two years.

Piergrossi said he wasn't just a social smoker. He'd smoke about two packs a day.

He said he had the mindset to quit, but just needed more support.

Piergrossi said he underwent group hypnosis sessions years ago which helped for a little while, but once he started a job where his co-workers were smoking a lot, he went back into the habit of smoking. Piergrossi said he told himself he would only smoke at work. He said the place he had the sessions from went out of business. He said there wasn't any reinforcement with the sessions.

Piergrossi wanted to try hypnosis sessions again. He did some research and found Phoenixville certified hypnotist Tony Longobardi through a website search.

"He was a local guy and I liked that he hosted hypnosis seminars at Owen J. Roberts," he said.

One of the big factors that made him want to quit smoking was when the Pennsylvania smoking ban laws went into effect.

"I was in a band at the time. We were playing at these clubs where you had to go outside and smoke," Piergrossi said. "So you're outside in the freezing cold smoking cigarettes. The enjoyment was totally not there anymore."

Piergrossi participated in a one-on-one self hypnosis session with Longobardi in January 2010.

Longobardi said with each session he conducts a pre-talk to dispel the myths of

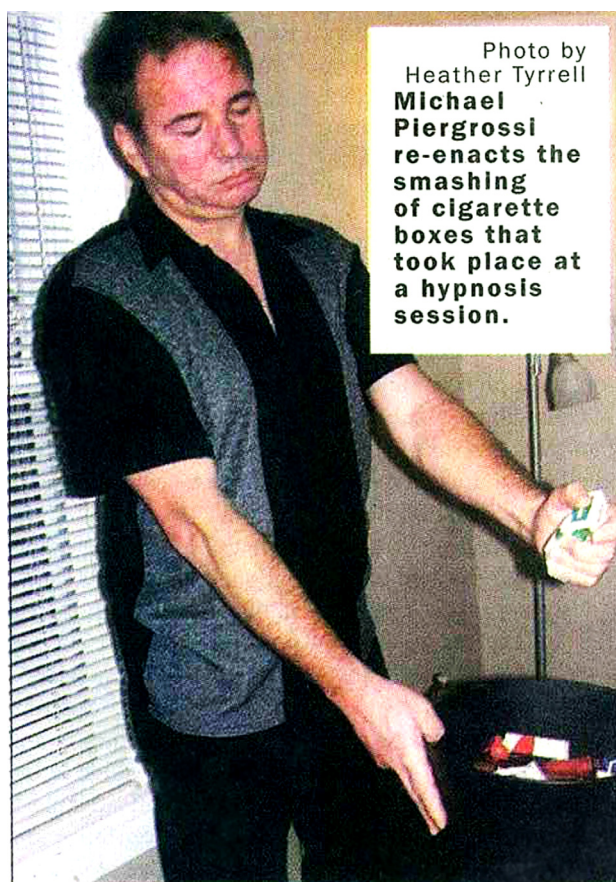


Photo by Heather Tyrrell
Michael Piergrossi re-enacts the smashing of cigarette boxes that took place at a hypnosis session.

hypnosis and makes sure clients would respond to the hypnosis. He said throughout his time of working as a hypnotist, he has had to turn two people away because they weren't responding to the visualization he would give to them.

He said his clients experience deep relaxation, but are very aware and are able to see, hear and remember everything from the session.

"I have them experience that desire and then I have them go through their past when they were able to take control," Longobardi said.

Piergrossi said, "It was total relaxation. It wasn't painful. It wasn't like someone was trying to mess with your head."

During the session, Longobardi instructed Piergrossi to come up with three activities he could do instead of smoking for positive reinforcement.

The three activities Piergrossi decided on were doing the dishes, learning how to play a new song and taking the dog out for a walk. He also stopped drinking coffee because when he usually enjoyed a cigarette with coffee in the morning.

In addition, Longobardi's clients that want to stop smoking take a dry drag of

the cigarette during the sessions.

"Most clients take a dry drag. They hate it and throw it in the trash can," he said.

Piergrossi didn't bring cigarettes to the session so Longobardi had him smell a thrown out pack, smash it and put it in the trash can.

Longobardi told Piergrossi to drink a lot of water to flush out the nicotine and eat fruits and vegetables. He also told him to throw out his toothbrush. Longobardi gave him some breathing exercises to do if he started to feel anxious.

The client only had one session with Longobardi and didn't come back for the reinforcement session the week after the initial session.

Piergrossi said he tried the patches before, but they would fall off during the day.

"With the patches and the gum, you're taking nicotine to quit nicotine," he said.

He said after the session he initially sort of felt a temptation to smoke, but he knew the urge would pass.

Piergrossi said his friends and coworkers supported him with his efforts to quit smoking.

In addition to smoking cessation, Longobardi also offers sessions for weight loss.

He said most recently several clients participated in hypnosis sessions due to various fears including driving, public speaking and needles (shots). He offered a free stop smoking session on World Hypnotism Day, Jan. 4.

"The bottom line is I empower people to take control of their lives," Longobardi said.

For more information about hypnosis email call 610 659-0526, email info@HypnosisByTony.com, or visit www.HypnosisByTony.com.

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