
INDEPENDENT

Diary

RUTH DUDLEY EDWARDS



All last week, owing to a steady influx of politically incorrect visitors, the house has been full of cigarette smoke and the ashtrays full of stubs, and although I have not smoked for nine years, I don't mind. I owe this to Gillian Riley, who in four mornings made it possible for me to give up smoking almost without pain and not turn into an anti-smoker. I appear as a case study in her *How to Stop Smoking and Stay Stopped for Good* (Vermillion), explaining: "I began smoking when I was about eight but did not take it up seriously until I was 14 or 15." She has asked me to mention her similarly titled audio tape (Random House Audiobooks) and my gratitude to her is so heartfelt that I am breaking my almost invariable rule of never giving plugs. Hounded by evangelical converts, my smoking friends are indebted to her, too.