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Guilford Publications has kindly given permission for making the literacy-adapted workbook available free of charge. The literacy-adapted workbook supplements the source material, which is found in Thorn, B.E. (2017). *Cognitive Therapy for Chronic Pain: A Step-by-Step Guide, 2nd Edition*, New York: Guilford Publications.

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Introduction to Therapist Edition of Learning About Managing Pain (LAMP) Patient Workbook

The workbook accompanying this introduction is the result of a multi-year effort to disseminate efficacious cognitive-behavioral therapy for chronic pain to people with low health literacy. This effort grew out of feedback I received after publishing the first edition of **Cognitive Therapy for Chronic Pain: A Step-by-Step Guide (Thorn, 2004)**. Although it was gratifying to receive positive notes from practitioners around the world, one particular question surfaced that piqued my curiosity: Was this treatment appropriate for individuals with limited literacy? As with most cognitive therapy techniques, this approach makes use of patient workbooks, handouts, and worksheets. Would this mode of treatment delivery pose a barrier to those with limited literacy? Further, cognitive therapy requires a certain amount of abstract thinking and problem solving, and it is not clear how to best promote these skills in patients with limited literacy. In my effort to answer these questions, my clinical research lab team embarked upon an NIH-supported research endeavor that began with adapting the existing manual found within the above-mentioned book. Results of this randomized controlled trial can be found in: **Thorn, B.E., Day, M.A., Burns, J., Kuhajda, M., Gaskins, S., Sweeney, J., ~~~ Cabbil, C. (2011). Randomized trial of group cognitive-behavioral therapy compared to a pain education control for low literacy rural people with chronic pain. *Pain*, 152, 2710-2720.** Since that time, we have conducted a large randomized controlled trial (RCT) supported in part by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (**Thorn, B.E., Eyer, J.C., Van Dyke, B.P., Torres, C.A., Thorn, B.E., Kim, M.,Tucker, D.H. Literacy-Adapted Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy vs Education for Chronic Pain at Low-Income Clinics: A Randomized Controlled Trial, submitted**). Results of this RCT support the efficacy of this simplified CBT program. I have also published a major revision of **Cognitive Therapy for Chronic Pain, 2nd Edition: A Step-by-Step Guide (Thorn, 2017)**.

The problem of limited literacy is formidable. Millions of Americans are lacking in the ability to use print materials in everyday life. As the health care system becomes increasingly complex, functional literacy skills are needed more, rather than less. Numerous studies have demonstrated the link between limited literacy skills and poor health outcomes among adults in the U.S. Unfortunately, other research has shown that many of the materials available to health consumers, including patient workbooks, have been written at a level which is well above the understanding of many of our citizens. Limited literacy is considered so critical a problem in the U.S. that it has engendered a national priority within the healthcare system for the simplification of written patient education materials. The patient workbook and worksheets within the manual

were reduced from the tenth grade level (in the original Thorn, 2004 manual) to the fifth grade level, consistent with recommended guidelines by the PLAIN Language U.S. Government directive and other health literacy experts.

Guilford publications has kindly given permission for making the literacy-adapted patient workbook available free of charge. **The literacy-adapted patient workbook is not meant to stand alone. It supplements the source material, which is found in Thorn, B.E. (2017). Cognitive Therapy for Chronic Pain, 2nd edition: A Step-by-Step Guide, New York: Guilford Publications.** The parent book covers the conceptual/theoretical underpinnings of the approach, the research supporting this approach, the training necessary to deliver this treatment, relevant cognitive assessments that can be used with patients in this program, and explanatory remarks with examples from each session. The session content in the parent book (which includes patient materials such as written session summaries, worksheets and session outlines for patients) and the literacy-adapted workbook are not identical because of the way the literacy-adapted patient workbook was simplified. The web address for the source material is the following:

http://www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/cartscript.cgi?page=pr/thorn.htm&dir=pp/acpp&cart_id=230964.27905

The therapist edition of this simplified patient workbook includes this introductory content and scripts for session summaries (referred to as “Session Tips” in the workbook) as well as the relaxation scripts used in this program. It is my hope that you will find these materials useful to you and your patients who suffer from persistent painful conditions. We see this as a necessary first step in providing appropriate psychosocial treatments to those with literacy barriers, and thus potentially reducing some of the rampant healthcare disparities in our society.

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Therapist Supplement

Scripts for Tips CDs

[Note: scripts are for therapists to use to make audio recordings to give to clients]

Week 1: Tips from Pain Management Discussion Group #01:

[Comments in brackets not read.]

Each week, we will give you an audio recording with tips from the discussion group, usually as a CD. We'd like you to listen to this CD at least once during the week, just to remind yourself about the group. Listening to the Tips CD also helps remind you to think about—and practice—what you learned in the discussion group. We will also give you a recording of a relaxation exercise, a number of different ones over the course of the study. We'd like you to do the relaxation exercise at least three days during the week following the group meeting.

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned about chronic pain, the stress and pain connection, and ways to judge a stressful situation.

Chronic pain and short-term pain are different. Chronic pain is pain that lasts for longer 3 months, hurts most days, and limits what you can do. Surprisingly, at least 3 out of 10 people have chronic pain. Although there are different causes and each person's pain is different, there are also a lot of common things that people with pain share. Your pain is real. These groups can't cure your pain, but they can teach you new information and skills to manage your pain.

Stress and pain are related. Stress is a reaction of your body, including your brain, to situations that seem overwhelming. Stressors can be any problem in life. When you don't think that you can cope with something that's happening to you, or happening around you, then you feel pressure, and your body and your mind begin responding in an effort to defend you.

- **Your body** reacts to stress by tightening up the muscles, increasing your blood pressure and heart rate, and pumping stress chemicals into your blood stream. Your body's reaction to stress is to prepare you to fight for your life, or run for your life!
- Your mind reacts to stress by translating the situation into negative **emotions** – things like feeling mad, sad, worried, or scared.
- Your mind also causes you to have **thoughts** about the stressful event, and you may find yourself saying very negative things about the situation.
- Finally, your **actions** or behaviors also change as a result of feeling stress: you are more likely to withdraw (or run away) when you are stressed, or sometimes, you may lash out at others (or fight) when you are feeling stressed.

Pain itself can be a stressor. It can cause the same negative reactions in your body, your emotions, your thoughts, and your behaviors. And other stressors, even if they are not related to pain, can certainly make pain worse.

This week, we also learned that the way you judge a situation makes all the difference in how you cope with it. We usually judge a stressful situation to be negative or positive. When we view it as a negative, we see it as a “threat” or a “loss.” When we judge a stressor to be a threat, we are likely to feel worried or afraid and avoid the stressor if at all possible. When we judge a situation to be a threat, we also tend to think thoughts that make us even more nervous. For example, we may tell ourselves that things are really bad and likely to get worse, which (of course!) makes things much worse! When we judge a stressor to be a loss, we are likely to feel sad or depressed and to withdraw and give up. We tend to think thoughts that increase the chances that we will give in and give up. For example, we might tell ourselves that we may as well give up on trying to become the person we want to be—that our time has passed. These judgments about stressful situations make the situation worse than it was to begin with. If we can learn how powerful our judgments are, and if we can learn how to recognize negative judgments, we can start taking more control over stressful situations.

One way to take control is to look at a stressor as a challenge. Even if it’s just a little bit, if we can see some part of our stressful situation as a challenge, we are more likely to feel some positive energy, to give solutions a try, and to help ourselves instead of hurting ourselves.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

The first relaxation exercise—and the first tool in your new Pain Toolbox!—was called “**First Aid for Stress**.” We taught you how to take 20 breaths to feel less stressed. It is a short relaxation exercise, one that you can take with you anywhere you go. Learning how to pay attention to your breathing allows you to be able to quiet your body and your mind. The more you practice, the better you get at it. You can use **First Aid for Stress** in the middle of a hectic day or during a frustrating situation, just to calm yourself.

When you feel stressed, stop and notice how your body feels. Then, sit down and take 20 slow breaths. Breathing in, nice and slow, and breathing out for a little longer than you breathed in. Not straining or forcing the air. Letting yourself be comfortable and relaxed. Do 20 breaths so that your body can really feel the difference. Then, see how you feel! Does your body feel different? Practice this at least 3 times during the next week.

See you next week at next week’s discussion group!

Week 2: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned about chronic pain, the stress and pain connection, and ways to judge a stressful situation. We learned that chronic pain lasts longer than 3 months, hurts most days, and limits what you can do. We also learned that it is fairly common, real, and different for different people. Although there is no cure, there is a lot you can do to manage the pain.

We also talked about how stress can make your pain worse and how pain can make you more stressed. This negative cycle affects your body, your emotions, your thoughts, and your behavior. We also learned that there are positive and negative ways to think of a stressful situation and that how you view a situation makes all the difference in how you cope with it. If we see a stressful situation in a positive light, we'll see it as a challenge we can work towards overcoming, and we will have more energy to manage our pain. If we see it in a negative light, we may get sad or scared, and we will be more limited in what we can do. If we can learn to see situations in a positive light, though—as a challenge we can face—we can start taking more control over stressful situations.

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned how you can take charge of your pain, how pain works in the brain, and how you can start to change your response to pain. First, we talked about how you can Put Yourself in Charge of managing your pain. By thinking, “I can do it!,” you can grow a stronger belief in yourself that you can manage your pain and your life.

We also learned how pain works in the brain. Remember that it is the brain that tells us whether we are in pain or not. Sometimes, even if we have a broken or worn out body part, we don't feel much pain. And sometimes, even if the broken body part is physically healed, we still feel pain. The key to understanding this is to understand more about how the brain works.

On the way up to the brain, pain signals from the body go through a “gate” in the spine that can let a lot of pain signals through or only a few pain signals through. How wide open the gate is depends on the brain. The brain sends signals down the spine to control the gate so that it opens wide or closes shut. When the gate is open wide, you might feel a lot of pain. When the gate is only open a little, you might feel just a little pain.

In the brain, there are “Thought Centers” and “Feeling Centers” that send these signals to the gate. We know that certain moods or emotions make the gate wider—things like depression, anger, and worry. Certain kinds of thoughts also make the gate wider—things like focusing on the pain itself, telling yourself there is nothing you can do, or thinking that you are a failure. Certain actions can also affect the gate. Inactivity or resting too much can make the gate wider, and using pain medication for a long period of time can lead to worse pain.

The good news is that there are also things that make the pain gate smaller! Positive moods, like being happy, hopeful, or joyful, and helpful thoughts like “I can do this” or “I am learning new things every day” can make the pain gate smaller. Other things like exercise, an active life, physical therapy, and massage can make the gate smaller. Relaxation exercises also make the gate smaller, so we will be teaching you several relaxation exercises during these discussion groups. The bottom line is that you can learn things that you can do yourself to

make the pain gate smaller, and the aim of this discussion group is to teach you those things.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

This week's relaxation exercise was called "Breathing Space." It is a short relaxation exercise that builds on First Aid for Stress to teach you how to adjust your body's reaction to stress and pain. Like the First Aid, you can take it with you anywhere you go. Learning how to focus your awareness on your breathing allows you to be able to quiet your body and your mind. The more you practice, the better you get at it. You can use the breathing space exercise in the middle of a hectic day or during a frustrating situation, just to calm yourself. We generally sit upright when we do this exercise, relaxed, but not slouching in the chair. Your body gets used to the signal of sitting upright as a cue for relaxing with the breath. Listen to your audio recording each day, and remember what situation you were in and how it helped you so that you can tell us about it the next time we meet.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 3: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned about “Putting Yourself in Charge.” We talked about how growing a feeling of “I know I can do it!” inside yourself can lead you to believe in yourself more strongly and help you manage your pain and your life better.

We also learned about a new idea of how pain works called “Pain is in the Brain.” This idea is better than the old idea that pain is caused by broken or worn-out body parts. The new idea means that the pain you feel comes from the way the brain processes signals sent from your body. Remember, it is the brain that tells us whether we are in pain or not. Fortunately, pain is a two-way street because the brain can also send signals to a gate in your spine. This gate can open wider to let more pain signals through or it can close smaller to let fewer pain signals through.

In the brain, there are “Thought Centers” and “Feeling Centers” that send these signals to the gate to open it or close it. Feelings like sad or mad; thoughts like telling yourself there is nothing you can do; or actions like resting too much can make the gate wider. The good news is that there are also things that make the pain gate smaller. Positive feelings, like being happy or hopeful, and helpful thoughts, like “I am learning new things every day,” can make the pain gate smaller. Other things like exercise, an active life, and relaxation can also make the gate smaller. The bottom line was that there are lots of things you can do to lower your pain.

[Review of This Week]

We began this week’s group by talking about how fear of pain can get in the way of physical activity. With short-term pain, resting can help us heal and get better. With chronic pain, resting too long can create a cycle: we are afraid to feel pain so we do less, which leads to feeling isolated and down, which opens the pain gate to more pain signals. If we buy into this pain and far cycle, we rest too much, begin to get weak and we are able to do less and less over time.

Most of this discussion group was spent talking about getting active. There are also many reasons why it is important to increase your level of physical activity in your life. You may feel that your chronic pain makes it impossible for you to be physically active, and we realize that there are things you may no longer be able to do that you once did. But being physically active is important for your overall health, your mood, and your pain. Physical activity helps keep your muscles stronger, which helps support your spine and other bones and joints. Everyone is different when it comes to what kind of activity they can do and how long they can do it.

Pacing your physical activity is the key to being active without injuring yourself or causing pain flare-ups. The idea behind pacing is that when we have pain, we tend to “underdo” so that we reduce the chances of a pain flare-up, or we tend to “overdo” because we want to make up for lost time. Both underdoing and overdoing can get us into trouble. Pacing yourself involves learning to recognize the body’s signals that it is time to push yourself a little or it is time to back off a little.

Sometimes, people try to do too much too fast, and then they get pain or get discouraged and

quit. If you pick a gentle activity, like walking, and start doing it a little bit at a time, you are more likely to stick with it. You're also more likely to feel better after doing it. The goal is not to exercise to the point of being exhausted or to the point of feeling pain, but to do a little something that you know you can do, then rest, then repeat it. Over time, you will be able to increase your level of activity if you go slowly and you do it often. Finding the right balance between rest and activity will help you feel less pain in the long run. We want you to experiment with pacing a physical activity at least 3 times this week.

When we talk about "getting active", we mean not only increasing your physical activity, but also making sure you do activities that are enjoyable, meaningful, or pleasurable to you. It's easy to let pleasant activities get sidelined by the "have to's" in our lives, but it is very important to make time for pleasant activities. We asked you to think of some activities that you enjoy. We also asked you to schedule in and do at least 3 small pleasurable activities during the next week. These do not have to be big things, but they usually need to be planned. In planning for the activity, be as specific as possible. When will you try it? Who will you do it with? Where are you going to do it? What are some of the roadblocks you might come across? How will you get around them?

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

This week's relaxation exercise was called "**Warm & Heavy.**" It is a quick relaxation exercise that teaches you how to adjust your body's reaction to stress and pain. It is designed to help teach your body and mind to be quiet and relax. This exercise is aimed at balancing out your body's responses, so that the body doesn't over-react to stress and pain and make things worse. Adding to the focus on the breath, you learn how to focus on certain sensations or feelings in the body and imagine, or create feelings of warmth and heaviness. These feelings help quiet down the nervous system so that it is less reactive overall. The more you practice, the better you get at it. Listen to your relaxation recording each day, and remember how many times you did it and what effect it had on your stress.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 4: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we talked about the fear and pain cycle and that fear of pain can lead to too much resting, not doing things we like to do, feeling lonely and down, and even opening the pain gate, creating more pain.

We also talked about actions we can take to lower our pain. “Getting Active” means both increasing your physical activity AND making sure you do activities that are enjoyable, meaningful, or pleasurable to you. Being physically active is important for your overall health, your mood, and your pain. It helps keep your muscles stronger, which helps support your spine and other bones and joints. Pacing your physical activity is the key to being active without injuring yourself or causing pain flare-ups. By starting a little bit at a time and doing just a little less than what we know we can do without pain—then resting and repeating—we avoid “overdoing it” and paying for it the next day OR “underdoing it” and gradually doing less and less. Pacing yourself teaches you to know the body’s signals that it is time to push yourself a little or it is time to back off a little. Over time, you will be able to increase your level of activity if you go slowly and you do it often. It is also very important to MAKE time for pleasant activities. We asked you to think of some activities that you enjoy and schedule them in several times throughout the week.

By “Getting Active,” you can take steps to a fuller life with less pain.

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned about depression and other common mood changes associated with chronic pain. We learned that feeling sad, mad, or scared are very common reactions to chronic pain that sometimes lead to depression or anxiety. The “Getting Active” skills that we asked you to experiment with last week are good ways to help you manage negative moods.

Another way to manage strong emotions and negative moods is to open up and express strong emotions. It’s important to have a way of being able to express strong emotions instead of letting them get bottled up inside you or causing you to lash out at those around you. Many of us are uncomfortable with our strong emotions. We might be scared that if we admit to strong emotions, especially the negative ones, we might get “swallowed up” or “swept away” by them. What really happens, though, is if we keep these feelings bottled up inside of us, they will eat away at us and have a negative effect on our physical and emotional wellbeing. So how should we open up to strong emotions? Many of us are afraid that we will hurt others, or turn them away from us, by talking about our strong feelings, especially if they are negative. The “**Express Yourself**” exercise allows you to open up, express, and let go of strong emotions. And it is meant just for you — not as a way of communicating with others.

There are two ways you can express yourself. You can write about your feelings and thoughts, or you can talk about them, perhaps into a voice recorder. You can write or talk about any feelings: Your feelings about your pain.... Changes you have made because of your pain....your childhood... your loved ones....your ideas about who you are now or who you want to be in the future. You can keep what you write or you can throw it away. You can save what you say into the recorder or you can erase it. It’s completely up to you.

We’d like you to do the “Express Yourself” exercise at least 3 times during this week. Each

time you do the Express Yourself activity, write or talk for 10 minutes. When you write or talk, do it just for you! You do not have to share this with anyone. You can write or talk about anything you want. It is normal to experience many different feelings during this activity. You might feel sad. You might feel mad or even scared. In fact, some people say that at first, doing the exercise made them feel sad or mad. Later on, those same people said that it really helped them to write about and then better understand the strong feelings they were holding inside of them. It's OK to write or talk about your sad or mad feelings. If you become too upset about your words, you can always change the subject. The important thing is to keep writing or talking.

Remember: The Express Yourself activity is just for you. You are in charge!

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

This week's relaxation exercise was called "**Thoughts & Feelings**" relaxation. It works to help you become more aware of all the small things that are happening in your body and mind. Like the other relaxation exercises you've learned, this relaxation exercise helps teach your body and mind to be quiet and relax. This exercise is aimed at helping you observe your body and your mind, without judging what is happening or reacting to it. Your goal is simply to notice it. This relaxation exercise introduces the powerful idea of "acceptance": when you accept your thoughts and feelings the way they really are—when you stop fighting things that are happening, you find that you can manage things better! Acceptance in no way means that you are giving in or giving up. Acceptance means to let go of judging. The more you practice, the better you get at it. Listen to your relaxation CD at least 3 times before the next session.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 5: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned about how sadness and other common emotions are tied to our chronic pain. We learned that feeling sad, mad, or scared are very common reactions to chronic pain that sometimes lead to depression, anxiety, or other problems. In addition to using the “getting active” exercises to help you cope with negative emotions, you can also use the “express yourself” exercise.

Last week, you learned **Express Yourself** as a new way to help *Close the Pain Gate*. You do this when you open up and express the strong emotions you may have been holding inside you. Many of us are uncomfortable with our strong emotions, but if we keep these feelings bottled up inside us, they eat away at us and have a negative effect on our physical and emotional wellbeing. Many of us are also scared that we will hurt others, or turn them away from us by talking about our strong feelings, especially when they are negative. The “**Express Yourself**” exercise allows you to open up, express, and better understand strong emotions—without troubling anyone else—because it is meant just for you, not as a way of talking to others.

All you have to do is write about your feelings and thoughts—maybe on a piece of paper or in a notebook—or talk about them—maybe to yourself or into a voice recorder so you can listen to them again later. You can write or talk about any feelings: *Your feelings about your pain.... Changes you have made because of your pain....your childhood... your loved ones....your ideas about who you are now or who you want to be in the future.* It is normal to experience many different feelings during this activity. You might feel sad, mad, or even scared. Some people say that at first, doing the exercise made them feel sad or mad, but later on, those same people said that it had really helped them to write about and then let go of the strong feelings. If you become too upset about your words, you can always change the subject. The important thing is to keep writing or talking. When you’re done, you can keep what you write or you can throw it away. It’s completely up to you. We wanted you to do this 3 times for 10 minutes at a time, but most of all, we wanted you to remember that the Express Yourself activity is just for you. You are in charge!

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned about the ways we can talk to someone: Attack talk, Retreat talk, and Stand Tall talk. Lots of people have problems asking for what they need or want in a clear and direct way. Often, we feel weak, like we don’t have the right to ask for what we need, or mad when our needs aren’t met.

- Sometimes, when we feel mad that people aren’t meeting our needs, we may use **Attack talk**, demanding that we get our way, fussing or even yelling at others because we feel “wronged” or hurt. When we use attack talk, others may hear, “*I am right and you are wrong! My needs are more important than your needs!*” Attack talk doesn’t work because it makes others feel angry or scared, and usually drives others away from us.
- When we feel like we don’t have a right to ask for what we need or want, we may use **Retreat talk**, wishing and hoping people would know what we need, or sometimes feeling like “doormats” because others are “walking all over us.” When we use retreat

talk, others may hear, *“I am weak and wrong. My needs do not matter.”* Retreat talk doesn’t work because people can’t read minds! We have to tell them what we want or need. As we discussed in the group, everyone has that right. Asking the right way does not guarantee that you will get your wants and needs met, but it helps people know what it is that you want.

- **Stand Tall** talk is a way of simply and directly asking for what you want and need without saying you’re sorry or seeming mad. When we use stand tall talk, others may hear, *“We both have thoughts and feelings that matter. Both of our needs are important.”* Standing Tall and stating directly what you want or need is a brave thing to do. Standing Tall means that you are taking responsibility for your own feelings and for getting your needs met in a healthy way. Stand tall talk can be as simple as making a straightforward request of someone else, or saying no to something that you would prefer not to do. Stand tall talk can also be used to deal with problem situations.

To use stand tall talk in problem situations, make a plan for what you want to say. Remember that you have the right to ask for what you want. Pick a good time and place to meet and talk with the other person. What do you want to say to the other person? (you might want to write it down).

What is your problem situation? Who is involved? How does this situation make you feel? What do you want – what would you like to happen?? And finally, what do you think will happen if you Stand Tall in this situation? As you start to plan your Stand Tall talk, think about a good time and place for you to meet and talk about the situation with the person involved. You might want to write out the problem ahead of time.

Remember **The 4 steps to Standing Tall using “I”-messages:**

- 1) Say what the problem is in a simple and direct way and ask for one thing at a time.
- 2) Say how you feel when the problem happening without blaming the other person for how you feel.
- 3) Tell the other person what you want in specific and simple language.
- 4) Say how the change would help your relationship with the other person, and will make you feel better.

Remember that saying no can also be Stand Tall talk. You have a right to say no. You don’t have to be nervous or Retreat, and you don’t have to be mean or Attack. Saying no in a polite, simple, and direct way, without apologizing, is a good example of Stand Tall talk.

In general, when doing your Stand Tall talk, use “I” rather than “you” statements. That means to talk about yourself more than the other person. Don’t accuse the other person of “not caring” or “being a bad person.” That could ruin all the effort you’ve put into planning your Stand Tall talk! If you have to complain about the person you are talking to, focus on their behavior, not who they are as a person. When you Stand Tall, people know exactly what you want, and they may not put up their defenses so quickly. You may not always get what you want, but you’ll feel better about talking this way! Try using Stand Tall talk **at least 3 times** this week.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

Our relaxation exercise this week was called “Images Relaxation.” In this relaxation exercise,

you created a special place in your mind where you can go for relaxation and guidance. Make this place peaceful, comfortable, and safe. When you visualize this special place, try to use all of your senses — sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch — in order to make this place in your mind as real as possible. We want you to try this exercise **at least 3 times** in the coming week.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 6: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned how to ask for what we want in a clear, direct way using Stand Tall talk. Instead of Attack talk, which can make people angry or scared, or Retreat talk, which forces other people to read your mind, Stand Tall talk helps you take responsibility for your own feelings and get your needs met in a healthy way. To get started Standing Tall, make a plan for what you want to say. Pick a problem situation in your life, but don't choose the biggest one. Think about a good time and place for you to meet and talk about the situation with the person involved. Then, write out what you want to say. Try The 4 steps to Standing Tall using "I"-messages:

- 1) Say what the problem is in a simple and direct way and ask for one thing at a time.
- 2) Say how you feel when the problem happening without blaming the other person for how you feel.
- 3) Tell the other person what you want in specific and simple language.
- 4) Say how the change would help your relationship with the other person, and will make you feel better.

Remember that demanding that we get our way, fussing or even yelling at others because we feel "wronged" or hurt, is not Standing Tall. That's Attack talk, and it can make others be scared of us or resent us—or worse! Also, being afraid of saying what we need, wishing and hoping people would know what we need without saying it, is not Stand Tall talk. That's Retreat talk and it may leave us feeling like "doormats" and not getting our needs met because others can't read our minds.

Keep in mind that saying No can also be Stand Tall talk. You have a right to say No, and you don't have to be nervous and Retreat or be mean and Attack. Just say No in a polite, simple, and direct way, without apologizing.

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned a lot more about the importance of our thoughts, both helpful and unhelpful. We learned that what we think really does affect our emotions, our actions, and our bodies. You'll remember that thoughts affect the amount of pain we feel because they can work to open or close the pain gate, so paying attention to our thoughts can help us to have more control over our pain. These thoughts can be completely true, partly true, or not true at all, but they can still affect our pain a lot!

Helpful thoughts are thoughts that work for us—they can make our pain better. They can make us feel more in control and able to do the things we need to do to manage our pain. They can lead us to feel like things aren't as bad as we may have thought. Helpful thoughts usually lead us to do more of the things we really want to do. Helpful thoughts can help close the pain gate.

Unhelpful thoughts are thoughts that work against us—they can make our pain worse! Unhelpful thoughts can make us feel helpless and out of control, and make us feel like things are much worse than they really are. Unhelpful thoughts often lead us to stop doing things that we really want to do.

- Often, our thoughts are just simple **statements** we think to ourselves without even noticing. They can be helpful, unhelpful, or even harmful! An unhelpful thought might be: “Oh, I just can’t handle this back pain!” A helpful thought might be: “My pain is not so bad today.”
- Other thoughts are **rules** we have about how things “should” be, “ought to be,” or are “supposed to be” with ourselves, others, or the world. An unhelpful thought might be: “I should have taken better care of my health.” A helpful thought is “If I do the right things to take care of myself, I will feel better.”
- Other thoughts are beliefs that are dug in **deeper**. They are the strongest and toughest to change, but we can change them with some effort. An unhelpful belief might be: “I’m less of a person because of my pain.” Or a helpful belief: “I am a whole person with chronic pain.” Carrying around unhelpful thoughts weighs us down like carrying a bunch of heavy bags.

During the coming week, practice noticing what unhelpful thoughts you carry around with you. Start by paying attention to your feelings. When your mood changes—when you get sad or mad or scared—think about what situation you were just in. Think about the thoughts you were just thinking. Do those thoughts work for you or work against you? Try to remember at least 3 of these thoughts or situations so that, if you want, we can discuss them in the next session. When you become more aware of your thoughts and recognize what you are saying to yourself, you will have taken the first step in getting better control of what you tell yourself. We’ll talk about what we can do with these thoughts in the next few weeks.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

For our relaxation exercise this week, we returned to “**Thoughts & Feelings**,” which we first learned in Week 4. Thoughts & Feelings relaxation is particularly powerful, so we want you to have lots of opportunities to practice it. For that reason, we’ll be asking you to do it for the next few weeks as well. This relaxation works to help you become more aware of all the small things that are happening in your body and mind. Like the other relaxation exercises you’ve learned, this relaxation exercise helps teach your body and mind to be quiet and relax. It also helps you learn to observe your body and your mind—your feelings and your thoughts—without judging what is happening or reacting to it. Your goal is simply to notice it. This relaxation exercise introduces the powerful idea of “acceptance”: when you accept your thoughts and feelings the way they really are—when you stop fighting things that are happening—you find that you can manage things better! Acceptance in no way means that you are giving in or giving up. Acceptance means to let go of judging. The more you practice, the better you get at it. Over time, you may notice that you get better at thinking thoughts without having your emotions get out of hand and that you also get better focusing your mind on one thing without it getting distracted. We’d like you to listen to your relaxation CD **at least 3 times** before the next session.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 7: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned a lot more about the importance of our thoughts, both helpful and unhelpful. We learned that what we think really does affect our emotions, our actions, and our bodies, so paying attention to our thoughts can help us to have more control over our pain. Whether the thoughts are completely true, partly true, or not true at all, we can use them to help close the pain gate.

We described thoughts as either unhelpful or helpful. Helpful thoughts are thoughts that work for us by making us feel more in control and able to do the things we need to do to manage our pain. When we think helpful thoughts, we do more of the things we really want to do. Helpful thoughts also help close the pain gate. Unhelpful thoughts are thoughts that work against us. They can make us feel helpless and out of control, and like things are much worse than they really are. When we think unhelpful thoughts, we stop doing things that we really want to do. Unhelpful thoughts open the pain gate.

Thoughts can be helpful or unhelpful and can be weak, strong, or very strong, but usually, we don't even realize we think them. **Simple statements** are ideas like "This pain is too much!" that we think without noticing. They are like leaves on a tree because there are lots of them but they are pretty easy to get rid of or just let blow away. **Rules** are thoughts like "If I were a better mother, I would never let pain keep me from playing with my kids" that tell us to do things a certain way. They're stronger, like the branches on a tree, and take more effort to change. **Beliefs** are thoughts like "No one loves me because I'm too hard to love" that we believe very strongly, usually from when we were kids. They are very strong and hidden deep within us like the roots on a tree. They are hard to change, but we can change them with time and effort.

Carrying around all these unhelpful thoughts weighs us down like carrying a bunch of heavy bags, but we can change them if we want to. Start by noticing them. When you feel your emotions change—when you notice that you are feeling sad or scared or mad—think back to the situation that happened right before, and try to remember what you were thinking when it happened. Ask yourself if they were helpful or unhelpful. This was the first step in getting better control of your thoughts.

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned new ways of "thinking about our thinking." We can have habits in our thinking that are really unhelpful. Sometimes when we're thinking unhelpful thoughts, one thought leads to another, and then to another, and another, and another, until we're feeling overwhelmed by an army of unhelpful thoughts. Knowing this pattern helps us to notice when it is happening and stop our tumble! Another pattern is when we think of things as the worst they could possibly be. When we think unhelpful thoughts as if things are as bad as they could be, it makes us feel like there is nothing we could possibly do to make it better. But now that we know this pattern, we can recognize that things are usually not *that* bad, and we can look for things we CAN do to make it feel like less of a catastrophe. Another way we can tell when we are thinking unhelpful thoughts is when we notice **Red Flag Words**. Red Flag Words are words that describes extremes like "always," "never," "all the time," "every time," "ever," "everyone," and "no one." When we use Red Flag Words, whatever we are saying is usually not totally true because most things are not that black and white.

Our Gate Closer for this week taught you how to “Change Your Unhelpful Thoughts” by acting like a jury.

- **Step 1** was to figure out what unhelpful thoughts you are having. What emotion are you feeling?
- **Step 2** is to think about the thought like a jury. Ask yourself: “What is the evidence that this thought is true?” and “What is the evidence that this thought is not true?” What’s your verdict? How true is it overall?
- **Step 3** is to come up with a new thought that is more **helpful** than the original thought. These thoughts are usually more true or real and more positive.

When you learn to recognize and question your unhelpful thoughts, you will have more control over them. By learning how to change your thoughts, you are learning to harness the power of the brain to help you manage your pain. You are also learning to have a different relationship to your thoughts—learning that maybe they aren’t the “all powerful truth,” but just thoughts. This new relationship with our thoughts takes some of the power away from the unhelpful ones—the ones that have done a lot of damage to our emotions and to our bodies. Before the next discussion group, try to change at least 3 unhelpful thoughts as they come up. Make a note to yourself or remember what the thought was and how you changed it, so that we can discuss it next week.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

Our relaxation exercise again this week was “**Thoughts & Feelings**.” We are doing this relaxation several times during these discussion groups because Thoughts & Feelings is a particularly powerful relaxation exercise, and we want you to have lots of opportunities to practice it. This relaxation works to help you become more aware of all the small things that are happening in your body and mind. Like the other relaxation exercises you’ve learned, this relaxation exercise helps teach your body and mind to be quiet and relax. It also helps you learn to observe your body and your mind—your feelings and your thoughts—without judging what is happening or reacting to it. Your goal is simply to notice it. This relaxation exercise teaches you the powerful idea of “acceptance”: when you accept your thoughts and feelings the way they really are—when you stop fighting things that are happening—you find that you can manage things better! Acceptance in no way means that you are giving in or giving up. Acceptance means to let go of judging. The more you practice, the better you get at it. You may already be noticing that you are getting better at thinking thoughts without having your emotions get out of hand and that you are also getting better focusing your mind on one thing without it getting distracted. Listen to your relaxation CD **at least 3 times** before the next session.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 8: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned new ways of “thinking about our thinking.” We can have habits in our thinking that are really unhelpful. Sometimes one unhelpful thought leads to another, and then to another, and another, and another, until we’re feeling overwhelmed. Knowing this pattern helps us to notice when it’s happening and stop our tumble! Another pattern is when we think of things in the worst case scenario—as if everything is a total catastrophe! Catastrophizing makes us feel like there is nothing we could possibly do to make it better, but now that we know this pattern, we can look for things we CAN do to change the situation. Another sign that a thought is unhelpful is when we hear **Red Flag Words**. Red Flag Words are words that describe extremes like “always,” “never,” and “all the time.” When we use Red Flag Words, whatever we’re saying is usually not totally true because most things are not that black and white.

The Gate Closer for last week taught you to “Change Your Unhelpful Thoughts” by *acting like a jury*.

- **Step 1** was to figure out what unhelpful thoughts you’re having and what emotion you’re feeling.
- **Step 2** was to think about the thought like a jury. Ask yourself: “What is the evidence that this thought is true?” and “What is the evidence that this thought is not true?” What’s your verdict? How true is it overall?
- **Step 3** was to come up with a new thought that is more **helpful** than the original thought. They are usually more true or real and more positive.

When you learn to recognize and question your unhelpful thoughts, you are learning to harness the power of the brain to have more control over your thoughts, which can help you manage your pain. You are also learning that thoughts are just thoughts, not some “all powerful truth.” This new relationship with your thoughts takes some of the power away from the unhelpful ones—the ones that have done a lot of damage to our emotions and our bodies.

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned how our helpful and unhelpful thoughts can be anything from a little weak to really strong. Like the leaves on a tree, most **simple thoughts** are pretty weak and can be changed easily or let to blow away. However, deeper, stronger thoughts like Rules or Beliefs are harder to change and have an effect on our emotions, our bodies, and the way we cope. These deeper thoughts and beliefs may have stronger “hooks” than other thoughts. We call some of these strong thoughts Rules because they are the ideas we carry around in our heads about how we, others, and the world “should be,” “ought to be,” or “is supposed to be.” Like the branches on the tree, they are stronger and tougher than regular unhelpful thoughts. We call other strong thoughts Beliefs because they are even more deeply held ideas about our own worth as human beings. When things are going well in our lives, our beliefs are usually ok. But when things are going badly in our lives or we are stressed, negative beliefs come out and take hold of us. Like the roots of a tree, they can be very strong and very hard to get rid of. Of course, when we are dealing with chronic pain, we can become very stressed, causing a vicious cycle where our pain triggers our negative beliefs, which come out even more strongly and trigger more pain. This is why it’s especially

important to learn to recognize, and challenge, our negative rules and beliefs. It is hard, but you can do it.

In your **Gate Closer** this week, we told you about ways to change rules and beliefs:

1. First, see if you can name of unhelpful deep belief that you have.
2. Next, ask yourself “how does it hurt me to buy into this unhelpful belief?” What thoughts do you have about this belief? What emotions do you feel? What actions do you take? How does it affect your pain?
3. Then, ask yourself how things would be different if this belief was not true. In particular, what actions would you take? Also, what thoughts and emotions would you have? What would it do to your pain?
4. Now, try “*Acting As If*” the negative rule or belief is just not true. To do this, pick a negative belief and simply “act as if” it is not true, even if you strongly believe it. Here’s how. Once you’ve identified a strong negative belief, ask yourself: “If I didn’t believe this about myself, what would I do differently?” “Would I act differently in any way?” Once you’ve come up with some ideas about new ways to act, try them on for size during the next week. Act “As If” the belief is not true, and see how it changes the way you see things. Notice how you feel in the coming week and come in ready to discuss your tries.

Another way of dealing with negative thoughts and beliefs is to use **coping statements**. Coping statements are positive statements about you that can help you feel more in control, improve your mood, and feel more hopeful. One example of an important coping statement is: “I am a well-person with pain.” A good way to think about positive things about yourself is to think about the nice things a close friend would say about you. Even if the friend would say something balanced like “You may be late a lot, but I know it’s because you care so much about people that you have a hard time getting away.” A good coping statement from this would be: “I care a lot about people.” We will discuss what other coping statements you came up with at our next session.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

Our relaxation exercise this week—for the last time—was “**Thoughts & Feelings**.” We have been doing this relaxation several times during these discussion groups because Thoughts & Feelings is a particularly powerful relaxation exercise, and we think you’ll get a lot out of practicing it. This relaxation works to help you become more aware of all the small things that are happening in your body and mind. Like the other relaxation exercises you’ve learned, this relaxation exercise helps teach your body and mind to be quiet and relax. It also helps you learn to observe your body and your mind—your feelings and your thoughts—without judging what is happening or reacting to it. Your goal is simply to notice it. This relaxation exercise builds inside you the powerful idea of “acceptance”: when you accept your thoughts and feelings the way they really are—when you stop fighting things that are happening to you—you find that you can manage things better! “Acceptance” in no way means that you are giving in or giving up. Acceptance means to let go of judging. The more you practice, the better you get at it. You may now be noticing that you are getting better at thinking thoughts without having your emotions get out of hand and that you are also getting better at focusing your mind on one thing without it getting distracted. Listen to your relaxation CD **at least 3 times** before the next session.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 9: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned more about thoughts and ways to change unhelpful ones. The thoughts we think, both helpful and unhelpful, can be of any strength from weak to very strong. Most thoughts are like the leaves on a tree, pretty weak and easily changed or let to fall. However, deeper, stronger thoughts like Rules or Beliefs, have stronger “hooks,” are harder to change, and affect our emotions, our bodies, and the way we cope. Rules are ideas we carry around in our heads about how we, others, and the world “should be,” “ought to be,” or “is supposed to be.” Like the branches of a tree, they are stronger and tougher than simple unhelpful thoughts. Beliefs are even more deeply held ideas about our own worth as human beings. When we are stressed, these negative beliefs come out and take hold of us. Like the roots of a tree, they can be very strong and very hard to change. Of course, chronic pain can raise stress and cause a vicious cycle where our pain triggers our negative beliefs, which triggers more pain. This is why it’s especially important to learn to recognize, and challenge, our negative rules and beliefs.

In your **Gate Closer** last week, we told you about ways to change rules and beliefs:

1. First, name of unhelpful deep belief that you have.
2. Next, ask yourself “how does it hurt me to buy into this unhelpful belief?”
3. Then, ask yourself how things would be different if this belief was not true. In particular, what actions would you take?
4. Now, try “*Acting As If*” the negative rule or belief is just not true, and see how it changes the way you see things. Notice how you feel in the coming week and come in ready to discuss your tries.

We also taught you how to **coping statements** as a way of dealing with negative thoughts and beliefs. Coping statements are positive statements about you that can help you feel more in control, improve your mood, and feel more hopeful. One example of an important coping statement is: “I am a well-person with pain.”

[Review of This Week]

This week, we learned about the importance of sleep and good sleep habits. About 1/3 of our time is spent asleep, and it is a very important function to keep our minds and bodies healthy. Good sleep means getting between 7 and 9 hours each night. Though each person is different, good sleepers fall asleep within 15 minutes and wake up in the morning feeling rested and alert. During the night, good sleepers may wake up as many as 6 times, but they don’t usually have trouble falling back to sleep.

Getting good sleep can help a lot with pain problems. Unfortunately, sleep problems are very common in people who have chronic pain. This could happen because the pain interferes with your ability to fall asleep, wakes you up at night, or causes you to wake up earlier in the morning than you would like to. That said, your sleep problems may not be related to your pain at all. You may have a medication that messes with your ability to sleep or other factors. We talked about how sleeping pills can be useful for a short time, but they may have side effects and usually lose their effectiveness over time. In fact, sleep medication may make your sleep problems worse if they are taken over a long period of time. Because of this, we taught you good sleep habits that you can do instead of relying on sleeping pills.

It’s hard to force yourself to go to sleep if you have trouble with sleep. It seems like the

harder you try to make yourself go to sleep, the harder it is to fall asleep! It can be done, though, and here's how. You have to give your body the right environment, teach it to know when to fall asleep, and then, LET it fall asleep. Make your bedroom dark, quiet, relaxing, and cool (not cold). Make sure you have a comfortable bed, a soft pillow, and no loud or bright distractions, such as TVs or computers. Build Good Sleep Habits like keeping a regular sleep schedule—waking up at the same time every day and going to sleep when you feel tired. Develop a bedtime ritual that you do every night, like brushing your teeth, washing your face, and reading for a few minutes. This will signal your body and your mind that you are preparing for sleep. Regular exercise definitely helps with sleep, but do the majority of your physical activity before evening. Caffeine from coffee, colas, and chocolate, and nicotine from cigarettes or chewing tobacco definitely reduce your ability to sleep well, especially if you use them between supper time and bedtime. Drugs and alcohol usually make sleep problems worse, and avoiding heavy meals late in the evening is also a good idea. If you do have trouble falling asleep, get out of bed after 15 minutes and do something else until you are sleepy. Then, go back to bed when you feel sleepy again. Remember that it is normal to have times when sleep is not good, but sleep will most likely return to normal before long. Relax about it and know it will pass.

For this week's learning activity, we asked that you pick three good sleep habits to give a try. Make sure you pick ones that you know you can do but that you also think would help you. Think about the possible roadblocks to practicing your good sleep habit, and see if you can figure out a way to get around those roadblocks. Come to group ready to talk about what you have learned.

[Review of Relaxation Technique]

This week's relaxation exercise was called "**Deepening Relaxation.**" It is a relaxation exercise to help you go deeper into the body's relaxation response. Relaxation techniques use this body process to make you feel calmer, more focused, and healthier. As you learn to deepen your relaxation response, you are likely to be able to focus more completely on the exercise and get more out of it. The images and body sensations that are suggested are likely to seem more "real," as if you were really there. Like the other relaxation exercises you have learned, this relaxation exercise helps teach your body and mind to be quiet and relax. But it also goes further by helping you deepen the sense of relaxation, concentration, and focused awareness. The more you practice, the better you get at it. We're teaching it this week because it can be particularly helpful to help you relax and get your body ready to go to sleep. Listen to this relaxation audio **at least 3 times** before the next session.

See you at the next discussion group!

Week 10: Tips from Pain Management Discussion

[Review of Last Week]

Last week, we learned about the importance of sleep and good sleep habits. Sleep is a very important function to keep our minds and bodies healthy, particularly for people with chronic pain. Good sleep means getting between 7 and 9 hours each night, falling asleep within 15 minutes and waking up in the morning feeling rested and alert. During the night, you may wake up as many as 6 times, but rarely have trouble falling back to sleep. Unfortunately, sleep problems are very common in people who have chronic pain. This could happen because the pain interferes with your ability to fall asleep, wakes you up at night, or causes you to wake up earlier in the morning than you would like to. That said, your sleep problems may not be related to your pain at all.

If you have sleep problems, the harder you try to make yourself go to sleep, the harder it is to fall asleep! You have to give your body the right environment, teach it to know when to fall asleep, and then, LET it fall asleep. Make your bedroom dark, quiet, relaxing, and cool (not cold). Make sure you have a comfortable bed, a soft pillow, and no loud or bright distractions, such as TVs or computers. Build Good Sleep Habits like keeping a regular sleep schedule—waking up at the same time every day and going to sleep when you feel tired. Develop a bedtime ritual that you do every night. This will signal your body and your mind that you are preparing for sleep. Regular exercise during the day definitely helps, but caffeine, nicotine, drugs, and alcohol hurt your ability to sleep well. When you do have trouble falling asleep, get out of bed after 15 minutes, do something relaxing—like thumbing through a magazine—until you feel sleepy, and then, go back to bed. Remember, it is normal to have times when sleep is not good, but sleep will most likely return to normal with time. Relax and know it will pass.

[Review of This Week]

In our last session together, we reviewed all of the various information and skills you learned in this group. The overarching idea from this pain management group is that “your pain is real” and that “it is stress-related.” Your thoughts about pain and stress affect how you feel, how you act, how you think, and how you cope. Your thoughts even affect your physical well-being. For example, judging stressful situations negatively instead of as a challenge can make them much harder to handle. All of the tools that we gave you had something to do with this stress-and-coping model of pain.

The first tool we learned was **the Relaxation tool**. Relaxation exercises focus on breathing, relaxing your muscles, thinking in a calm way, and paying attention to a peaceful word or saying that makes you feel happy. Relaxation exercises also focus a lot on visual imagery, whether that is a mental image, a smell, a taste, or a touch. Practicing relaxation exercises every day helps you get good at the skill of relaxing your body and quieting your mind.

Another tool we learned about was the **Get Active** tool. The best way to deal with negative emotions related to chronic pain is to be active. Getting active helps with both stress and pain, and it involves two main things: increasing physical activity and doing activities that are enjoyable, meaningful, or pleasurable to you. Pacing yourself so that you do not overdo and do not underdo is also an important part of getting active. When we remain active, despite the presence of pain, we continue to give our lives meaning instead of giving up and giving in.

Another tool we learned about was the **Express Yourself** activity. Writing or talking about your deepest thoughts or feelings about your pain and other stressful situations in your

life helps you to understand them better. Writing or talking about strong feelings can make them seem less scary and less out of control. Writing or talking is also a great way to help you understand troubling feelings that you have been holding in. Use this tool when you feel like you need to vent or when you're confused about or overwhelmed with your feelings, or when there is something that you are holding on to, and don't feel comfortable talking with others about. Remember to write or talk to yourself. Don't worry about spelling, grammar, or errors. The express-yourself activity is not for communicating with other people; it's for you and you alone.

We also learned the **Stand Tall** way of talking. Remember that you have the right to express your wants and needs in a direct way without apologizing. Stand Tall talk helps you ask for what you want and need and helps you say No to something you don't want. Stand Tall talk is not mean or selfish. Actually, it's part of taking care of yourself. You may not always get what you want when you use Stand Tall talk, but chances are you will feel better about being able to express yourself directly, without getting hostile or angry, without pushing others away, and without being a doormat. You can also improve your relationships with your health care providers by using this Gate Closer.

Another tool we learned taught us **how to change our thoughts** to change our lives. Our thoughts are not set in stone, although they can be very strong. We can change them if we try. Thoughts can be simple like leaves on a tree, rules that are stronger like branches, or deep beliefs that are the strongest like roots. Negative thoughts can cause us more pain and stress. Rules are the "shoulds" or "supposed to's" we hold about ourselves, about others, and about the world around us. Deep Beliefs are deeply held ideas about ourselves and our own self-worth. We often become aware of negative thoughts when our feelings change or we notice a change in our physical well-being. With practice you can know your thoughts by asking, "What just went through my mind?" You can change the negative part of your thought by looking for the evidence -- the true and the not-true parts. With practice, you can change the negative part of your thought and create an alternative thought that is more realistic and more positive. You can also look at the drawbacks and benefits of that belief; and you can create an alternative, more realistic, and positive belief. Remember that "Acting As If" is very helpful in creating alternative beliefs. We also learned how using positive coping statements can help you better manage your thoughts and deeper beliefs.

A final tool we learned was **Good Sleep Habits**. Good sleep habits are important to help you sleep well. If you're having trouble sleeping well, you might want to try the following: Go to bed when you're sleepy or tired, and get up around the same time each day. Try to avoid naps during the day and try to avoid working, eating, or watching TV in bed. If you wake up and can't get back to sleep, try getting up and reading a magazine or something in somewhat dim light until you're sleepy again. Then, go back to bed, and try again. Good sleep habits can help you sleep better without medicine.

All of these tools are meant to help you learn to cope better with chronic pain. You have to practice them to get the benefits. It's normal to forget these skills at first. Use your workbook and audios to remind yourself about how to use them. In spite of using them well, you will still have pain flare-ups from time to time. Knowing this can help you not to be surprised by it. When you have a pain flare-up is the most important time to use these skills, but practice during the good times will make it easier to do when you have more pain. The main goal of this group is to help you move from feeling like you are a disabled chronic pain patient to the idea that you are a well person with pain. Use your Gate Closers to get there.

Therapist Supplement

Scripts for Relaxation CDs

[Note: scripts are for therapists to use to make audio recordings to give to clients]
[Comments in brackets not read.]

Week 1: First Aid for Stress

The first relaxation exercise we will do is called First Aid for Stress.

We teach you how to take 20 breaths to feel less stressed. This is a way to respond to stress as soon as you feel it.

When you feel stressed, stop for a moment, and notice how your body feels. Observe what's going on in your body. How do your muscles feel? Are some muscles more tense than others? What is your breathing like? Is it shallow or deep? Fast or slow? Take a moment to inhale and notice how that breath is. Now, take a moment to exhale, and notice how that breath is. This time when you breathe in and out, you might want to put one hand on your belly and notice when you breathe in, your belly expands like a little balloon. When you breathe out, your belly goes back down. As you breathe in, notice how your belly expands. When you breathe out, do it a little slower than when you breathe in.

Now, take about 3 minutes to take 20 breaths, breathing in and out at a rate that is comfortable for you. You can breathe with your eyes open or closed depending on where you do this. You can count quietly to yourself, and don't worry if you lose count. You can do this at a comfortable pace for you, and you don't have to listen to the CD to do this, or you can use my voice on the CD as a guide. You might want to breathe in through your nose, and breathe out through your mouth, but you don't have to do it that way.

Breathing in at your own pace, and breathing out just a little slower than you breath in.....breathing in....breathing out..... [Do the 20 breaths.]

Just sit quietly for a moment or two and notice how your body feels. What are the differences between when you started and now? How do your muscles feel? What is your breathing like? What other changes do you notice? As you continue practicing this breathing exercise, you'll notice that your breathing changes depending on how you feel. You'll also notice that you can use your breathing to calm your mind and your body. Breathing like this is a way to take care of stress right away, before it becomes a bigger problem.

Week 2: Breathing Space

Because this is a short practice and we want to come into it quickly, we take on a posture that's a little bit different from our normal sitting position. Normally, when we sit in a chair, we sink into it and our back rounds into the chair – we just let the chair support us. In this short relaxation exercise, I'd like you to experiment with sitting in the chair in a different way: Your body should be relaxed, but experiment with sitting a little bit more upright, allowing your back to be a bit lengthened, but not stiff or unnatural. Your shoulders can be relaxed and comfortably lowered away from your ears, and your hands can rest in your lap. Your head can be balanced evenly between your shoulders, in a neutral position -- neither dropping your chin forward toward your chest nor letting your head fall backward toward the back of the chair.

Closing your eyes, if that feels comfortable for you, take a deep breath in, hold it for a second or two, and let it out slowly..... and do that again a couple more times..... Now, just let your breathing return back to its normal rhythm. And focus your awareness on the movements of the breath coming in and going out of your body. As you inhale, be aware of the movement of the air coming in through your nose, past the back of your throat, and down into the lungs. As you exhale, notice, if you can, the movement of air back out of your lungs and out your nose.....as you breathe in notice that your chest gets a little bigger to allow for more air to fill the lungs....as you breathe out, notice how the chest goes gently back down as the air travels out. As you breathe in, notice how your belly also inflates a little bit, like a small balloon. As you breathe out, notice how your belly goes back down. Breathing in.... breathing out....really focusing your awareness on the rise and fall of the breath... moment by moment, breath by breath, as best you can. So that you know when the breath is moving in, and you know when the breath is moving out. Just bringing your awareness to the pattern of movement ... using your breath as an anchor for your awareness of the present moment.

And as a final step, allow your awareness to expand beyond the breath. As well as being aware of the breath, we also include a sense of the body as a whole. Noticing the sensations in the body... Are there sensations of tension, of holding, or whatever? Just noting whatever sensations you become aware of, without working to change them. And just experiment with following the breath as if your whole body is breathing. As you inhale, your breath travels into every part of your body, as your body breathes in the refreshing air. As you exhale, your body as a whole breathes out, getting rid of the old air. Exchanging the old, stale air for refreshing, healing air.

As we come to the end of this short relaxation exercise, know that you can practice this any time you have a few minutes to yourself. You can use the CD, and you can also do this breathing exercise anytime you need to quiet down and relax quickly..... You can do it with your eyes closed or with your eyes open. You can do it for 5 or 10 minutes, or for just a short minute. And now, when you are ready, just bring your awareness back into the room, and allow your eyes to open, alert, refreshed, and relaxed.

Week 3: Warm and Heavy Relaxation

First find a comfortable position to sit or lie down. This relaxation is a different way to allow you to relax your body and calm your mind. Begin by breathing deeply, but in a way that is comfortable for you, drawing air into your lungs as is comfortable for you and releasing the breath slowly. Breathe in Hold it for a second....and breath out, making the outbreath a little long than the inbreath. And do that again..... Breathe in.... Pause .. and breath out....And just continue taking slow, regular breaths.

Turn your attention to your right hand. Feel the skin on the palm of your right hand becoming pleasantly warm and relaxed. Feel the warmth in each finger. And the warmth on your palm. Feel it spreading to the back of your hand...to your wrist. Feel your right arm becoming pleasantly warm. Your right arm is starting to feel heavy, very heavy, and very relaxed. Your right arm is warm, heavy, and relaxed.

Next, focus on your left hand. Picture placing your left hand into soothing, warm water. Feel the warmth relaxing your hand completely. Allow your wrist to enter the warm, calming water and allow it to relax. Your left arm is becoming heavy. Allow your left arm to sink into the warm water. Your left arm feels warm, heavy, and relaxed.

Turn your awareness to your legs. Feel your legs becoming comfortably warm. Feel the warmth spreading all the way from your feet to your ankles...your lower legs...your knees...your hips. Feel your legs becoming heavy, very heavy, and relaxed. Your legs are warm, heavy, and relaxed. Imagine a pleasant, warm breeze gently blowing across your face. Feel your face and head relaxing. Whether your eyes are open or closed, your eyelids are very heavy...warm, heavy, and relaxed.

Picture the warmth of a gentle sun, shining down on you, warming the front of your body. Allow your chest and stomach to relax into this warmth. Feel the sun shining, warming your skin, relaxing your body, as your body is filled with heavy, warm, pleasant relaxation.

Perhaps imagine sitting with your back to a pleasant camp fire. Feel the warmth of the campfire on your back. Feel your back warming and relaxing. The warmth spreads all the way from your neck to your shoulders...your upper back...middle and lower back. Feel your body relaxing as it becomes warm and calm through the gentle caress of the pleasant campfire.

Feel the heaviness in your entire body. Your body is warm, heavy, and relaxed. Enjoy this calm, relaxed feeling. Notice your smooth, even breathing, relaxed and comfortable, drawing you even deeper into relaxation. Your body feels very heavy, warm, and relaxed.

Enjoy the relaxation for a few more moments.....

Now slowly begin to bring your attention back to the present, keeping your eyes closed. Notice the room around you. Notice the surface that you are sitting on or, if you are lying down, notice the surface that you are lying on. Hear the sounds around you. Gently start to reawaken your body. Wiggle your fingers and your toes. Move your arms and legs a little. Stretch if you like. And when you are ready, open your eyes, and become fully alert.

Week 4, 6, 7, & 8: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation

Settle down in a chair, making yourself comfortable as best you can. Allow your eyes to close gently. Bring your awareness to how you're sitting in the chair and where your body makes contact with the chair. Sitting with legs uncrossed and feet flat on the floor, your lower back can be supported by the back of the chair, making a stable base for your upper body. Gently guiding your chest to be slightly lifted and your shoulders to be back and down. Your head is centered, balanced comfortably between your shoulders. Allowing the crown of your head to be lifted toward the ceiling and your chin to lower slightly. Intentionally adjusting your body this way allows you to take on a dignified sitting posture.

Taking a few moments to get in touch with the movement of your breath and the sensations in the body. Bringing your awareness to the physical sensations of how your breath is coming into the body, through the nostrils, past the back of the throat, down into the lungs. As you breathe in, the air moves into your lungs, your chest rises and your belly may balloon out slightly. As you breathe out, your belly falls gently back in towards your spine, and your lungs gently release the air back out through the back of your throat and out the nose. Take a few minutes to feel the sensations as you breathe in and as you breathe out.

There is no need to try to control the breath in any way – simply let the breath breathe itself. As best you can, also bring this attitude of allowing to the rest of your experience. There is nothing to be fixed, no particular state to be achieved. As best you can, simply allow your experience to be your experience, without needing it to be other than it is. You are simply being an observer of your breathing.

Sooner or later (usually sooner), your mind will wander away from the focus on the breath in the lower abdomen to thoughts, planning, daydreams, drifting along – whatever. This is perfectly OK – it's simply what minds do. It is not a mistake or a failure. When you notice that your awareness is no longer on the breath, gently bring the awareness back to a focus on the changing pattern of physical sensations in the belly, renewing the intention to pay attention to the ongoing inbreath or outbreath, whichever you find.

When you feel reasonably settled in your awareness of the breath, allow your awareness to expand around the breath to include, as well, a sense of physical sensations throughout the whole body. You are still aware, in the background, of the movements of the breath in the belly, change your primary focus, so that you become aware of a sense of the movements of the breath throughout the body, as if the whole body were breathing.

Now, together with this wider sense of the body as a whole, you might want to become aware of the physical sensations where the body makes contact with the chair– the sensations of touch, pressure, or contact of the feet with the floor; the buttocks with whatever supports them; the hands where they rest on the thighs, or on each other.

You might also become aware of other sensations in your body that call for your attention. It could be an itch or a tickle, it could be an ache that you hadn't been aware of before sitting quietly, or it could be a painful sensation that you deal with on a daily basis. For now, as best you can, simply observe this sensation and see what happens.

Does it take on a different quality? Does it go away or grow in intensity? Are thoughts or

emotions tied to the sensation? As best you can, simply observe the sensation and be aware of the separation of the sensation from the thought that labels it or the emotion that may come along with it. If, as you are observing a sensation....say, an itch....you decide to scratch the itch, that's perfectly ok. Go ahead and make whatever adjustment you need to make – a scratch, or a shift in posture, whatever you need to do to be kind to your body at this particular moment in time.

And now, bringing your attention to the sounds in the room. As best you can, letting go of any categories you may normally use to make sense of what you hear; instead of hearing a chair scraping or a person coughing, hear the sounds in the room as patterns of pure sound.

Being aware, if you are attracted to particular sounds, perhaps finding that you are saying to yourself, "Ah, how lovely that bird sounds singing." And also being aware of the sounds that you are judging to be unpleasant, perhaps you maybe wishing for certain sounds to go away or be different in some way... and just noting these judgments, and as best you can, letting them go and returning your focus of attention to simply the waves of sound...

Where is your awareness right now?.....

If you choose, you may like to now bring your awareness to any thoughts that are floating through your mind...

When we experience troubling thoughts, we tend to mull them over, or talk to ourselves about them, or even create an imaginary conversation or argument with another person to justify, or get it off our chest, or feel like we are "in the right" and the other person is "in the wrong". When you find your mind getting carried downstream by a thought, it may help to simply note it by saying, "oh, there's thinking", or "oh, there's thinking, and there's sadness", or "oh, there's thinking, and there's muscle tension."

It's as if you are sitting on the bank of a stream and watching thoughts and emotions and sensations come and go like leaves floating by on the stream. When you notice that you have floated along with one of the thoughts, or emotions, or sensations – that you are being carried downstream, simply note that, and bring yourself back to the bank of the stream, observing, and watching the thoughts and emotions and sensations pass by.

The easiest way to relax is to stop trying to make things different. Accepting experience means simply allowing space for whatever is going on, rather than trying to create some other state. Through acceptance, we settle back into natural awareness of what is present. We let it be – we simply notice and observe whatever is already present, the breath, body, sounds, thoughts... This is a new way to deal with experiences that have a strong pull on our awareness.

As we come to the last few minutes of this relaxation exercise, wherever you are right now, simply bring your awareness back to your breathing. Focus on the fullness of the inbreath and the fullness of the outbreath. Become aware of any thoughts or emotions about the sitting coming to an end. Maybe relief or impatience. Maybe disappointment. Maybe a tendency to judge what you have just done, as if there is a right or a wrong way to do this. Simply note what is going through your mind as you become aware that you are nearing the end of the sitting, and then let those thoughts or emotions float on by as you sit on the edge of the thought stream, simply observing your breath.

Week 5: Images Relaxation

Sit or lie down in a quiet place and close your eyes softly. Begin by narrowing your focus of attention. If you are comfortable doing so, you can focus on your breathing. If you prefer, you can focus on a word or a phrase that is right for you at this point in time. Just observe the repetition of the breath, or the word, as you focus your awareness and begin to calm your body and your mind. Be aware of the rhythm of the repetition, as you repeat your word or phrase, or observe your breath.....

You might also want to scan your body, seeing if there is any tension in specific muscles and just allow those muscles to relax as best you can. Allowing the muscles to relax, let go, and unwind. How do the muscles in your legs feel? Just observe, and let any tension go.... Quiet and calm your back muscles, your shoulders....

During this imaging relaxation, you'll be picturing mental images in your mind. The images will involve all your senses. Sight. Hearing. Smell. Touch. And taste. For example, you might imagine the sights of a green forest, with the trees, blue sky, white clouds, and pine needles underfoot. But then, you can choose to add the sounds into your image. The wind whispering through the trees. Water running. Bird calls. And, include the feel of the ground under your shoes. The smell of pine. Maybe even the taste of chewing a grass stem or tasting the mountain spring water.

During your visualization, you will be creating your own special place. You will be making a retreat for relaxation and guidance. This place may be indoors or out. In structuring your special place, follow a few guidelines. Allow a private entry into your special place. Make it peaceful, comfortable and safe. Fill your place with detail. What's going on in the background? In the foreground? In the midground? Use all of your senses: vision, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch...

A special place might be at the end of a path that leads to a pond. Grass is under your feet. The pond is about 30 yards away, and mountains are in the distance. You can feel the coolness of the air in this shady spot. The mockingbird is singing everyone a song. The sun is bright on the pond. The honeysuckle's powerful scent attracts the bee buzzing over the flower with its sweet nectar.

Or, your special place might be a sparkling, clean kitchen with cinnamon buns baking in the oven. Through the kitchen window, you can see fields of yellow wheat. A window chime flutters in the breeze. At the table is a cup of tea for you.

Take a few moments to create your special place..... Visualize... where it is, what it looks like, what makes up your special place. Construct the details to make it just right for you..... Think of the smells. Think of the sounds. Even the tastes that might be in your special place.

You'll walk slowly to this quiet place in your mind. Your place can be inside or outside. It is peaceful and safe. Picture yourself unloading your anxieties, your worries, your tension. Picture yourself laying down your pain.

Notice the view in the distance of your safe place. Notice what is before you. Reach out and touch it. How does it feel? What do you smell? What do you hear? Make the temperature of your special place comfortable for you. Be safe here.

Look around for a special spot. A private spot. Find the path to this place. Feel the ground with your feet. Look above you. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? Walk down this path until you can enter your own quiet, comfortable, safe place.
(long pause)

You have arrived at your special place. What is under your feet? How does it feel? Take a couple of steps. What do you see above you? What do you hear? Do you hear something else? Reach out and touch something you'd like to touch. What is its texture?

Look as far as you can see. What do you see? What do you hear? What aromas do you notice?

Now that you're in your special place, in your mind's eye, sit or lie down. Notice its smells, its sounds, its sights. This is your place, and nothing can harm you here. If you sense danger here, send it away. You are in control of this place. Spend a few moments realizing that you are relaxed, safe, and comfortable.
[long pause]

Memorize this place's smells/tastes/sounds. You can come back and relax here anytime you want. You entered it by one path or entrance. Go ahead and be aware that you can leave by that same path and entrance. Notice the ground. Touch things near you. Look far away and appreciate the view. Remind yourself, this special place that you created can be entered whenever you wish. You might say to yourself, "I can relax here," when you enter your special place, or "This is my special place. I can come here whenever I wish."

In a moment, we'll finish with this imagery exercise, but for now, spend a moment or two bringing your awareness back into the room and appreciating whatever sense of relaxation you've been able to achieve. Remind yourself of the special place that you came up with.

Enjoy the experience of imagining visually but also with sounds, with smells, and maybe even with taste. Enjoy the experience of having created yourself a special place.

And now, bring yourself back into the room by wriggling your feet, your toes, maybe flexing your fingers. Stretching your neck and shoulders a little bit.

Focus your awareness on my voice, on any noises or sounds around you. Within the room or outside the room. And when you're ready, go ahead and open your eyes. Alert. Refreshed. And relaxed.

Week 9: Deepening Relaxation

Find a quiet spot where you can rest in relative comfort for 20-30 minutes. You may sit in a chair or lie down. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Take a few deep, cleansing breaths... which always prepare your body for relaxation. Notice the movement of the breath... into your lungs... and out of the body.

And for this exercise, I'd like you to begin by allowing your eyes to focus on a spot if that is comfortable for you. Choose a spot either on the wall in front of you... or on the ceiling if you happen to be lying down. The point of staring is not to really focus on a visual image, but to steady your eyes on that spot on the wall or ceiling. So that they don't blink as much.... So that you're not distracted by other images.... So that you can just listen to my voice.... Pay attention to my suggestions.... As you continue focusing on the spot....

You may be aware of your slow and steady breathing. That should be getting to feel fairly natural as part of your relaxation response. You may be aware of having a desire for your eyes to close.... They may be getting dry or itchy.... They may want to blink.... They may be watering just a bit.... Of course, you can close them any time you need to. But for an experiment, you might want to keep them open just a little bit longer. Focusing on the spot and listening to my voice..... Breathing deep and slow and regular.

And when you're ready, just allow your eyes close very gently. Be aware of the sensation of the eyelids as they close. Be aware of the increased comfort and then turning inward... once you don't have anything visual coming in from the outside. Breathing deep and slow and regular. Focusing your awareness on your breathing and on my voice.

I'd like to invite you to experiment with the possibility of going deeper into this sense of relaxation that you've been working on the past several weeks now. This deepening exercise will actually go down several levels. We'll experiment with going down... and coming up... and going down until you find the level that you're comfortable with... for today, knowing that you can continue to experiment with different levels of deepening your relaxation.

For now, as best you can, put your body into the state of relaxation that you've been working on for the past several weeks. Whatever suggestions, images, or awareness that works for you best. Begin to put your body into a state of pleasant, restful, rejuvenating relaxation. Notice any sensations of tension or tightness in any parts of your body... and suggest to those areas that they can let go. The muscles can unwind or relax. Notice any areas of discomfort... perhaps pain, perhaps a sensation that you carry around with you pretty much 24 hours a day, or perhaps this is a sensation that you weren't really aware of until I suggested that you focus your awareness. If you did become aware of an area of your body where there are painful sensations, just experiment for a moment with breathing into that part of your body. Being aware of the sensation. Breathing into that part of your body. Giving the sensation some space, some lightness.

And now, having achieved some level of relaxation, you might like to experiment with a method that we use to help you deepen your relaxation. So, typically we imagine either an elevator or a staircase. Think about which you would be more comfortable with: going down on an elevator or going down on a staircase. Either way, it's perfectly safe. It's your elevator. You get to design it the way you want to. It's your staircase. You get to design a sturdy, safe staircase, with a good, sturdy handrail.

Consider what level of relaxation you are at the moment -- zero being totally relaxed, and 10 being very tense. There's no right or wrong answer to this. It's just another experiment. And let's just say you're at a 5. Sort of medium --- Between tense and relaxed. You might want to visualize yourself on that elevator on the fifth floor. And if you're using a staircase, you might want to visualize yourself standing on step 5. You've gone down five steps from the top of the steps, and there you are on the elevator or the staircase. And just have a look around.

This is your staircase, your elevator. Allow yourself to create an image—to create a situation that's restful and positive and helpful to you. It may be a staircase from your childhood that you remember fondly, or it may be a totally made-up staircase. If you're on the elevator, maybe the wall of the elevator is clear glass and you can see out on a beautiful field of flowers. Spend a moment creating that image for yourself....

And now, when you're ready, if you would like to, experiment with going down one level as slowly and as gradually as you'd like to. Descend one level deeper into relaxation, focused awareness, and ability to concentrate on my voice and on my suggestions. See how that feels. You may not feel any difference at all, or you may feel a fairly intense difference. Be aware that at any time you can always go up the scale... as well as down the scale... because you're in charge of this experiment. And if you care to, go down one more step, one more flight in the elevator..... and just experiment with going down 2 or 3 steps, as much or as little as you'd like to until you reach the point where you're comfortable to stay, for now. And just take a look around.

Make a mental note of what you see. Remember, creating your image to be a positive, helpful, hopeful, relaxing image. One that nourishes you and sustains you. What do you see? Some of the things that you see may surprise you. You may not have thought about them in a long time. Or they may be new images for you. Really see if you can focus on the image so that it's real for you. Knowing that at any time, you can change the image and you can also go up the stairs or up the elevator, experimenting with different levels of this relaxation response.

And if you've gotten to the level... where you're comfortable... for today, for this experience, Just rest... and rejuvenate yourself here, while I make a few more suggestions. Now, you're either sitting in a chair or lying down. As comfortable as you can be.... I'd like you to experiment with the idea that the chair or the bed or the recliner or the floor that is supporting your body is a huge tension-absorbing cloud, almost like a sponge. Like a sponge that soaks up water, only in this case, the sponge is soaking up tension. Maybe the sponge is soaking up feelings of fatigue or tiredness. Maybe the sponge is soaking up pain sensations, as if you're letting those sensations of tension and tiredness and discomfort ease through your body and release into the sponge. And allowing the cloud that's like a sponge to soak up those sensations away from your body. Really see if you can visualize, in your mind's eye, floating... on this huge tension-absorbing, pain-absorbing, tiredness-absorbing cloud. Your body may even begin to feel light, lighter than normal. And if it does, that's okay. It's part of the experiment. It's not right or wrong to feel that way. Just be aware of whatever it is that happens.

And if you're experimenting with your pain sensations, you might focus on what your pain feels like at this moment. For example, when it's bad, it might feel like a heavy black metal ball or, maybe, a metal with jagged edges. What does your pain feel like at this moment? Once you have a sense of that, you might want to experiment with changing the sensations in your mind by changing the image. If your pain is a heavy, black, jagged-edged piece of metal,

you might want to experiment with changing the image to be more rounded. Lightening it. Making it a softer gray. Making it plastic, instead of metal. Rounding the edges. Lightening it. Softening it. In your mind, only in your mind, and yet, as you experiment, you may be interested to find... that those mind experiments... can actually influence what you feel in your body. Just experiment with that for a minute or two.

If your pain has a temperature---if it's hot pain, experiment with cooling it down. If it's cold pain, experiment with warming it up. You may have a very big change in the sensations that you're experience, or a little bit, or nothing at all. There's no right or wrong. Just whatever happens.

Now, you've been sort of hanging out at the same level for a few minutes now, and in a moment, we're going to go back up. Back up to the level that you began with, a relatively relaxed but mild level of relaxation, perhaps. But before we do, look around. Look at the visual images that are part of your scene from the elevator or the staircase. Describe it to yourself in your mind's eye in as much detail as you can get to. Remember that these are your images, you're completely in charge. And therefore, you're painting yourself an image that is helpful and restful and positive. Rejuvenating.

And now, when you're ready, you can experiment with going back up the floors. Traveling, if you're on the stairs, is little to no effort. The elevator moves silently and freely, up to the level that you began. And as you get to that level, the level where you began the relaxation exercise, bring your awareness back into your surroundings. You might want to wiggle your toes. Flex your arms. Shrug your shoulders a little bit. Take a good yawn. Be aware of your breathing -- bringing your awareness to that life-force of breathing. Become more aware of my voice. More aware of, perhaps, the sounds around you that had faded into the distance. More aware of your own mind, already starting to process this exercise. And, when you're ready, you can just allow your eyes to open, back in the room.... refreshed, relaxed, and alert.



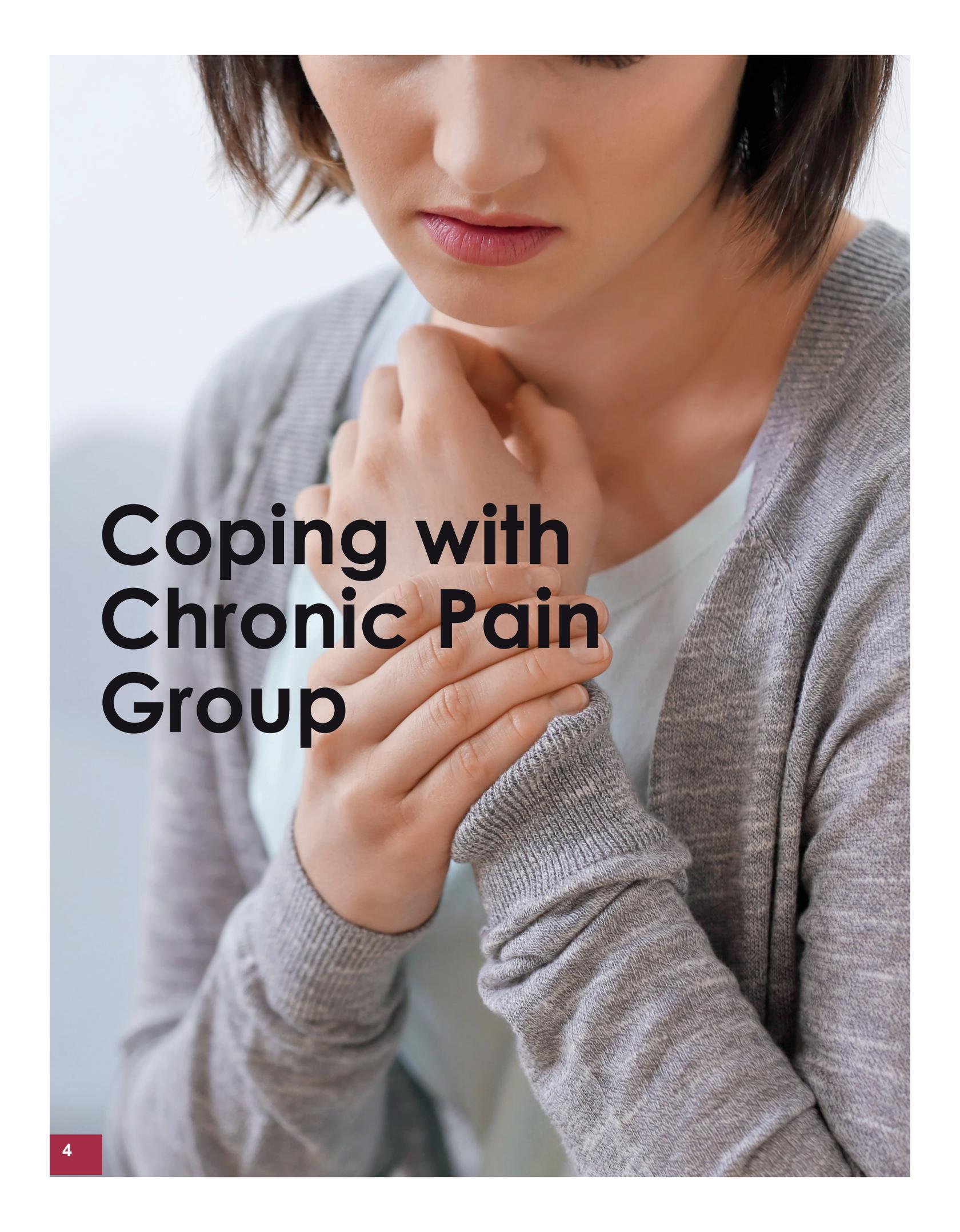
Learning About Managing Pain

Patient Workbook

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Coping with Chronic Pain Group

Week 1

Let's Get Started: Pain Is Stressful!



Week 1 Goals

- Learn about the purpose of these groups.
- Learn what we will do each week.
- Learn how to use the workbook.
- Get to know each other.
- Learn how stress and pain are related.
- Learn about Your Pain Toolbox.





In this group, you will learn ...

- a lot about pain.
- how your **thoughts**, **feelings**, and **actions** affect your pain.
- relaxation and other skills to help you manage pain.



What You Say is Private!

- Your group **leaders** will not talk about the people in this group.
- But, if you tell us you are planning to hurt yourself or someone else, we must take steps to keep you or others safe.
- We ask **you** not to talk about the people in this group.



Special Jobs for Group Leaders

- Teach you skills to help you manage pain.
- Listen carefully to all group members.
- Work with all group members as a **team**.
- Keep things moving and on time.

Special Jobs for Group Members

- Show up for group each week.
- Be active and share your wisdom.
- Share only what you want to share.
- Practice your new skills.
- Tell the group about the skills that do and do not help you.
- Respect each other.
- Take turns and share the group time.



Tell the Group About Yourself

- What is your name?
- What do you enjoy doing even with chronic pain?
- Tell the group about your pain.

Why Are We Doing These Groups?

- Chronic pain is a big problem.
- Most medical treatments for chronic pain use surgery or medicine.
- Many people with chronic pain do not know how pain works in the brain and body.
- Medical facts about pain can be hard to understand.
- We want to make Pain Facts easy to understand.
- We want to give people with chronic pain the chance to talk with and support each other.
- We can't cure your pain, but we can teach you new ways to manage it.

Pain Fact # 1: Chronic Pain and Short-Term Pain Are Different



- **Short-term pain** does not last past normal healing time.
- **Chronic pain** lasts more than 3 months, hurts most days, and gets in the way of what you can do.
 - Chronic pain is real.
 - Your pain is **real**.
- At least 3 out of 10 people have chronic pain.
- Most people with chronic pain have pain in more than one part of their body.
- Causes of Chronic Pain
 - Illness (arthritis, fibromyalgia, migraine headaches)
 - Accident (injuries, car accidents, falls, job injuries)
 - Unknown
- Everyone's pain is different, but people also share a lot in common.
- Some things make pain worse and some things make pain better.



What makes your pain better?

What makes your pain worse?



Pain Fact #2: Stress and Pain Are Related



- Pain is stressful.
- Stress makes pain worse.
- Bringing down stress **in a healthy way** makes pain better.
- We can teach you skills to manage stress.

What does **stress** mean to you?



What makes you stressed?

What does your body do when you are stressed?

What Is Stress?

- Stress is the feeling we have when we are under pressure.
- Stress affects our body and our mind.
- Stress can be short-term or long-term.
- Long-term stress is more harmful.

Pain Fact #3: The Stress Response Has Four Parts



1. Your Body

- Blood pressure goes up
- Muscles get tight
- You can get sick



2. Your Emotions

- Scared
- Sad
- Mad



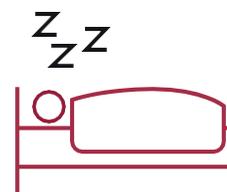
3. Your Thoughts

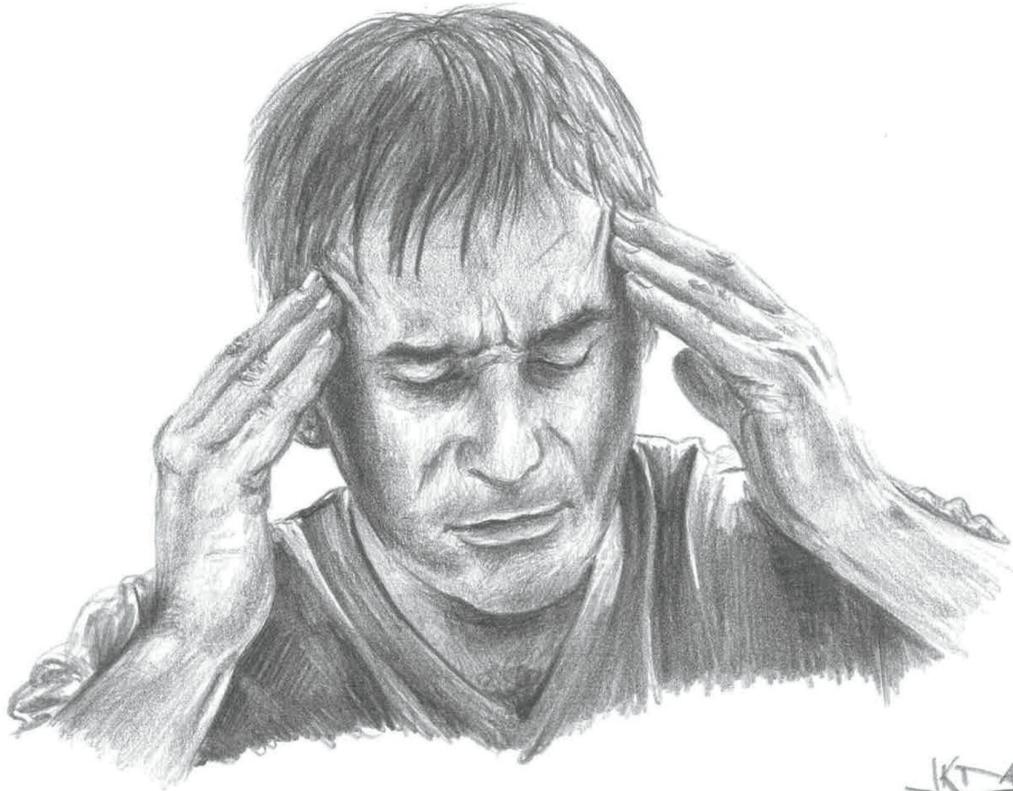
- Trouble making decisions
- Feeling confused



4. Your Actions

- Losing your temper
- Going to bed
- Crying





What are your stress symptoms?



Pain and Stress Are Related

- **Pain** can make you stressed.
 - Chronic pain can be very stressful.
 - Chronic pain can lead to the Stress Response.
 - Stress can make your pain worse.
- **It is important to learn to cope with stress.**
 - Coping is a way of dealing with problems.
 - There are helpful and unhelpful ways to cope.
- What are some **helpful** ways you cope?

- What are some **unhelpful** ways you cope?

Pain Fact #4: **How We Think About** **Stress Matters**

- Change can be stressful. We might think, “**I can’t take this!**”
- Change is less stressful when we think: “**I can handle this.**”
- How we think about an event is more important than the event itself.
 - We can’t get rid of stress, it is a part of life. We **can** change the way we think about stressful events.
 - **Our thoughts about an event change how we feel and what we do.**
- We can think about a stressful event as a **threat, a loss, or a challenge.**

A **threat** is something that can harm us.



A **loss** is something we cannot get back.



A **challenge** is something that is hard, but **we can do it.**



Example:

Your son or daughter is looking for a job. How could the way they think about looking for a job change their other thoughts, feelings, and actions?

	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions
Threat or Loss			
Challenge			



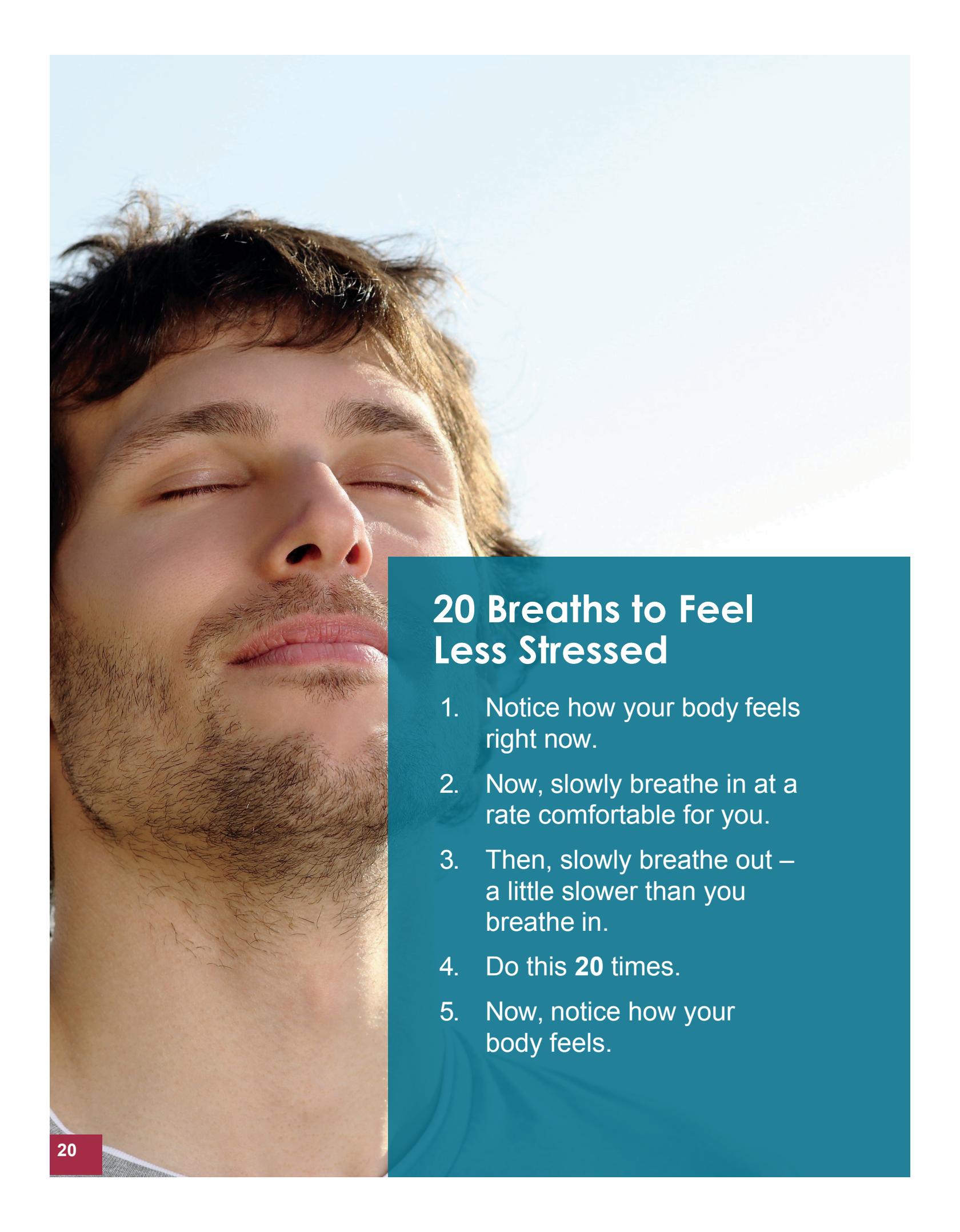
Your Pain Toolbox

Here is your first tool!



FIRST AID FOR STRESS!

- **You can** reduce your stress!
- You are **your own best help**.
- Several long, deep breaths can help a lot.
- Breathing like this can take care of stress right away, before it becomes a bigger problem.
- Breathing is one kind of relaxation.
 - Relaxation is one way to deal with stress and pain.
 - It can help calm our minds and bodies so that we feel prepared to handle the situation.
 - In this group, you will learn different ways of using relaxation.



20 Breaths to Feel Less Stressed

1. Notice how your body feels right now.
2. Now, slowly breathe in at a rate comfortable for you.
3. Then, slowly breathe out – a little slower than you breathe in.
4. Do this **20** times.
5. Now, notice how your body feels.

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



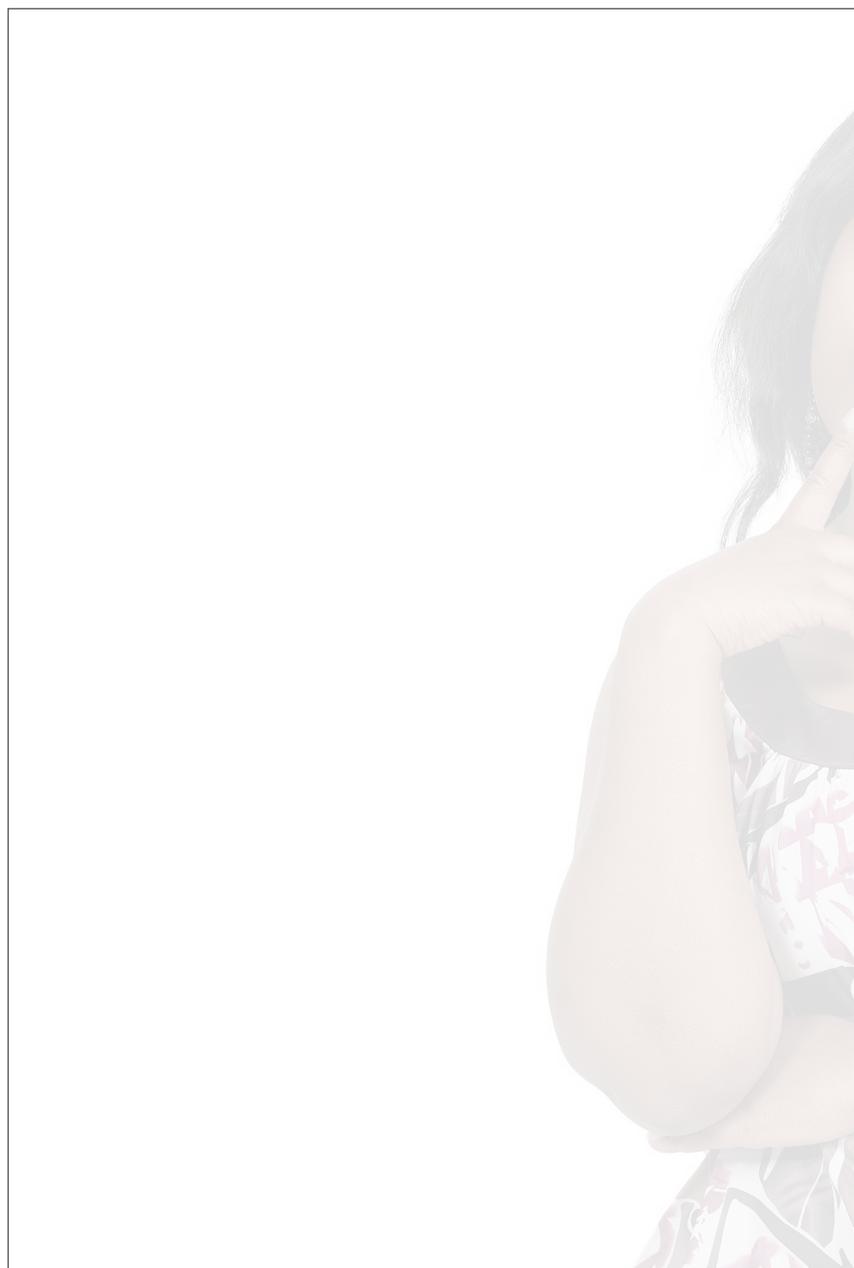
1. Listen to the Session 1 Tips. 
2. Think about Stress and Pain.
 - Remember, you can think of an event as a **threat**, a **loss**, or a **challenge**.
 - During the week, notice when you feel stressed.
 - How did you think about the situation? A threat? A loss? A challenge?
 - How did this affect your thoughts, feelings, and actions?

We will work on this in the coming weeks.

3. Use First Aid for Stress
 - When you feel stressed, stop and notice how your body feels.
 - Then, sit down and take 20 slow breaths.
 - After you finish, notice how your body feels.
 - Do this every day, as many times as you want.

How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 1 Summary

Let's Get Started: Pain Is Stressful!

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #1: Chronic Pain and Short-Term Pain Are Different
- Pain Fact #2: Stress and Pain Are Related
- Pain Fact #3: The Stress Response Has Four Parts
- Pain Fact #4: How We Think About Stress Matters
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - First Aid for Stress



Week 2

Manage your Brain to Manage your Pain





Week 2 Goals

- Learn how pain works in the brain.
- Learn how to close the gate to pain signals.
- Learn the **Breathing Space Relaxation**.





First Aid for Stress Exercise

Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- Share one stressful event from last week.
- Which path did you take? (Threat, loss, or challenge?)
- How did this affect your thoughts, feelings, and actions?
 - What **thoughts** did you think?
 - How did your **body** feel?
 - What **emotions** did you feel?
 - What were your **actions**?

- How did you use **First Aid for Stress**?



Putting Yourself in Charge

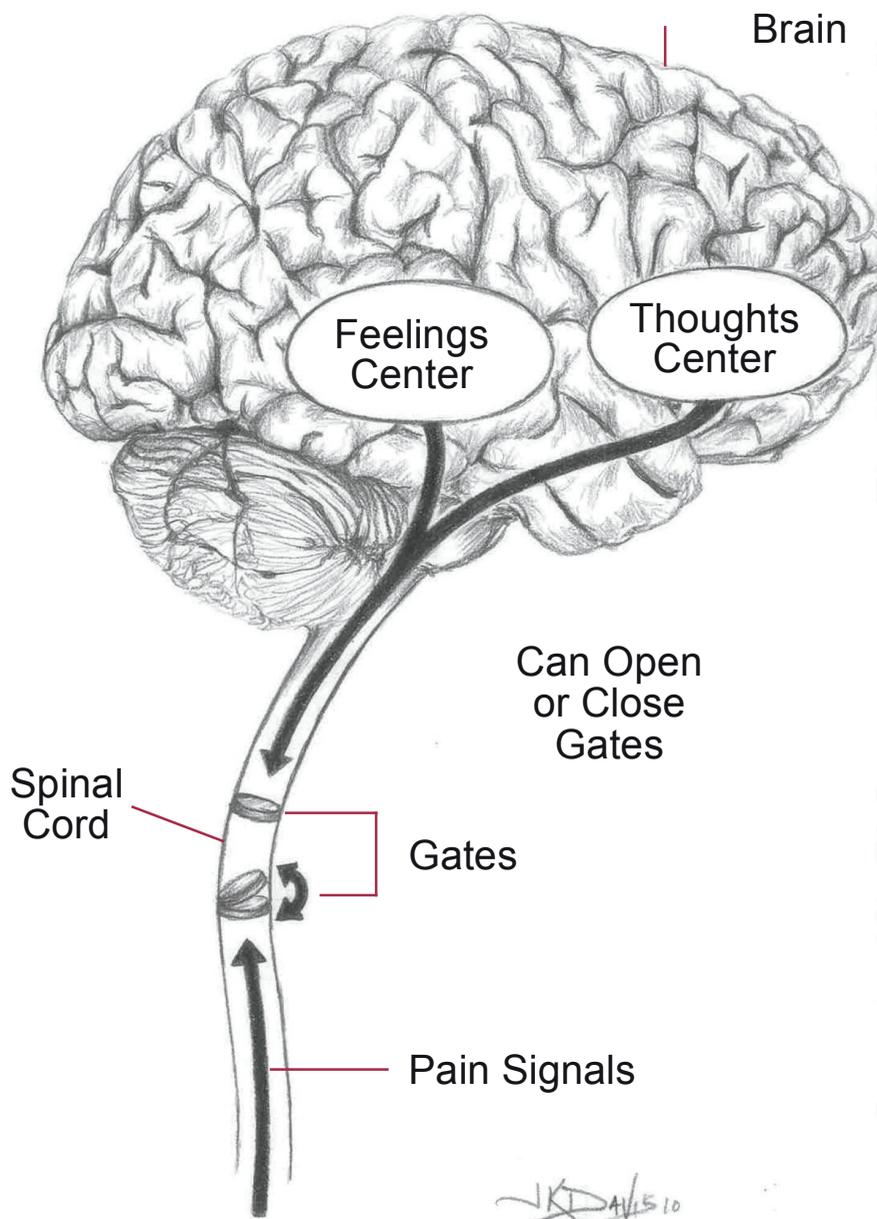
- Grow a feeling of “I know I can do it!”
- Have a strong belief in yourself.
 - Believe you can do things to help manage your pain.
 - Believe you can do things to manage your life.
- Putting yourself in charge helps you to manage your pain better.
- What are some ways you can put yourself in charge?

Pain Fact #5: **The Brain Decides When You Are in Pain**

- Pain is *sometimes* caused by a broken or worn out body part. **But not always:**
 - Often, even when the part is “fixed,” the pain stays.
 - Sometimes, we have pain without any sign of a broken or worn-out body part.
- **How Pain Works in the Brain**
 - Your body sends signals to the brain.
 - The brain reads these signals and then you feel pain.
 - BUT, it is not a one-way street!
- The brain can send signals back to your body.



Pain Fact #6: Brain Signals Open or Close a Pain Gate



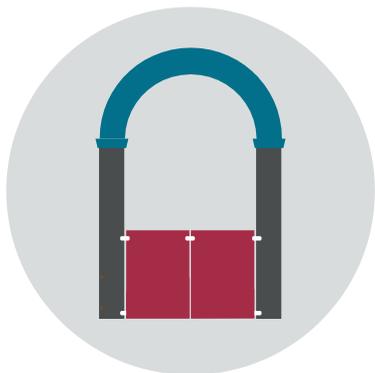
Close the Gate to Pain Signals

An open gate = **more** pain signals to the brain

- Things that open the gate:
 - Depression, anger, fear
 - Unhelpful thoughts
 - Underdoing: No physical activity (sitting, not doing much)
 - Overdoing: Too much physical activity (standing for too long)
 - Even pain medicine opens the gate sometimes
 - When you take it for a long time and it does not work anymore
 - When you take more than the doctor prescribes



A closed gate = **fewer** pain signals to the brain

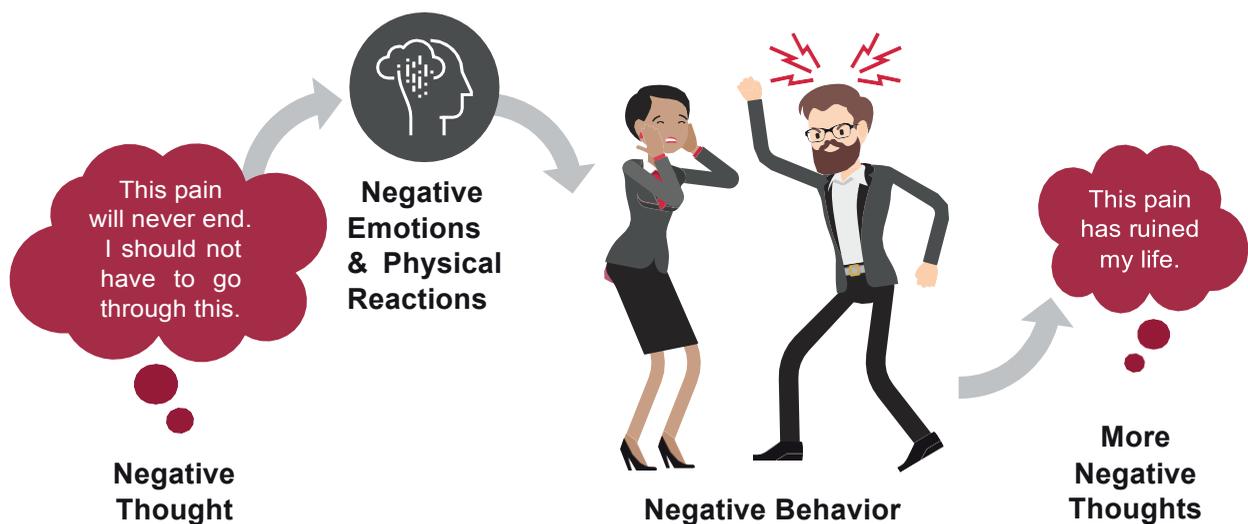


- Things that **close the gate**:
 - Being active without overdoing it
 - Pacing your activities
 - Feeling positive
 - Thinking positive (having hope!)
 - Pain medicine (sometimes)

YOU Can Learn to Open or Close the Gate Yourself!

▪ Thoughts and Feelings

- can open or close the pain gate.
- affect how the brain feels pain.
- affect how we deal with pain.
- are affected by stress.



What You **THINK** and **DO** Can Affect Your Pain

- Our thoughts affect
 - other Thoughts
 - our Bodies
 - our Emotions
 - our Actions



What We **THINK** and **DO** Can Change How We **FEEL**

- **Unhelpful Thoughts** can open the pain gate.
- Often, we are not aware of these thoughts or beliefs.
- **But**, we **can** learn to be aware of them

- **What are some of your unhelpful thoughts?**

We will work more with this in the weeks to come.

Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Breathing Space Relaxation

Relaxation Practice

- Think of **First Aid for Stress** as a way to deal with stress when it comes up (week 1 relaxation practice).
- Other Relaxation goes deeper. With practice, it can keep you from feeling stressed.



Learning and Practicing Relaxation

- Helps you to feel more in-control.
- Helps you to have a strong belief in yourself.
- Helps you to manage your pain.

Your Weekly Pain Prescription

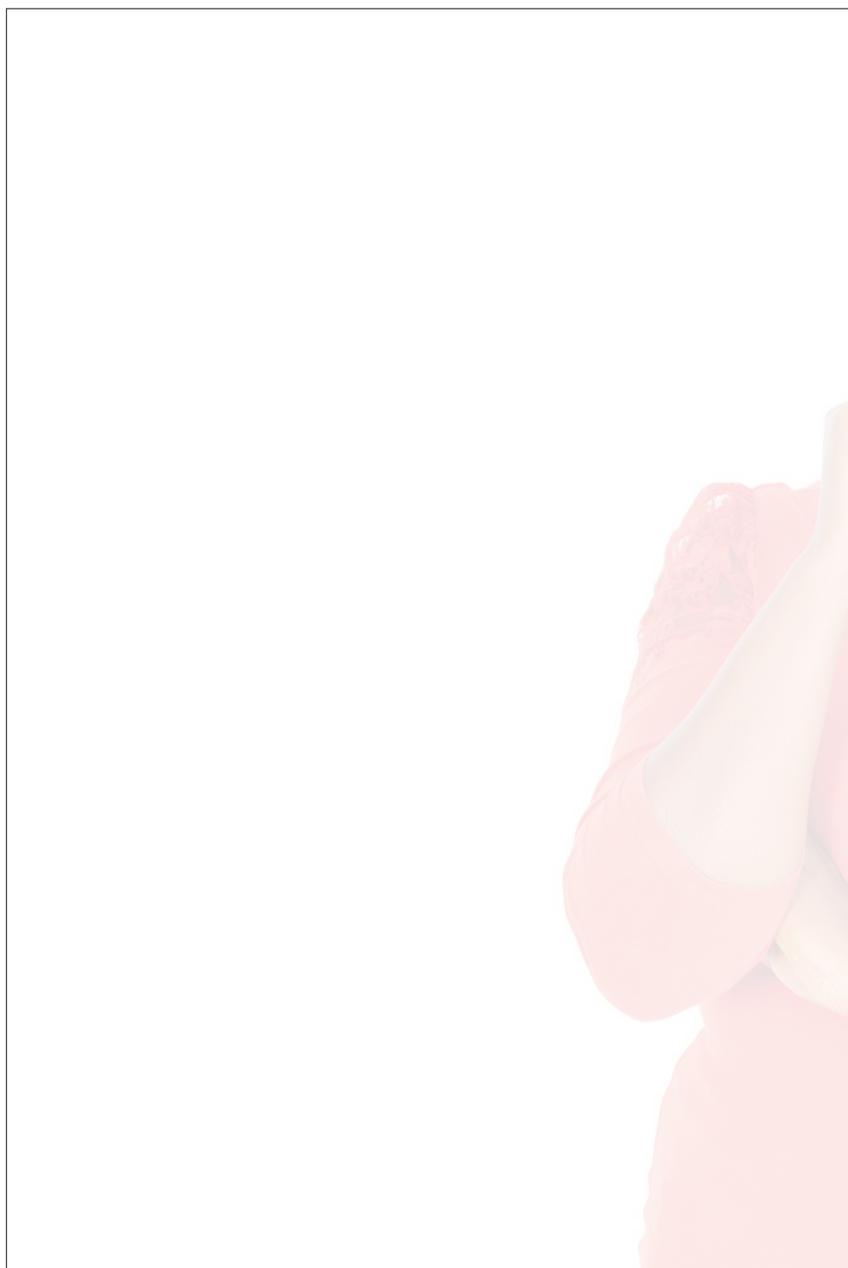


1. Listen to the Session 2 Tips for Discussion Group highlights. 
2. Listen to **Breathing Space Relaxation** at least **3 times**.
 - Right now, pick the best three days.
 - Now, think about the best time of day. Would it be easier to do it in the morning, lunchtime, the afternoon, or the evening?



How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use in the future.

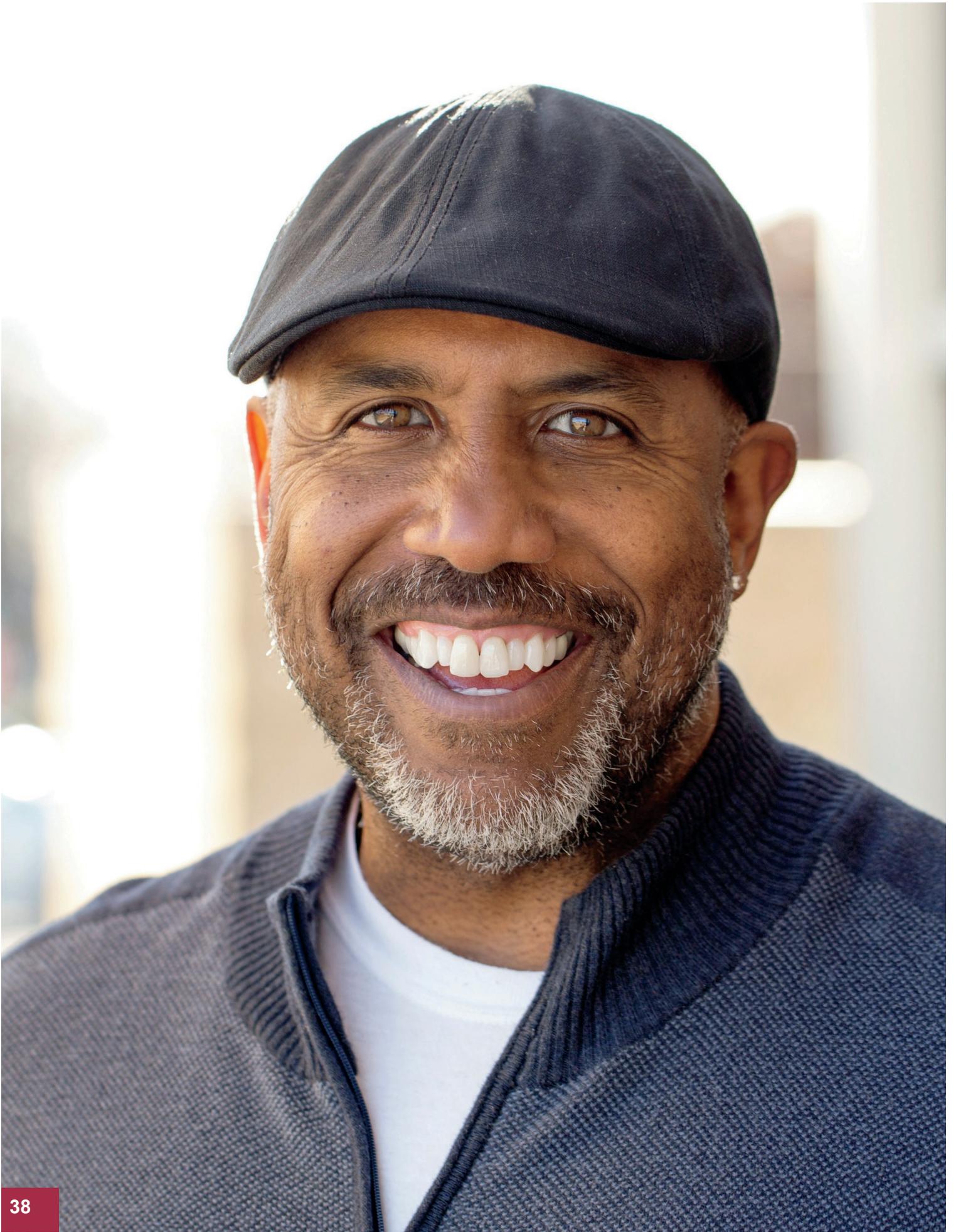


Week 2 Summary

Manage Your Brain to Manage Your Pain

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #5: The Brain Decides When You Are in Pain
- Pain Fact #6: Brain Signals Open or Close a Pain Gate
- You can learn to close the gate through your thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Breathing Space Relaxation



Week 3

Getting Active



Week 3 Goals

- Learn about fear and activity.
- Learn about pacing yourself to get more active.
- Plan more enjoyable activities.
- Learn **Warm and Heavy Relaxation**.





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- Share your experience with the **Breathing Space Practice** from last week.
 - How often did you practice?
 - What did you learn through your practice?
 - What were the roadblocks?



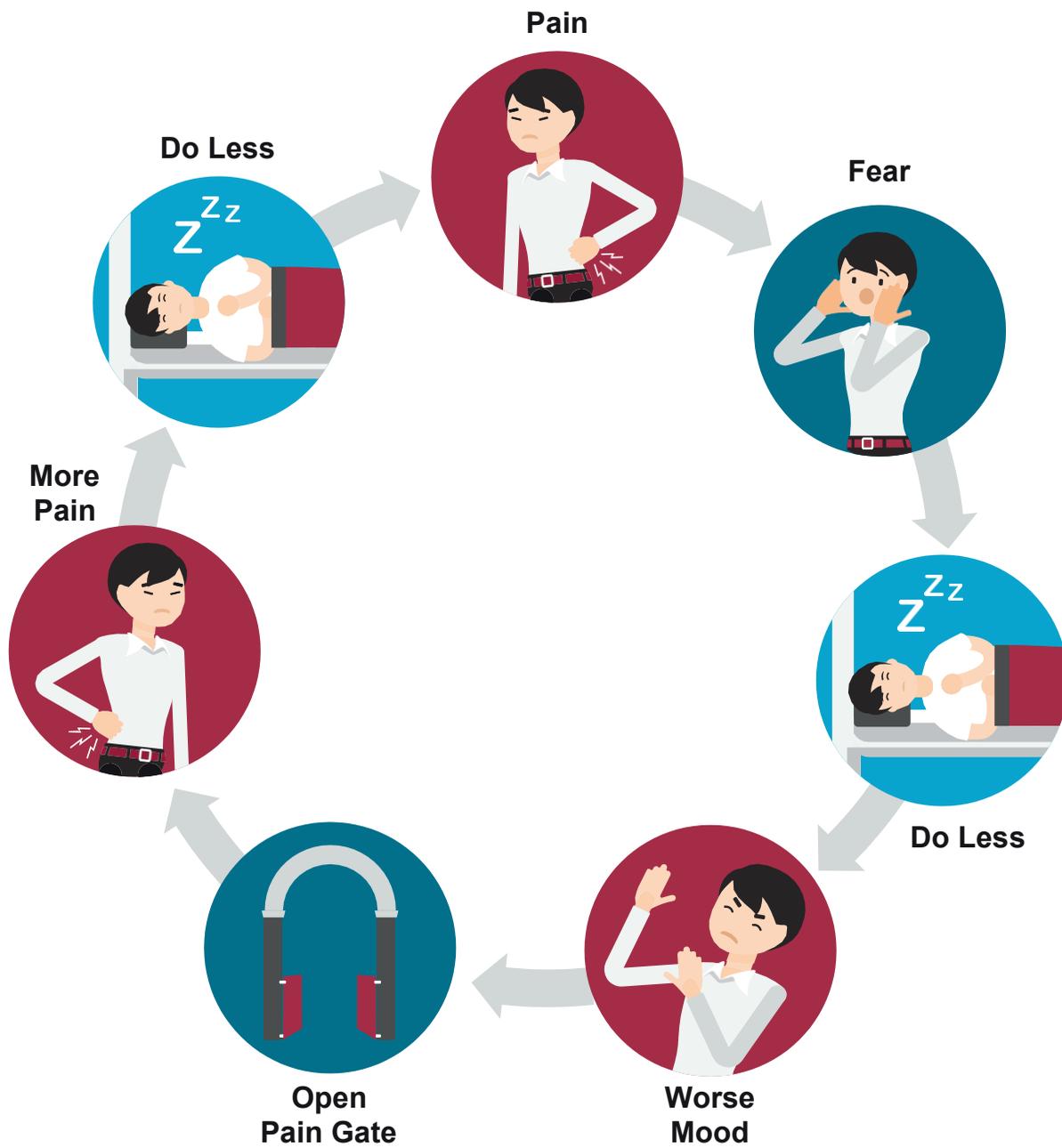
Pain Fact #7: **Fear of Pain Can Get in the Way of Physical Activity**



- At first resting can help us get better.
- Problems can happen when resting lasts too long.
- In what way does resting help you?

- In what way does resting hurt you?

Pain and Fear Cycle





Pros of Physical Activity

- Helps make muscles strong.
 - Strong muscles are like our shield and protect us:
 - by holding our bones and joints in place.
 - by keeping us stable and balanced
 - Weak muscles mean more pain because the muscles cannot support the bones and joints.
- Improves mood and may decrease pain.
- May help distract from pain.
- Helps you feel good about yourself.
- Fights depression.

Cons of Physical Activity

- It can be hard to find the time.
- It can be hard to get started.
- Can make you sore.
- If you do too much at once, it can open the pain gate and cause more pain.

Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Increasing Physical Activity

- Pacing your physical activities can help close the pain gate.
- Pacing means finding **balance** between activity and rest.
- Follow these steps to pace your physical activity:
 - Choose something that is simple and easy.
 - Break up your activity into small chunks – do one small part and then rest.
 - Check in with how your body feels.
 - If you feel good, do another part.
 - If you don't feel good, rest more before doing another part.
 - Keep doing the same thing each day for at least a week.
 - If you need to do less one day, that's ok, but move back to your goal when you can.
 - Increase your level of activity slowly.
 - Feel free to change to another activity for a change of pace.



Hints:

- Changes like these take time and practice – keep doing it!
- Setbacks are normal. Talking about the setbacks helps you get back on track.

What physical activities would you like to do this week?

When would you like to do your activity?

What are some roadblocks that might get in your way?

How will you work past the roadblocks?

Pain Fact #8: **Pain Can Get in the Way of Living the Life You Want to Live**

- When we are coping with chronic illness or pain, pleasant activities often get pushed aside for the “have to” activities.
- Even small, simple pleasures seem to get pushed aside when we’ve had pain for a long time.
- This can cause depression and open the pain gate.

GATE CLOSER: Doing More of What You Like to Do

- When we do the things we like to do, we feel better and our life has more meaning.
- We feel that we have more control over our life.
- This can help close the pain gate.
- What are some things you like to do?

- 
- What are some things that you miss doing?

- Some pleasant activities we enjoyed once are no longer possible, but often, we can find a way to do the activity in a different way.

- What is an activity that you could do this week?

**GATE CLOSER:
Warm and Heavy Relaxation**

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



1. Listen to the Session 3 Tips for Discussion Group highlights. 
2. Use the **Warm and Heavy Relaxation** at least **3 times** this week.
3. Try pacing a physical activity at least **3 times** this week.
4. Try doing one small pleasant activity at least **3 times** this week.





How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 3 Summary

Getting Active

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #7: Fear of Pain Can Get in the Way of Physical Activity
- Pain Fact #8: Pain Can Get in the Way of Living the Life You Want to Live
- You can help close the gate by doing more.
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Increasing Physical Activity
 - Gate Closer: Doing More of What You Like to Do
 - Gate Closer: Warm & Heavy Relaxation



Week 4

Pain and Your Emotions



Week 4 Goals

- Learn about the link between pain and emotions.
- Learn how to express your emotions to let go of them.
- Learn **Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation.**





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

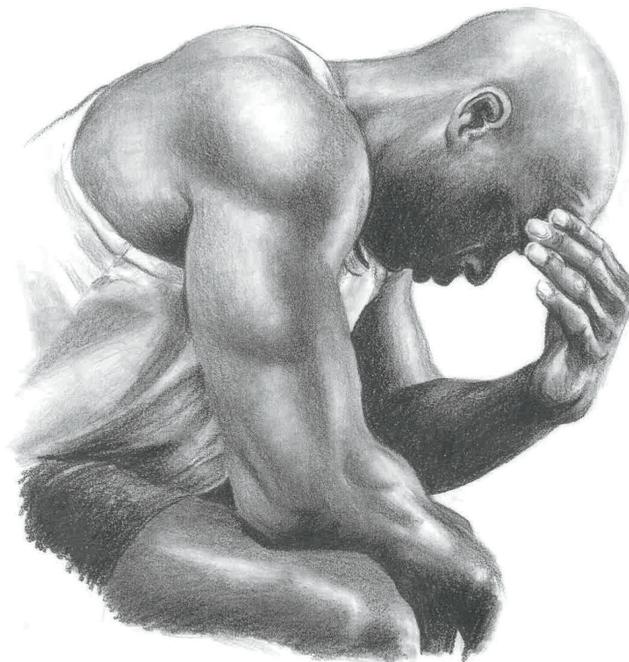
Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the Warm and Heavy Relaxation?
- What pleasant activities did you do or have scheduled?
- What physical activities did you do?
- How did you pace yourself?

Pain Fact #9: Pain and Emotions Are Related



- It is normal to have strong emotions when you are in pain.
- We might feel scared, hopeless, upset, angry, sad, or depressed.
- Sometimes we feel many emotions at the same time.
- **Emotions can open or close the pain gate!**
- Holding on to strong negative emotions can make our chronic pain worse.
- Emotions can come from how we **think** about a situation.
 - It can be helpful to feel these emotions.
 - BUT our emotions do not have to rule us!



J. K. Davis
10

Emotions: Feeling Sad

- Many people with chronic pain feel sad about how pain has affected their lives.
- Feeling sad for a long time or very strong sadness can open the pain gate.
- For some, sadness can lead to depression.
- Depression is common for people with chronic pain.
 - About 2 out of every 5 people with chronic pain also have depression.
 - Everyone's depression looks different.
 - But, it is more than just feeling down or blue.
 - Depression can also look like losing interest in activities.



Emotions: Feeling Angry

- It is common for people with chronic pain to feel irritable or mad that they have pain.
 - We might feel angry at ourselves, others, events, or the world.
 - Sometimes, we get angry at ourselves. This can lead to feeling depressed.

- Strong anger, or holding on to anger for a long time can open the pain gate.
- People with anger might **lash out or snap** at others around them.
 - This can hurt family members, friends, or doctors who are trying to help us.
 - Lashing out might push others away and we might feel more lonely.
 - Feeling lonely or isolated for a long time can also open the pain gate.

Emotions: Feeling Scared

- People with chronic pain feel scared or worried about a lot of things.
 - It is common to be scared of having more pain.
 - Often people worry about hurting more if they are active.
 - Many people worry about how their lives will change because of pain.
 - This can cause many problems, such as avoiding physical activity and having trouble sleeping.
- Holding on to fear and worry for a long time can open the pain gate.



- Feeling scared or worried a lot can lead to **anxiety**.
- Anxiety might look different for each person.
 - When we are anxious, it can be very hard to control or stop our worry.
 - We might feel tense or tight in our muscles and bodies.



Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Coping with Strong Emotions

Helpful ways of coping (and closing the pain gate) when feeling sad, angry, or scared:

- Facing the things that **worry** or **scare** you
- Talking to someone
- Using your relaxation skills
- Physical activity
- Pleasant activity
- Crying can help you let go
- Taking a “time out” can help when feeling **angry**
- Therapy, counseling, and medicine can help
 - For many problems, therapy is a great option.
- Write about it! (more on that soon!)

You are in charge! You can do something! You can help close the pain gate!

When to seek help:

- If your strong emotions are getting in the way of living your life, you might want to talk to your doctor, a counselor, or a therapist.
- There are many options that can help!



Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Express Yourself

- There are 2 ways you can **Express Yourself** to figure out what you are feeling.
 1. You can **write** about your feelings and thoughts.
 2. You can **talk into a voice recorder or to yourself** about your feelings and thoughts.
- You can write or talk about **any** feelings or thoughts.
- We write (or talk) about our deepest thoughts and feelings:
 - to help learn about thoughts and feelings we might not know we had.
 - to help let strong feelings out.
 - to understand them in a different way.
 - to learn how to express these thoughts and feelings in a helpful way.
 - to keep from hurting or overwhelming ourselves or others.
 - to realize that **we have more control over thoughts and feelings than we think.**





Think about a situation that bothers you (past, present, or future) that might be helpful to write about. Take 10 to 15 minutes to write.

- The **Express Yourself** activity is **just for you** and no one else.
- If you get upset, you can change the subject, but keep writing or talking for **10 minutes**.
 - You are in charge of how you do it!
- When you are done writing or talking, you can do whatever you like with the paper or recording!
 - You can erase it, tear it up, throw it away, or even flush it down the toilet!
 - Or, you can keep it and read it later.
 - Do whatever feels right for you!

There is no wrong way to do this activity!



GATE CLOSER: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



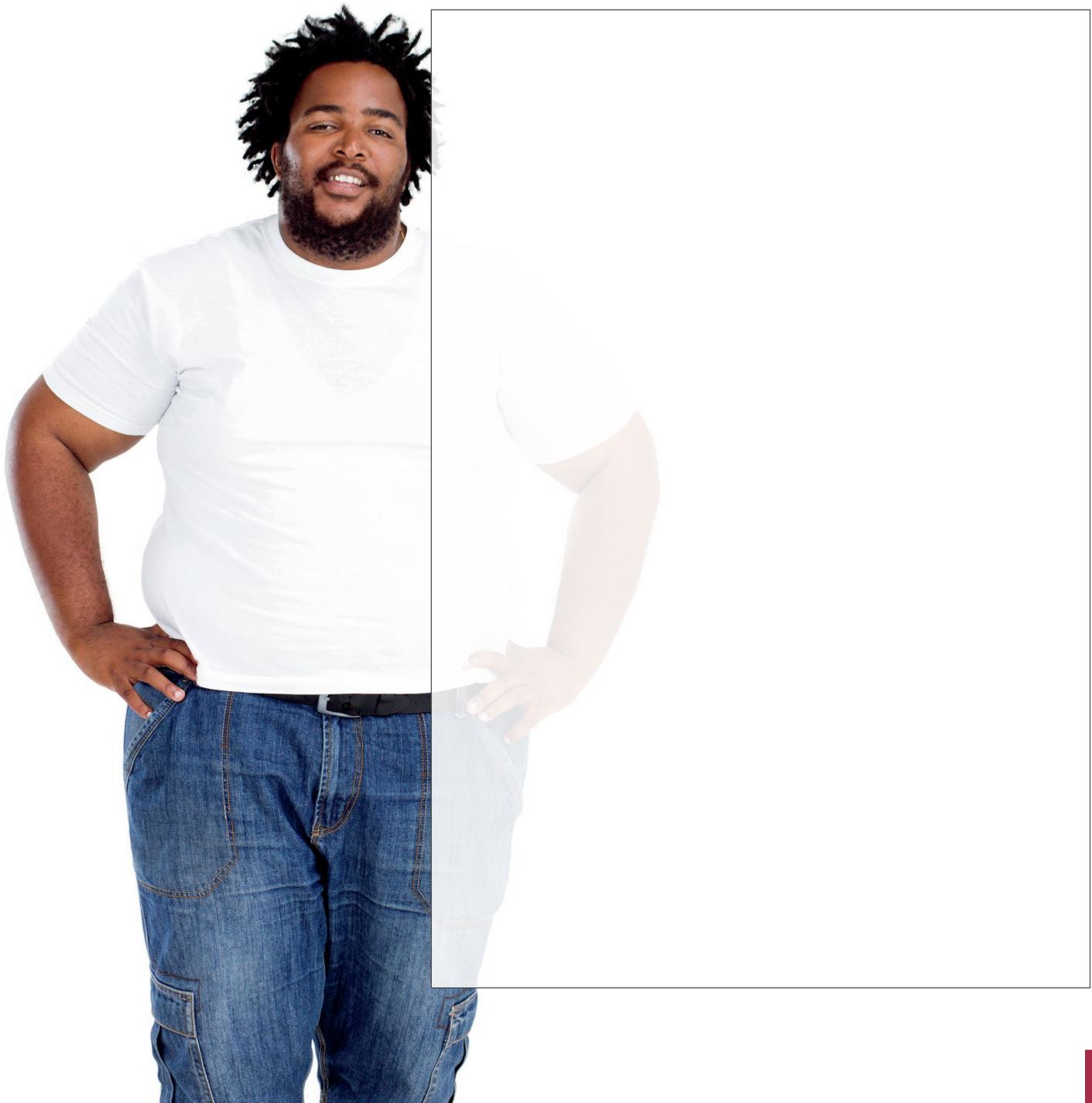
1. Listen to the Session 4 Tips. A red starburst icon with the word 'TIPS' written inside in white.
2. Use the **Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation** at least **3 times** this week.
3. Do the **Express Yourself** activity at least **3 days** in a row.
 - Write or talk for at least 10 minutes each time.
 - You can write or talk more if you want to.





How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 4 Summary

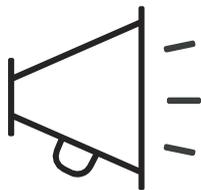
Express Yourself

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #9: Pain and Emotions Are Related
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Feeling and Coping with Strong Emotions
 - Gate Closer: Express Yourself
 - Gate Closer: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation

Week 5

Stand Tall Talk



Week 5 Goals

- Learn how people talk to others in different ways.
 - Attack talk
 - Retreat talk
 - Stand Tall talk
- Learn how to use Stand Tall talk with “I”-messages.
- Learn the **Images Relaxation**.





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the **Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation** practice?
- What did you notice about your emotions and pain?
- What was your experience with the Express Yourself activity?



Pain Fact #10: Pain Can Affect Your Relationships



- How does your chronic pain affect how you talk to others?

- How does your way of talking affect your relationships?

- How do your relationships affect your pain?

Pain Fact #11: **There Are Three Ways of Talking to Others**

There are 3 basic ways of talking to someone.

Attack	Retreat	Stand Tall
		

1. Attack

- We talk without showing respect for others.
- Sometimes, we hurt their feelings or push them away.
- When we use **Attack** talk, others hear:



2. Retreat

- We hold back a lot of what we think and feel.
- We may not hurt others, but we hurt ourselves when we hide our needs.
- When we use **Retreat** talk, others hear:



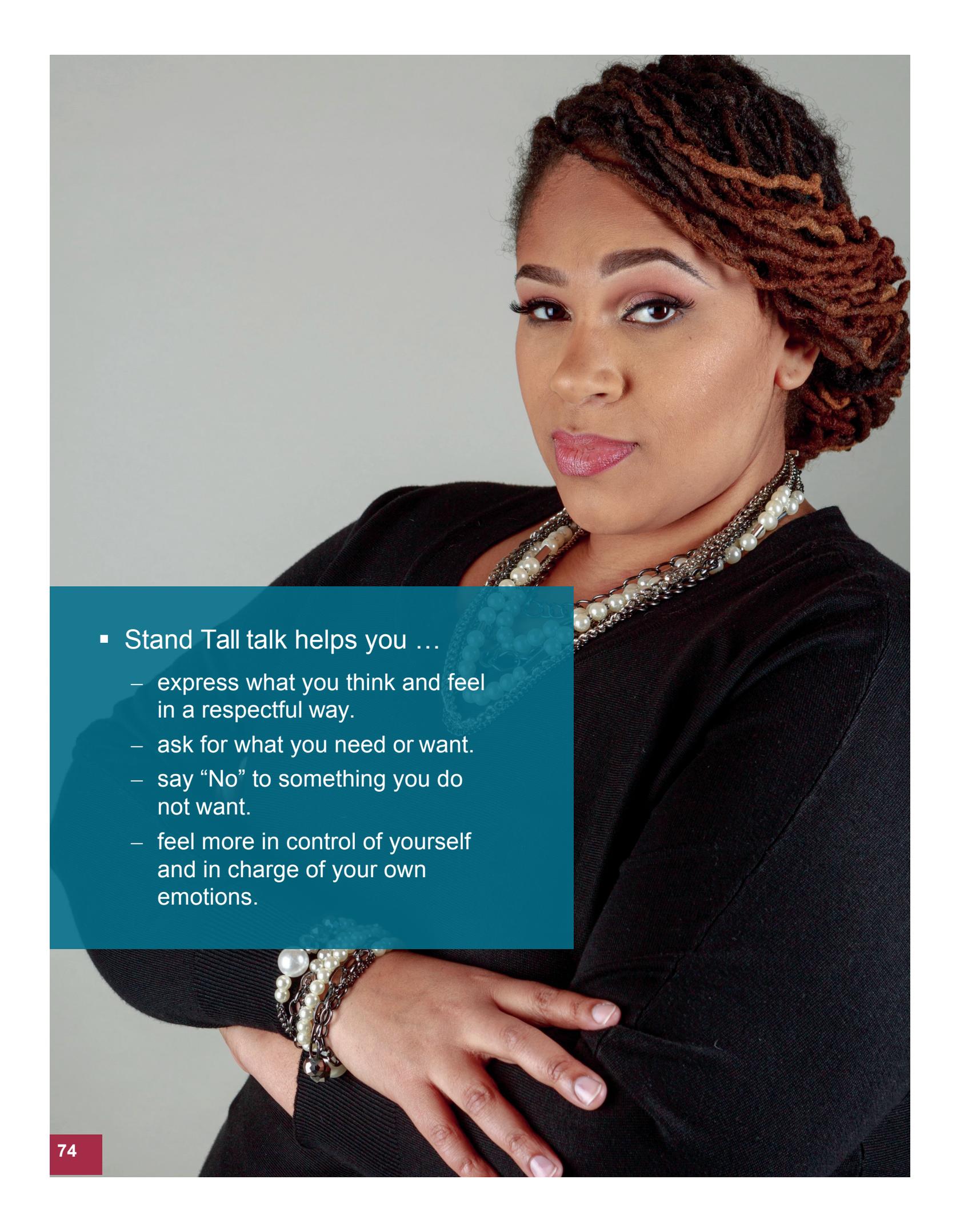
3. Stand Tall

- We say what we think and feel in a clear way that shows respect for others and ourselves.
- We usually do not hurt others' feelings or push them away.
- When we use **Stand Tall** talk, others hear:



- How could **stand tall** help you?

- When could you want to use **stand tall** talk?

- 
- Stand Tall talk helps you ...
 - express what you think and feel in a respectful way.
 - ask for what you need or want.
 - say “No” to something you do not want.
 - feel more in control of yourself and in charge of your own emotions.

Your Pain Toolbox



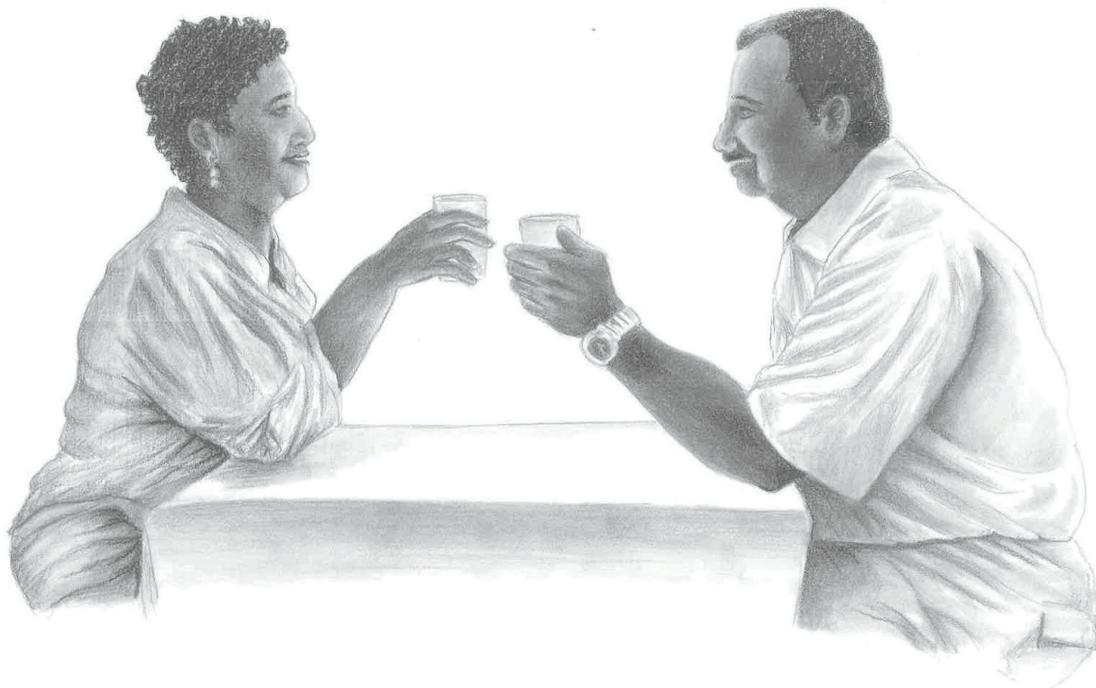
GATE CLOSER: Stand Tall Talk

Before Talking: **Plan What You Want to Say**

- You have the right to ask for what you want.
- Think about what you want to say ahead of time.
- Pick a good time and place to meet and talk with the other person.
- What do you want to say to the other person? (You might want to write it down.)

Using “I” statements

- **“I”** statements make it easier for others to listen to you.
- **“You”** statements turn other people off.
- Examples:
 - I would like your help with the dishes.
 - I need to take some time for myself.
 - I don’t want to do that.
 - When we get a late start, I feel upset.





Four Steps to Stand Tall Talk with “I” Statements

STEP 1: Tell the problem in a simple, direct way.

- Talk about only one situation at a time.
- Don't say you're sorry for speaking up.
- Don't complain, blame, or insult.

Example: When you ask me to watch your kids at the last minute ...

STEP 2: Say how you feel when the problem happens.

- Say how you feel, but ...
- Don't blame another person for how you feel!
 - Don't say “You made me feel ...”

Example: ... I feel like my needs do not matter to you.



STEP 3: Tell the other person what you want.

- Keep it simple and be specific.
- Ask for one thing at a time.
- Don't order the person around.

Example: I would like you to ask me at least the day before.

STEP 4: Say how this will help both of you.

- Talk about how this will help your relationship.
- Talk about how this will make you feel better.
- Don't talk about what you will do if they ignore you.

Example: This will let me know you care about my feelings and I can be helpful to you.

Putting it All Together

What to Say: (1) When you ask me to watch your kids at the last minute, (2) I feel like my needs do not matter to you. (3) I would like you to ask me at least the day before. (4) This will let me know you care about my feelings and I can be more helpful to you.

Extra Tip: How to say “No” with respect.

- Say No in a polite, simple and direct way.

What to Say:



“No, thank you.”

“No, I am not interested.”

“No, I am not able to do that.”

What NOT to Say:



“Why do you always ask me to do things you know I cannot do?”

“You know I have a bad back! You must be getting some kind of pleasure out of seeing me suffer!”



Other Tips on Stand Tall talk

- Stand Tall talk is not mean or selfish.
- Stand Tall talk can be a big change for others and it might take time for them to get used to it.
 - You might need to repeat yourself using Stand Tall talk.
 - Over time, most people respond well to Stand Tall talk.
- Even if they don't get what they want, most people feel better about themselves when they use Stand Tall talk.
- Learning to use Stand Tall Talk takes practice.
- You can use Stand Tall talk with friends, family, and even health care workers.



Tips for Using Stand Tall Talk with Health Care Workers

- Always try to use Stand Tall talk instead of Retreat or Attack talk.
- **Think ahead**
 - What do I want from this visit?
- **Get organized**
 - Make a list of questions before your visit to ask for what you want and need.
 - Take a list of all your medicines with you to help your health care worker understand how to help you best.
- **Ask questions**
 - Repeat back what you heard your health care worker say to make sure you understand.

**GATE CLOSER:
Images Relaxation**

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



1. Listen to the Session 5 Tips. 
2. Use the Images relaxation skill at least **3 times** this week.
3. Try using stand tall talk at least **3 times** this week.
 - Practice what you want to say and how you want to say it.
 - Afterwards, think about how it went. Try to remember the details so you can tell us about it next week.





How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 5 Summary

Stand Tall Talk

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #10: Pain Can Affect Your Relationships
- Pain Fact #11: There Are Three Ways of Talking to Others
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Stand Tall Talk
 - Gate Closer: Images Relaxation

Week 6

Thoughts That Work Against You



Week 6 Goals

- Learn how helpful and unhelpful thoughts affect us.
- Learn about the types of unhelpful thoughts.
- Learn to notice changes in mood and thoughts.
- More practice with **Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation.**





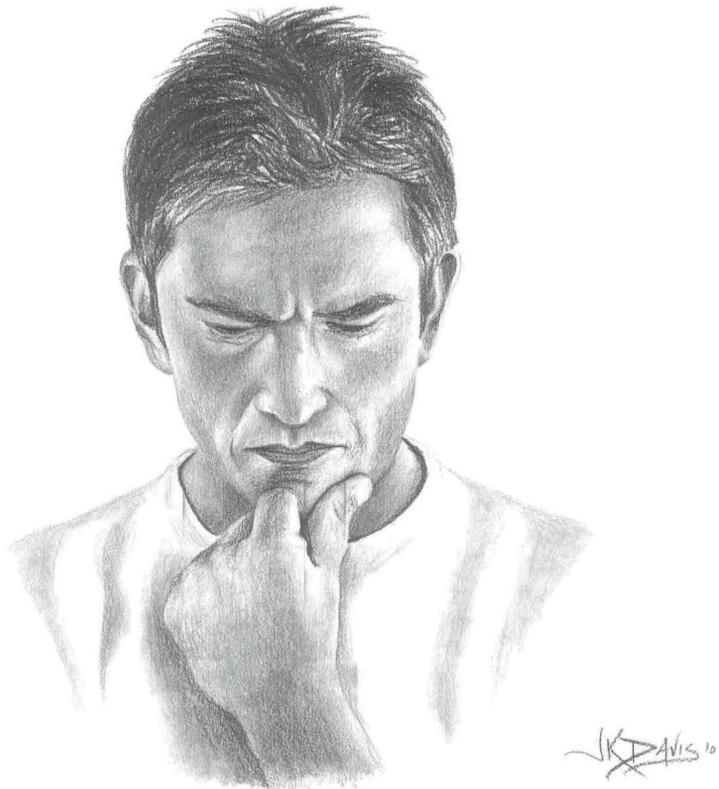
Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the **Images Relaxation** practice?
- What was your experience with **Stand Tall talk**?

Why Look at Thoughts?

- Pain can affect our Bodies, Emotions, **Thoughts**, and Actions.
- Our thoughts can have a big impact on our lives.
- Our thoughts affect how we feel and what we do.
- Sometimes we don't notice our thoughts, but they still affect us.
- Paying attention to our thinking can help us change the way we think, which can change the way we feel and how we act.



Pain Fact #12: Your Thoughts Affect Your Pain



- **Unhelpful thoughts** are thoughts that work **against** us. They make us feel bad, make us stop doing things we want to do, and make our pain worse.



- Seeing stress as a threat or a loss can lead to even more unhelpful thoughts.
- Unhelpful thoughts can open the pain gate.

- **Helpful thoughts** are thoughts that work **for** us. They can make us feel good, help us do things we want to do, and make our pain better.

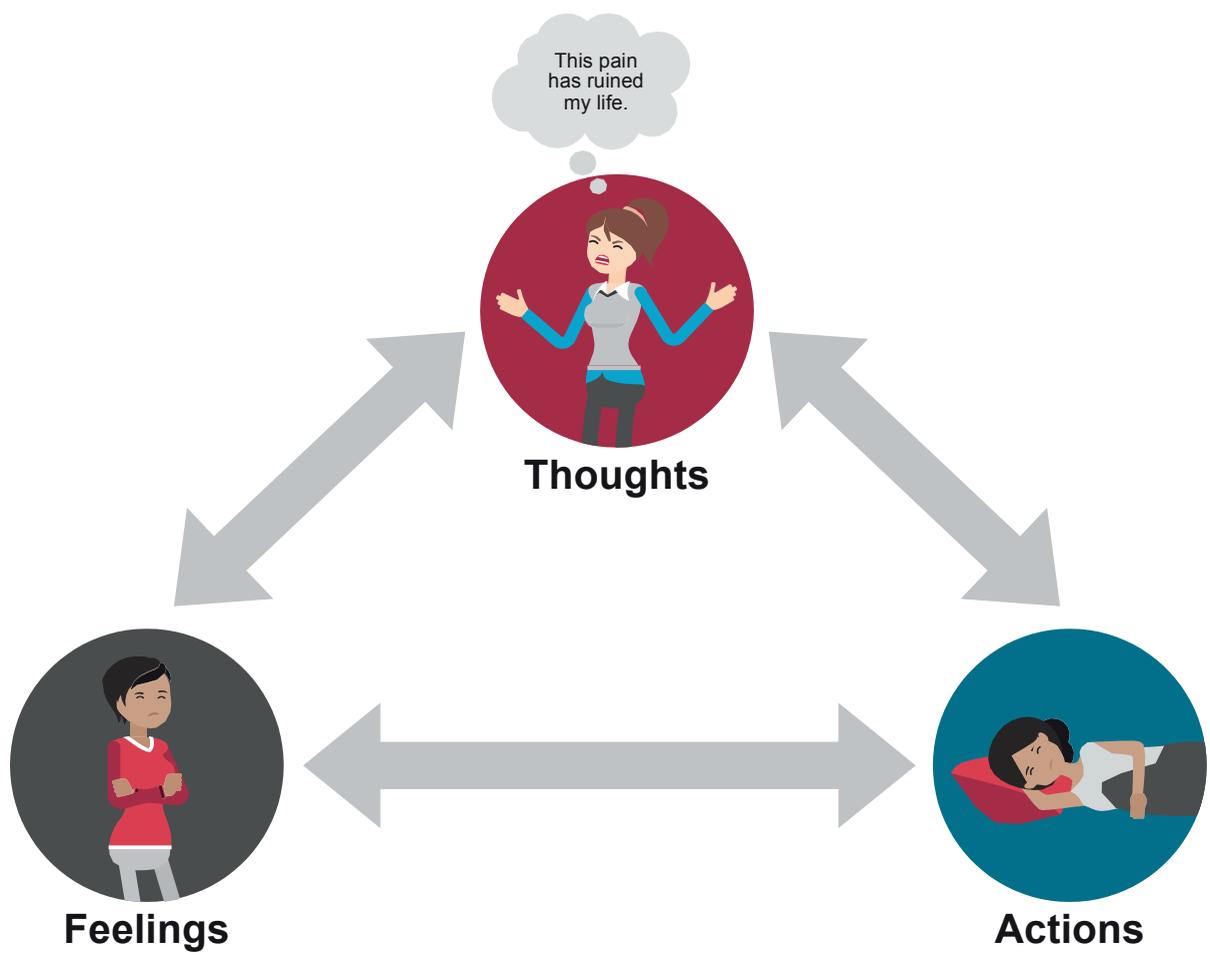


- Seeing stress as a challenge can lead to other helpful thoughts.
- Helpful thoughts can close the pain gate.

- **Unhelpful thoughts** about our pain or stress:
 - can be completely true, partly true, or not true at all.
 - can make us focus on the bad over the good.
 - can lead us to think about our pain nearly all the time.
 - can make us feel like things are much worse than they are.
 - can also make us feel **helpless** and **out of control** of our pain.
 - can make the pain worse by opening the pain gate.
 - can have very harmful effects on our emotions, our bodies, and our actions.



Pain Fact #13: Thoughts, Feelings, and Actions Affect Each Other





Types of Unhelpful Thoughts

- Unhelpful thoughts often happen in times of stress.
- Unhelpful thoughts can be simple statements, rules, or beliefs.
- We don't usually notice when we think these thoughts, but they can still have a big effect on us.
- **Simple statements** can happen so fast that we don't notice them.
 - **Example:** "I'll never be able to work again."
- **Rules** are thoughts about how things are **supposed to be**.
 - **Example:** "I should bring home a paycheck."
- **Beliefs** are thoughts we hold very strongly. They shape our other thoughts.
 - **Example:** "I am worthless."

**Carrying around
these thoughts
is a little like
being weighed
down by heavy
bags!**



What kind of Unhelpful Thoughts do you carry around?

Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Noticing Unhelpful Thoughts

- Practice noticing your thoughts and whether a certain thought works for you or against you.
 - Start by remembering a stressful situation you were in.
 - What was happening?
 - Did you view the situation as a threat, a loss, or a challenge?
 - What were your feelings (emotions)?
 - How did you react (actions)?
 - What thoughts did you have?
 - Did these thoughts work for you or against you?

GATE CLOSER: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



1. Listen to the Session 6 Tips.  A red starburst icon with the word 'TIPS' written in white inside.
2. Practice any relaxation skill at least **3 times**.
3. Pay attention to changes in your mood or emotions. Try to notice what you were thinking at that time. Bring some examples that you want to share next week.





How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 6 Summary

Thoughts That Work Against You

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #12: Your Thoughts Affect Your Pain
- Pain Fact #13: Thoughts, Feelings, and Actions Affect Each Other
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Noticing Unhelpful Thoughts
 - Gate Closer: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation

Week 7

Making Your Thoughts Work for You



Week 7 Goals

- Learn more about how you think.
- Learn to recognize Red Flag Thoughts.
- Learn how to change unhelpful thoughts to more helpful thoughts.
- More practice with **Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation.**





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

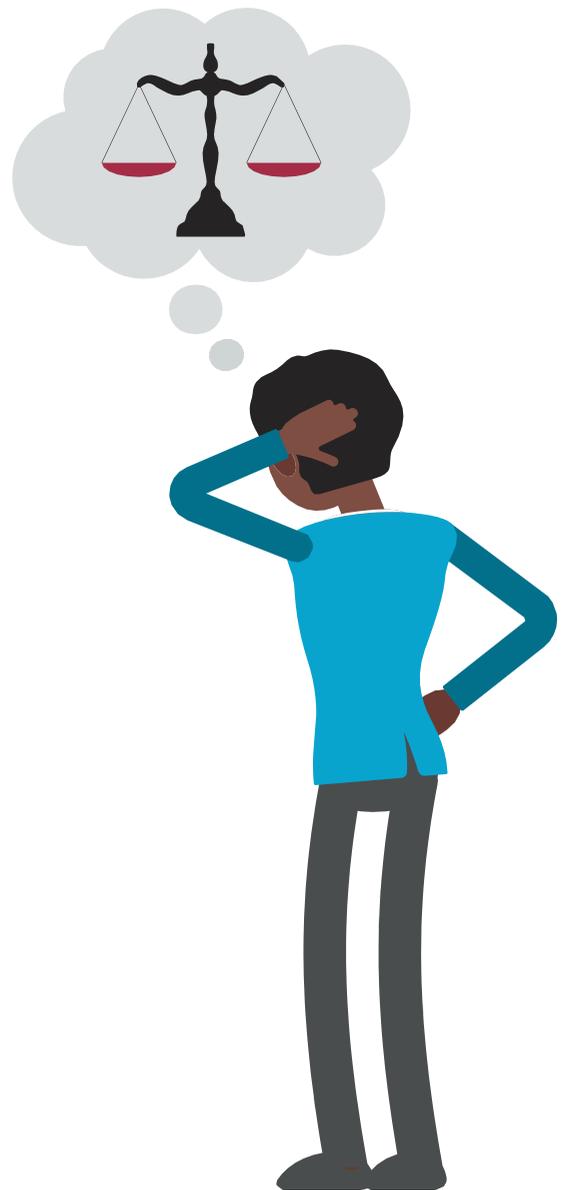
Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the **Relaxation** practice?
- What **unhelpful thoughts** did you notice?

Pain Fact #14: **Thoughts and Facts** **Are Different**



- A thought is just an idea.
- Just because we have a thought doesn't make it true.
- Sometimes we believe things that are not true.
- Sometimes thoughts are partly true and partly false.
- Our thoughts are not set in stone.
- We can change our thoughts to be more helpful.



Helpful and unhelpful thinking habits

- We all have helpful and unhelpful habits.
- Our thoughts can become habits too.
- Remember, unhelpful thinking habits can open the pain gate.
- Unhelpful thinking habits include:
 - Thinking that things are worse than they really are.
 - Getting stuck thinking about the negatives.
 - Thinking about the worst thing that could happen.
 - Thinking there is nothing you can do to help yourself.
- These unhelpful thinking habits can snowball into stronger and more negative thoughts.
- Luckily, we can change these thinking habits!
- Learning to change your unhelpful thoughts can close the pain gate.





Red Flag Words

- One way to change our thinking is to look out for **Red Flag Words**.
- Red Flag Words are words that are extreme.
- Words like **always**, **never**, **every**, **no one**, and **all the time** are Red Flag Words.
- Red Flag Words can also be words like **must**, and **should**.
- Pay attention to these words when you hear yourself use them. They are often part of unhelpful thoughts.

Change the Red Flag Word to change these thoughts to something less extreme. Using “some” or “sometimes” usually works.



Example:

Instead of: “**No one** loves me!” ...

Try: “**Some people** may not like me, but **some people** love me.”



Example:

Instead of: “I **always** screw **everything** up!” ...

Try: “I screw **some things** up, but I **get some things right.**”



Example:

Instead of: “I **must** cook dinner for my family every night.” ...

Try: “**Sometimes** I can cook dinner for my family and **some nights I cannot.**”

Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Changing Unhelpful Thoughts

You have learned how to notice your thoughts. Now, we're going to learn how to **Change Unhelpful Thoughts**.

- **Step 1:** Notice your **unhelpful thoughts**.
 - Remember you can use the situation, your emotions, or your actions to help you notice your thoughts.

- **Step 2:** Act like a jury for your thoughts.
 - Ask yourself, “What is the evidence **that this is true?**”
 - Then ask yourself, “**What is the evidence that this is not true?**”
 - What do you decide? What's the verdict?

- **Step 3:** Come up with a more helpful thought.
 - Usually, these thoughts are more **real** and more **positive**.





Example #1

- **Step 1:** My thought: “If I exercise, I’m going to hurt myself.”
- **Step 2:** Evidence:
 - **True:** I feel sore when I exercise.
 - **Not True:** Feeling sore is not the same thing as hurting myself.
- **Step 3:** New thought: “If I go for a walk, I may feel sore later, but it will help me get stronger and manage my pain.”

Example #2

- **Step 1:** My thought: “There’s nothing I can do to make my pain better.”
- **Step 2:** Evidence:
 - **True:** My pain medicine doesn’t work any more.
 - **Not True:** I am learning new ways to manage my pain better.
- **Step 3:** New thought: “I will have good days and bad days, but I am learning how to help myself cope better.”

Hints:

- Practice thinking the new thought instead of the original thought. Over time, the old thought will get weaker or change.
- When you practice Helpful Thoughts, they can become your new thinking habits.

- 
- As you think more Helpful Thoughts, you will begin to feel better, be more active, and hurt less.
 - It can take a little while to get the hang of this, so be patient with yourself!
 - Just keep trying and you will start to see the results.

**GATE CLOSER:
More Practice with Thoughts
and Feelings Relaxation**

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



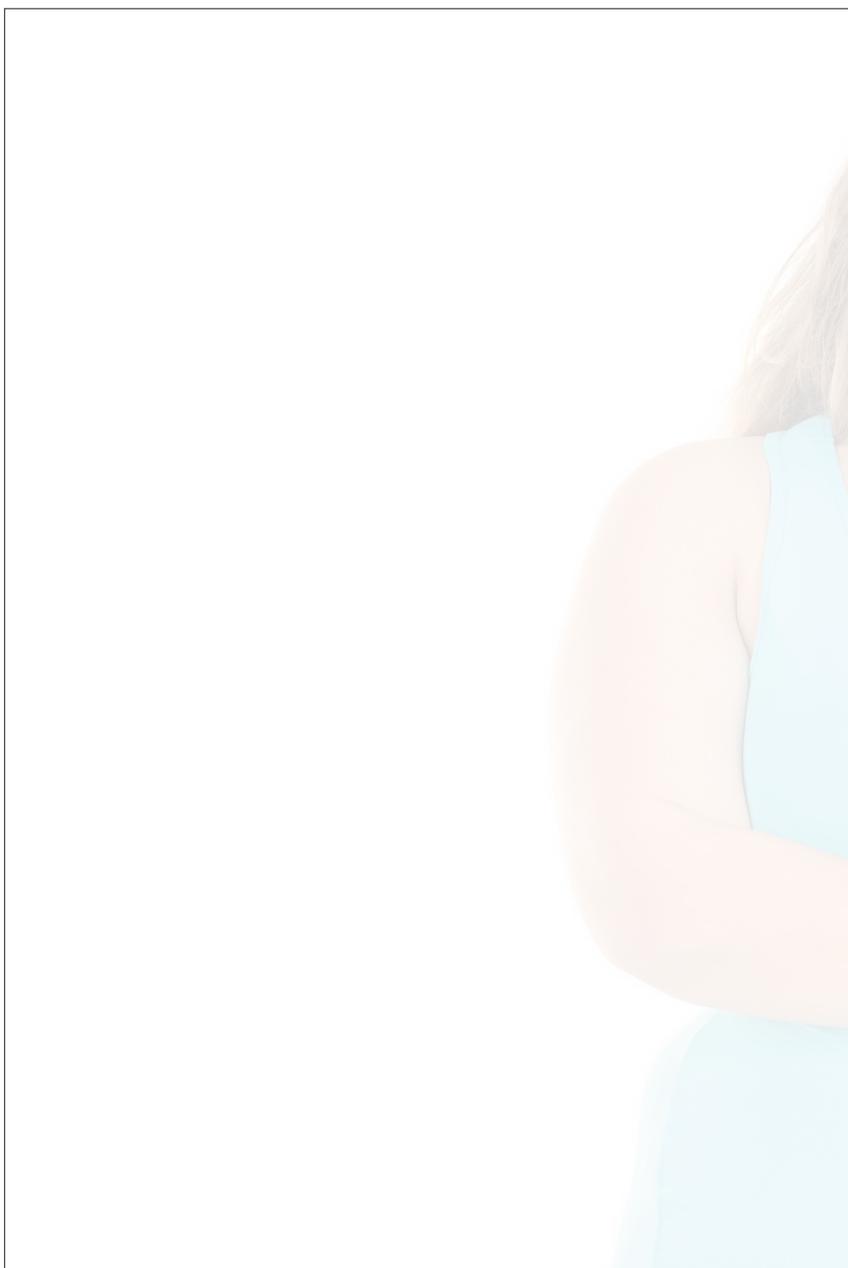
1. Listen to the Session 7 Tips. 
2. Practice **any Relaxation** skill at least **3 times** this week.
3. When you notice an Unhelpful Thought, practice the steps of changing it to a more Helpful Thought. Do this at least **3 times** this week.





How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 7 Summary

Making Your Thoughts Work For You

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #14: Thoughts and Facts Are Different

- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Changing Unhelpful Thoughts
 - Gate Closer: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation



Week 8

Master Your Thoughts to Manage Your Pain



Week 8 Goals

- Learn about the thoughts that really hook you.
- Learn how to Change Deep Beliefs.
- Learn how to Act As If.
- Learn how to use Coping Statements.
- More practice with **Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation.**





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

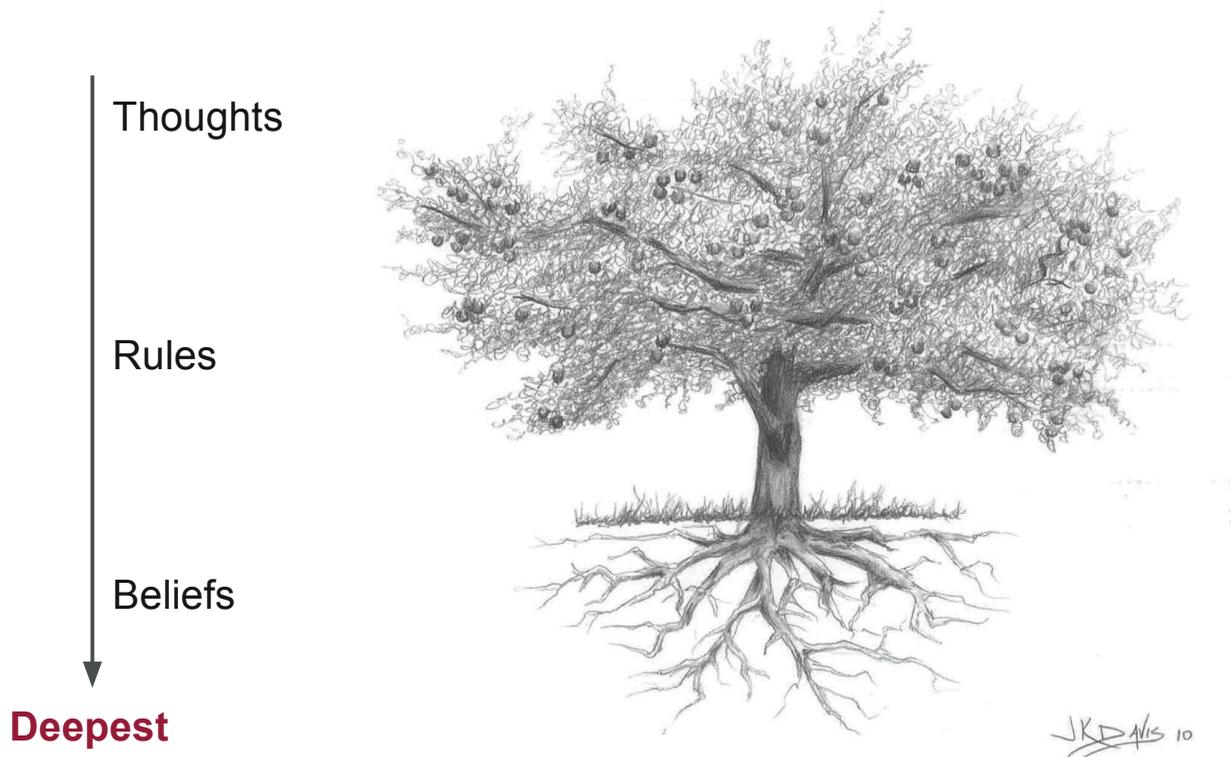
Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the **Relaxation** practice?
- What was your experience with the Changing Unhelpful Thoughts exercise?

Pain Fact #15: Rules and Deep Beliefs Can Really Hook You



- Not all thoughts have the same strength.
 - Some can be changed with a little effort.
 - Others, like **Rules** or **Beliefs**, take time and effort to change.
- **Rules** are strong thoughts about how you, others, or the world, **should** be.
 - **They** include words like “supposed to,” “should,” “must,” and “ought to.”
 - Often, we have learned **Rules** from other people.



- 
- **Beliefs** are really strong thoughts that are rooted deep inside us.
 - They tell us how much we value ourselves.
 - Sometimes **Beliefs** are positive and helpful.
 - **Example:** “I’m a good parent.”
 - Sometimes **Beliefs** are negative and unhelpful.
 - **Example:** “I’m a bad person. No one can love me.”
 - Like the roots of a tree, strong negative Beliefs can be hard to change.
 - When you are stressed, **Rules** and **Beliefs** can be especially negative.
 - This can lead to even more negative emotions and thoughts, to feel more pain, and to do less.
 - They can open the Pain Gate.
 - When we change our **Deep Beliefs**, we also change the **Rules, Simple Statements**, and other thoughts that grow from them.
 - These **Deep Beliefs** might take extra work to change, but you **can** change them. Here’s how:

Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Changing Deep Beliefs

Name one unhelpful Deep Belief you have.

- For example, a common belief of people with chronic pain is “I am damaged goods.”

How does it hurt you to buy into this unhelpful belief?

- What thoughts do you have?
- What emotions do you feel?
- What actions do you take?
- What does it do to your pain?

How would things be different if this belief was not true?

- **What actions would you take?**
- What thoughts would you have?
- What emotions would you feel?
- What would it do to your pain?



This week, try out “Acting As If” the unhelpful deep belief is not true.

- Pay attention to your thoughts, emotions, and pain when you Act As If the Deep Belief is not true.
- Changing our actions can help us change our thoughts, emotions, and pain.

GATE CLOSER: Using Coping Statements

- **Coping Statements** are your personal cheerleaders.
- They are positive statements about you and what you can do.
- They can improve your mood so you feel more hopeful.
- They can help you:
 - create new, more helpful **Deep Beliefs**.
 - For example, instead of: “**I am a disabled chronic pain patient,**” how about: “**I am a well person with pain.**”
 - close the Pain Gate.
 - cope with your pain.
 - feel more in control of your life.
 - believe in yourself.
 - live better with your pain.

- 
- If you are having trouble coming up with a coping statement, think about what a good friend would say about you.
 - **Coping Cards** are Coping Statements, that you write on small cards.
 - The messages have positive, real, helpful statements on them.
 - You can carry them around so that you always have them near you.
 - To create Coping Cards:
 - Write your own Coping Statements on a card.
 - Or, use one of the statements in the list below. Pick statements that are especially strong for you when you read them.

Coping Statements

- **“I am a well person with pain.”**
- “I am brave and strong even with my pain.”
- “I am not my pain.”
- “I have pain but I’m still a whole person.”
- “I will not let my pain stand in the way of what I need to do.”
- “I can still do things. I just need to do them differently.”
- “This too shall pass.”
- “Relaxation helps ease my mind and my pain.”

- 
- “I might not be able to get rid of my pain, but there are things I can do to make it better.”
 - “Even when I am in pain, I can use my breath to relax.”
 - “Self-care is not self-ish.”

Carry your Coping Cards around with you to remind you of your new, more helpful thoughts, Rules, or Beliefs.

**GATE CLOSER:
More Practice with Thoughts
and Feelings Relaxation**

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



1. Listen to the Session 8 Tips. 
2. Practice any relaxation skill at least **3 times** this week.
3. When you notice an unhelpful Deep Belief:
 - Ask yourself how the belief hurts you.
 - Act As If the belief is not true.
 - Do this at least **3 times** this week.
4. Make at least 3 Coping Cards and carry them with you.





How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week.



Week 8 Summary

Master Your Thoughts to Manage Your Pain

What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #15: Rules and Deep Beliefs Can Really Hook You

- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Changing Deep Beliefs
 - Gate Closer: Using Coping Statements
 - Gate Closer: Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation

Week 9

Get Better Sleep



Week 9 Goals

- Learn how sleep fits into health.
- Learn about sleep and sleep problems.
- Find out about good sleep habits.
- Learn **Deepening Relaxation** for sleep.





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the Relaxation practice?
- What was your experience working on Deep Beliefs?
 - What was your experience with Acting As If?
 - What Coping Statements did you come up with?

Why Is Sleep Important?

- When we get good sleep, we feel better and do better.
- Good sleep improves pain.
- Poor sleep leads to a lot of problems, like ...
 - feeling tired during the day.
 - feeling sleepy all the time.
 - problems thinking.
 - having a bad temper.
 - trouble keeping our minds on what we are doing.
- Problems with sleep can affect our relationships and daily activities, too.





Kinds of Sleep Problems

- Problems falling asleep
- Problems staying asleep
- Problems waking up too early
- Problems falling back to sleep

Do you have sleep problems? What kind?

Pain Fact #16: **Sleep Affects Your Pain and Your Health**



- We need around 7-9 hours a night.
- Different people have different needs for sleep.
- Normal sleep follows a regular pattern. Normal sleepers ...
 - fall asleep in less than 15 minutes.
 - wake up as many as 6 times and go back to sleep quickly without much trouble.
 - wake up in the morning feeling rested and alert.
- During the night, it is normal to have times when you are sleeping deeply and times when you are awake.
- The need for sleep gets less as a person gets older.
- We need good sleep for the brain to work well and for the body to feel well rested!
- Many people use sleeping pills, but they have side effects and should not be used all the time.
 - If you use sleeping pills or other medicines to help you sleep, make sure you talk to your doctor.

- Using nicotine (cigarettes, snuff, chew), caffeine (coffee, colas, tea), or alcohol (beer, wine, liquor) near bedtime can hurt your sleep.
- The harder you try to **force** yourself to sleep, the harder it is to fall sleep.



Your Pain Toolbox



GATE CLOSER: Better Sleep for Better Health!

Before you sleep

- ✓ **DO** get regular physical activity in the morning or afternoon (not at night).
- ✓ **DO** establish regular bedtime habits (brush teeth, wash face, read lightly).
- ✗ **DON'T** take naps after lunchtime.
- ✗ **DON'T** drink alcohol close to bedtime.
- ✗ **DON'T** drink caffeine after lunchtime. (Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, colas, and chocolate.)
- ✗ **DON'T** eat a large meal late in the day.
- ✗ **DON'T** try to solve emotional topics or problems right before bed. If you can't help it, try the **Express Yourself** tool.



When you sleep

- ✓ **DO** use your relaxation skills to help calm your body and mind before sleep.
- ✓ **DO** go to bed only when you are tired, but wake up at the same time each day.
 - You don't need to sleep extra for one bad night of sleep.
- ✓ **DO** get as much sleep as you need to feel rested.
 - This will be different for everyone, but is usually 7-9 hours.
- ✓ **DO** talk to your doctor about how to avoid taking sleep medicines for a long time.
- ✗ **DON'T** work, watch TV, use your cell phone, or eat in bed.
- ✗ **DON'T** stay in bed if you can't sleep.
 - If you are awake for a while, get out of bed and do something else, like read a magazine.
 - Use only dim lights during this time.
 - Then, return to bed when you start to feel sleepy again.
- ✓ **DO** get bright sunlight as soon as you wake up, if possible.



Where you sleep

- ✓ **DO** sleep in a dark, quiet, relaxing, and cool (not cold) room.
- ✓ **DO** sleep in a bed that is comfortable for you.
- ✗ **DON'T** have a TV, radio, or computer in your room.

GATE CLOSER: Deepening Relaxation

Your Weekly Pain Prescription

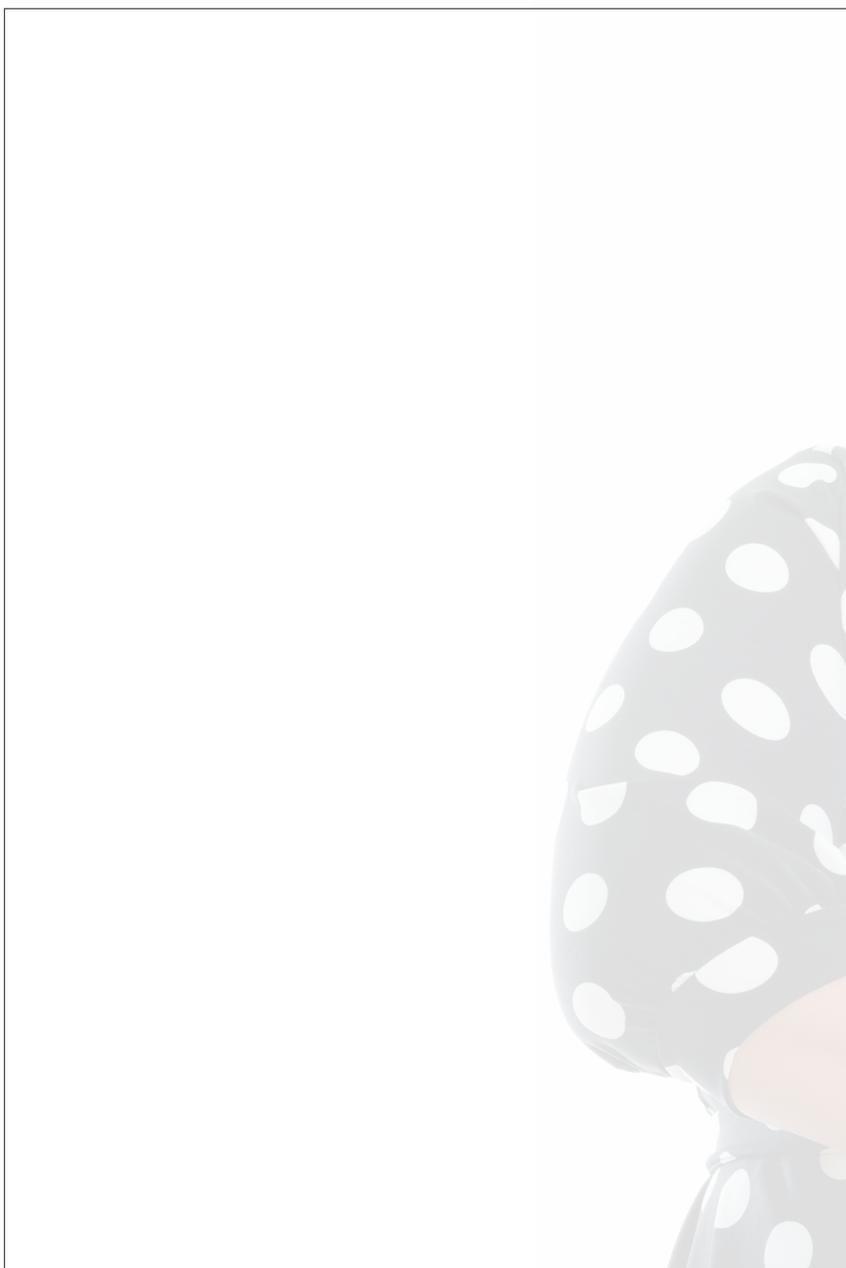


1. Listen to the Session 9 Tips. 
2. Practice the **Deepening Relaxation** for sleep **3 times** this week.
3. Pick **3 habits for sleep** that you are not doing right now.
 - Pick new habits you know you can do.
 - Do each of the three habits every night this week.



How Can I Use What I Learned Today?

Take a couple of minutes to write 1-2 things that you learned today that you could use this week?



Week 9 Summary

Get Better Sleep

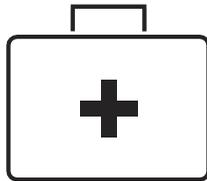
What we learned in group this week:

- Pain Fact #16: Sleep Affects Your Pain and Your Health
- Your Pain Toolbox
 - Gate Closer: Better Sleep for Better Health
 - Gate Closer: Deepening Relaxation



Week 10

Your Pain Coping Toolbox



Week 10 Goals

- Review the tools in your toolbox.
- Talk about how you will continue to take control of your pain management.
- Make plans to cope with setbacks and prepare for successes.
- Give feedback about how the group has been for you.





Breathing Space Relaxation Exercise

Your Pain Prescription from Last Week

- What was your experience with the **Deepening Relaxation for Sleep**?
- What **three habits for sleep** did you choose to change? What was your experience?

Your Pain and Coping Toolbox!

Congratulations!

You have reached the final week of the groups.

Let's review the Pain Coping Tools you have learned and how you use them.



Review

- Pain is real.
- Pain and stress are related, so lowering your stress can also improve your pain.
- The brain decides when you are in pain.
- Our thoughts, feelings, actions, and stress can open or close a gate that can make us feel more pain or less pain.
 - The more we use the tools we have learned, the better we will be at taking control of our pain, our mood, and our lives.
 - The most important tools are **The Gate Closers.**



GATE CLOSER:

Relaxation



- Relaxation reduces stress and pain so you can be more calm and peaceful.
- Practice relaxation every day to have more control over your pain.
 - You might even find that you use less medicine for your pain.

Try any of these relaxation exercises:

- Breathing Space Relaxation (Week 2)
- Warm and Heavy Relaxation (Week 3)
- Thoughts and Feelings Relaxation (Week 4)
- Images and Relaxation (Week 5)
- Deepening Relaxation (Week 9)

GATE CLOSER:

Increasing Physical Activity (Week 3)



- It is common to feel scared about being active.
- It is important to be active, despite the pain, to better manage pain and improve your mood.
- Pacing yourself will help increase your physical activity.

GATE CLOSER:

Doing More of What You Like to Do (Week 3)



- When we have pain, pleasant activities are often pushed aside.
- It is important to do the things we like to do, despite the pain, to feel better and enjoy our lives.
- We can learn new ways to do the things we enjoy.

GATE CLOSER:

Coping with Strong Emotions (Week 4)



- Having strong feelings is part of coping with pain.
- Coping with strong emotions in helpful ways improves mood and pain and helps you feel more in control.
- We have learned many ways to help us cope with strong emotions. Here are a few:
 - Facing the things that worry or scare you
 - Talking to someone
 - Crying can help you let go
 - Taking a “time out” can help when feeling angry
 - Therapy, counseling, and medicine can help when strong emotions are getting in the way of living your life.

GATE CLOSER: Express Yourself (Week 4)



- Writing or talking about our deepest thoughts and feelings can help us understand them better.
 - It can also help us let go of strong thoughts and feelings we might be holding onto.
- Using the Express Yourself tool can help you learn how to express strong thoughts and feelings in a helpful way.
 - This might help us realize that we have more control over thoughts and feelings than we think.
- A great time to use this tool is when you are feeling confused or overwhelmed by thoughts or feelings.

GATE CLOSER: Stand Tall Talk (Week 5)



- There are three styles of talking to others: Retreat, Attack, and Stand Tall talk. Each has pros and cons.
- Stand Tall talk helps you say exactly what you **need**, **feel**, and **want** (or **don't want**) in a direct and respectful way.
- Try to use “I”-statements with your Stand Tall talk.
- Remember to plan what you are going to say!
- You can also use Stand Tall talk with health care workers.

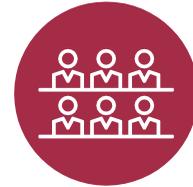
GATE CLOSER: **Noticing Unhelpful Thoughts** **(Week 6)**



- Thoughts, feelings, and actions all affect each other.
- Unhelpful thoughts work against us and make our pain worse.
- Unhelpful thoughts can be simple statements, rules, or beliefs.
- Seeing stress as a threat or a loss can lead to even more unhelpful thoughts.
- Noticing what we think in the moment can help us see when our thoughts are helping or hurting us.

GATE CLOSER:

Changing Unhelpful Thoughts (Week 7)



- Our ideas are not set in stone.
- After noticing an unhelpful thought, you can change the thought to something that works better for you.
- Changing unhelpful thoughts might improve mood and pain.
- Look out for **Red Flag Words**, like **always**, **never**, **every**, **no one**, **all the time**, **must**, and **should**.
 - Try changing these **Red Flag Words** to less extreme words, such as **some** or **sometimes**.
- Be the Jury for your thoughts by looking at the evidence for and against them.
- Change the thought to something a little more positive and real to make the thought more helpful to you.



GATE CLOSER: **Changing Deep Beliefs (Week 8)**



- Like the roots of a tree, Deep Beliefs can be hard to change.
- When we change Deep Beliefs, we can also change the Rules, Simple Statements, and other thoughts that grow from them.
- To change deep beliefs that really hook you ...
 - ask yourself how the belief hurts you.
 - Act As If the belief is not true.

GATE CLOSER: **Using Coping Statements (Week 8)**



- Coping statements are positive statements about you and what you can do.
- They can help you create new Deep Beliefs, improve your mood, and feel less pain.
- Sometimes it is helpful to think about what a friend would say about you.
- You can carry around coping statements on cards to remind yourself of these more positive, real, and helpful thoughts.

GATE CLOSER:

Better Sleep for Better Health (Week 9)



- Sleep is a very important part of your health and happiness.
- It is common for people with chronic pain to have sleep problems.
- Good sleep habits can help you sleep better without using sleep medicine.
 - ✓ Use relaxation practice to sleep better.
 - ✓ Go to bed only when you are tired, but wake up at the same time each day.
 - ✗ **DON'T** drink caffeine after lunchtime.
 - ✗ **DON'T** take naps after lunchtime.
 - ✗ **DON'T** stay in bed if you can't sleep.
 - ✗ **DON'T** work, watch TV, use your cell phone, or eat in bed.

Pain Fact Sheet

Week 1

- #1** Chronic Pain and Short-Term Pain Are Different
- #2** Stress and Pain Are Related
- #3** The Stress Response Has Four Parts
- #4** How We Think About Stress Matters

Week 2

- #5** The Brain Decides When You Are in Pain
- #6** Brain Signals Open or Close a Pain Gate

Week 3

- #7** Fear of Pain Can Get in the Way of Physical Activity
- #8** Pain Can Get in the Way of Living the Life You Want to Live





Week 4

#9 Pain and Emotions are Related

Week 5

#10 Pain Can Affect Your Relationships

#11 There are Three Ways of Talking to Others

Week 6

#12 Your Thoughts Affect Your Pain

#13 Thoughts, Feelings, and Actions Affect Each Other

Week 7

#14 Thoughts and Facts are Different

Week 8

#15 Rules and Deep Beliefs Can Really Hook You

Week 9

#16 Sleep Affects Your Pain and Your Health



Practice and Use New Ideas and Skills in Everyday Life

- You now have some tools to help you manage pain better.
- Practice these new ideas and skills to get good at them.
- Use your workbook often to read about the ideas and skills you learned during the group.
- Use your Tips CDs and Relaxation CDs.
- It is normal to forget to use these skills at first.
 - Sometimes, you'll even use them for a little while and then stop. If that happens, just remind yourself to start using them again.
- With practice, these new skills will become natural habits in your life, and you will not have to think so hard about how to use them.



Expect Pain Flare-Ups

- Sometimes, despite your efforts, you will still have times your pain flares up.
- A pain flare-up does not mean you did anything wrong, and it doesn't usually mean that there is new damage in your body.
- Knowing there are times when the pain will be worse is better than worrying or being surprised by it.
- Being aware that flare-ups happen can help you prepare to use your pain coping tools.
- **Coping with Pain Flare-Ups**
 - It is harder to use these skills when you have more pain.
 - But ... the most **important** time to use these skills is when you are in more pain.
 - Practicing these skills even when you are not in pain is important because they will become new helpful habits.
 - When these skills become habits, you are more ready to cope with pain flare-ups.



“Putting It All Together” – Group Chat

- What worked for each of you?
- What has been most challenging for you?
- What did you learn about yourself and your pain?
- How has your life changed due to these groups?
- What roadblocks do you think will get in the way of you practicing these new skills?
- Do you have any questions for the group leaders or other group members?

Your Weekly Pain Prescription



1. Listen to the Tips CDs. 
2. Listen to and practice the Relaxation Skills daily.
3. Practice your pain coping tools every day!



How Can I Use What I Have Learned Going Forward?



A close-up photograph of a man with curly brown hair and a beard, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is smiling broadly, showing his teeth, and looking towards the left. A hand is visible in the foreground, high-fiving him. The background is blurred, suggesting an office or professional setting.

CONGRATULATIONS
on Completing the Group!

You Are Now a
Pain Management Pro!

