Emotional Sensitivity

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Connection Between Pain and Emotions

Although pain does not necessarily put one's life at risk, it does put one's quality of life in jeopardy. Physical pain can be very difficult to deal with, however what is often overlooked is that the emotional effects of continued pain can be the most painful to bare.

Everyone deals with uncomfortable feelings differently, including pain. They might become angry and frustrated, isolate themselves, or develop depression.

According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, it has been clinically proven that pain sufferers are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, or both.

On top of that, there may be the feeling of guilt, lack of self-worth, and exaggerated emotional sensitivity, depending on the severity of the pain. Because of pain, feelings of helplessness, loss of control, guilt, and interference with normal daily activities can trigger mental and emotional health disorders.

Pain + Anxiety Disorders = A Bad Mix

Researchers have found that anxiety disorders and pain often combine together into a terrible mix of emotions. The emotional toll associated with living in pain may exacerbate conditions such as anxiety disorders and depression, and according to the National Institute of Mental Health, studies show that people with severe depression feel more intense pain.

Additionally, many studies are finding that inflammation may be linked between depression and anxiety. The link between inflammation and depression may be due to higher than normal levels of inflammatory proteins called cytokines that people with depression have in their body; thus, depression and pain can join together in a cycle, where one factor perpetuates the other.

Understandably, pain can lead to negative feelings, emotional sensitivity, and mental health disorders, but there are solutions that can help: support, a positive mindset, and keeping yourself busy.

Ways to Use Emotions to Cope With Pain

Try to Keep a Positive Mindset

Keeping a positive mindset can have a drastic impact on the quality of your daily life. In order to overcome the negative thoughts and emotional sensitivity that can come with pain, we have to embrace the philosophy of looking at the glass as half full.

Next page: where to go to for support.

Ways to Use Emotions to Cope With Pain

You need to make a conscious effort to focus more on the activities that you can still do rather than the activities you are not able to do because of your condition. Part of this strategy involves avoiding negative influences that remind you of the pain and how it has limited your life.

Meditation and relaxation therapies can be a great way of breaking the cycle of focusing on one's pain. Meditation also increases activity in the pain and emotion regulating areas of the brain; in turn, it can also help one to control their emotional reaction to pain.

Pain is a terrible sensation but meditation helps to reassert the notion that pain does not deserve such a strong emotional reaction and helps gain some control over it. You can't always control your physical condition but you can have control over your mindset.

It is also very important to surround yourself with positive people who can reinforce the idea of thinking positively. They will also be able to help bring you up emotionally when you're having trouble being positive on a particular day. When you are with someone who is supportive, they understand your struggle and will participate in activities you can also participate in despite having pain.

Support

We all need support at some point in our lives but those suffering from pain need to rely on support more often than the average person. Continuous pain is tough to deal with, especially if you are alone.

Pain sufferers deal with negative thoughts throughout the day with constant reminders of what they are incapable of doing, which can lead to a constant bad mood and bad attitude.

However, support can help them get through the constant physical and emotional obstacles. Support can come in a variety of forms; it could be someone who helps with tasks you are physically unable to do, someone you talk to about your struggles, or someone who is going through the same ordeal.

Make sure to identify who your support is when it comes to dealing with pain so you know who to turn to when you're having a rough time. Potential support could be a trained therapist, significant other, close friend, or family member.

Next page: keeping yourself occupied.

Support

Even if you can't identify a person, joining a support group or online forum for chronic pain can also be just as effective. Support groups can be very helpful in breaking a person out of mental state brought on by pain.

Talking amongst others about your struggle with chronic pain will allow you to better cope with the condition and manage your emotions associated with the pain better.

Keep Yourself Occupied

Pain can bring about the feeling that you're alone in your inner struggle and lead to emotional sensitivity. Many chronic pain sufferers have the instinct to seclude themselves because of the fear of exacerbating the pain. Despite this reaction, one of the worst things a person with pain can do is sit in a room alone, feel sorry for themselves, and focus on their pain. Secluding yourself from social interaction or societal inclusion can feed into the cycle of depression and more pain.

You must understand your physical limitations, but if you're going to be in pain why not try to divert your attention by doing something you enjoy? Many pain sufferers can still participate in therapeutic writing, gentle exercises, and many other enjoyable activities.

Conclusion

For a lot of people, pain and arthritis can be a difficult lifelong battle that involves fighting both their bodies and minds. The pain can lead to an emotional sensitivity that makes one more prone to depression and anxiety.

Although it is easier said than done, having support, having a positive mindset, and keeping yourself busy can make that battle a little easier. Pain is a very complex sensation that can be difficult to control, but controlling your emotions will help in dealing with the pain.

Part of managing the pain involves wrapping your head around it and finding enough support to get you through the tough times. Keeping a positive mindset may be very hard, but in trying to do so will open your mind to universal opportunities to make your life that much more enjoyable despite having a debilitating condition.

Rather than letting chronic pain take over one's emotional state, take advantage of those opportunities that will keep you busy and focused on the good that life does have to offer. We might not be able to control our physical state, but we can learn to control how much of our lives it affects.