



Be Pain Smart – My Role

Coming to terms with your pain

Acceptance or coming to terms with your pain is not giving up, but getting on with your life, despite your pain.

It is not about letting go of hope, but letting go of all the unhelpful thoughts and feelings, and the ongoing struggle you have with your pain. You can waste a lot of time and energy trying to be pain-free, but usually once your pain is chronic, it might not ever go away. Some people with chronic pain find that after letting go of the goal to be pain-free, it leaves more room to focus on the rest of their life, reduces their stress and anxiety, and they can manage their pain more easily.

Read the statements below and consider which ones sound true to you.

Accepting my pain means...

Recognising that there is not an easy answer

Giving up hope

Getting used to it

Being a quitter

I can still change my life/situation

Lying down and taking it

This is the way it is, whether I like it or not

Having no hope for improvement

Adjusting

Being weak

Acknowledging the facts

Nothing will ever change

Acceptance is about coming to terms with what is happening for you right now and learning ways to manage your pain. When you do not accept your pain, the struggle and fight with yourself continues. Think about what it will mean if you keep waiting for the pain to go, before you move on with your life; most likely you will be stuck where you are now for a long time.



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Think about what it would mean if you do not accept your pain. Will this help you get rid of your pain or will it help you to meet your goals? Does fighting your pain make you feel better? Think about these questions and read the example below.

What would it mean to not accept your pain?

If I do not come to terms with my pain, it will mean that I will stay trapped in this constant fight and struggle with myself about my pain. It will mean that I am stuck, and I will not be able to move forward with my life. I used to think that accepting my pain meant that I had given up or I had my head in the sand, but now I know if I do not accept my pain, I will keep being angry and get more stressed and worried – none of that will help my pain.

Not accepting



It is raining

I do not like rain. I wish it was not raining.

My day would be better if it was not raining.

My day is ruined. Every day is just like this.

It is always like this. Why does it always rain when all I want is for it to be sunny?

vs

Accepting



It is raining

Yep – it is raining.



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Coming to terms with your pain does not mean that you have to like it or be happy about having chronic pain; it just means you can learn how to deal with your pain so that you can get on with the job of living your life. There are lots of ways that coming to terms with your pain can help you, such as moving forward, using your energy to change your life now and to stop feeling stuck in limbo land. Would it be possible to come to terms with your pain and not feel like you have quit? Think about these questions and read the example below.

How could you come to terms with your pain, and not feel like you have given up?

I now think that coming to terms with my pain will make life easier. It is like when you get lost; if you do not figure out where you are now, you will not be able to find your path out.

I have spent so much time, money and energy trying to get rid of my pain and it is still there and now everything else is worse. Accepting my pain will mean that I can focus on managing things now and not worry about what will happen in the future.

Remember, accepting your pain is a huge step towards taking control of your life!

Now it is your turn to write down your thoughts about coming to terms with your pain.

Consider what it would mean if you do not accept your pain. Will this help you get rid of your pain or will it help you to meet your goals? Does fighting your pain make you feel better?



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What would it mean to not accept your pain?

How could you come to terms with your pain, and not feel like you have given up?