Be Pain Smart – My Role

Changing roles

This could be the time to change the roles in your life to align with the meaning and purpose you are looking for. Think of your past roles and find new ways to get that same sense in your new life.

Your life changes in many ways after you have a brain injury and chronic pain. There are often changes to your roles – your role at work, in your family and in your community. These roles give meaning and purpose to your life and it can be overwhelming when you are not able to return to these roles.

It can be helpful to think of your past roles and what meaning and purpose you got out of them. Think about what kind of work you did before, this could have been paid employment, study or volunteering roles. Think about the roles you had in your family, as a parent, partner, sibling, child or even other roles in your family, such as being the go-to person in your family to help and care for others, or the one who planned holidays or events. Think about the roles you had in your community. You may have helped out at your local school, church or sporting clubs.

Unfortunately, you may not be able to get back to many of these roles. But it can be helpful to think about what these roles were giving you in terms of meaning and purpose in life and then find new ways to get that same sense in your new life.

Take the time now to answer the questions below to help you to get back meaning and purpose in your life. Write your ideas down below.

What meaning and purpose did you get from your past roles? What did you get out of these roles?

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When you think of your past roles, you may find that they were not giving you the meaning and purpose that you were looking for. This could also be a time to change your roles, so they are closer to what you are looking for.

Are you still looking for the same meaning and purpose?

If not, then what meaning and purpose are you looking for?

Think about what is going on for you now. How do you think you could you get this meaning and purpose in your life now?

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Consider the barriers that might stop you from finding this. After a brain injury, many people have changes in the way they think, act, move and feel – how could these changes stop you?

Remember you have strengths and skills that you can use to help you and people around you to support you. What are your strengths? Who can help you?

Now think about how you are going to adopt new roles to give you meaning and purpose? What would these roles look like? What are your new roles?

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