

## PAIN COPING STRATEGIES

1. FOCUS AWAY FROM THE PAIN. "People don't suffer as much if they have something better to do." Wilbert Fordyce
2. DON'T STUFF YOUR FEELINGS. Get them out in a safe way.
3. EXERCISE WITHIN YOUR LIMITS. Not exercising hurts more in the long run.
4. GET OUT AND DO. You are going to hurt anyway. If you don't, you will get focused in on yourself and become more and more miserable.
5. FIND WAYS TO RELAX QUICKLY. Listen to relaxation tapes and do relaxation exercises. People in chronic pain are unaware of the tension level in their bodies, and the RESTING MUSCLE TENSION GRADUALLY BECOMES HIGHER AND MORE DISTORTED.
6. When you have an extreme bout of pain, use hot or cold treatments, take care of yourself, and tell yourself, "The pain has passed before and it will again."
7. BUNDLE UP. In cold weather keep the affected body part warm. Shivering is tension and tension makes your pain worse.
8. LEAN INTO THE PAIN. Learn to stop fighting the pain and go with it. Accept it. Fighting it causes tension.
9. STRESS AGGRAVATES PAIN. Anything that causes you stress will make your pain worse.
10. SOMETIMES GETTING TO DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IS WORTH SOME PAIN.
11. PRACTICE BREATHING DEEPLY.
12. LOOK FOR PAIN TRIGGERS. Pain triggers are stress, emotions, movements and exercises that cause intense bouts of pain. Know what they are so that you can decide whether you want to do them or not.