



WHAT IS Acceptance?

Acceptance is a shift in thinking. It is recognizing that because of your situation, you must change the way that you approach things to minimize your own frustrations and pain experiences. It also means recognizing that you are not “the pain” but rather someone who has pain among many other things (good and bad), it is not the defining feature of who you are.

“Nothing changes if nothing changes.”

Think about how you typically approach tasks, situations and even social interactions. Are you happy with the outcome? If not, you must change your approach, or the outcomes will remain the same.

STAGES of Grief

These are common feelings that someone experiencing a loss may have. You may not experience them all or experience them in order.

1

Denial: “I’m fine.” “This isn’t happening to me.” You may just feel numb, not quite realizing the extent the impact your injury might have on your life. Or you may be in denial of your condition – continuously seeking a cure, seeking out more specialists regardless of the fact they are all telling you the same thing.

2

Anger (or frustration): You may find yourself easily agitated, more irritable. You are frustrated with constantly being in pain. You may be focused on blaming others, pointing fingers.

3

Bargaining: “I promise to _____ if _____”. You may bargain with your higher power, yourself, your employers, your doctors WSIB/insurance, etc. You may rationalize behaviours you know will hurt you in the long run. “I’ll just finish this task, so it’s done and I’ll ignore the pain”.

4

Depression: You may feel completely overwhelmed, experiencing feelings of hopelessness or helplessness. You may not feel like doing anything, have problems concentrating, changes in sleeping, change in your appetite. You may just feel like isolating from others or just giving up. It is important to discuss these feelings with your doctor.

5

Acceptance: You come to accept that you have a chronic pain condition, and you find ways to manage and even thrive regardless of the pain. You accept the things you cannot change, focusing on what you can do, and how you can manage better. You transition from “I can’t do anything” to “How can I manage my pain while doing that?”

MYTHS of Acceptance

“If I accept my pain, I’m giving up”.

Acceptance is not giving up trying. It is giving up thinking that things are not different now, or that you don’t have to deal with this in a new way.

“Acceptance means that I’m okay with having pain forever”.

It is about accepting that right now you have pain and recognizing that you have to do things differently than before you had any pain. It’s about living with it.

“Acceptance does not mean you like it”.

You don’t have to like something to accept it. You have to be willing to recognize it for what it is and be willing to act accordingly.

Acceptance can give you more control over your life and your pain, leaving more energy for other things, including becoming a more positive advocate for yourself.

What does acceptance look like to you? What is holding you back?

TIPS FOR

Managing Grief and Loss

- ✓ Talk to people who understand.
- ✓ Recognize that these losses are significant, and it will take time to adjust.
- ✓ If you are concerned about your feelings of anger or depression, speak to your doctors!
- ✓ Take care of yourself physically.
- ✓ Plan ahead. Remember to modify, pace and take breaks. Build on small successes.
- ✓ Positive self-talk.
- ✓ Be open to change. Remember that moving towards acceptance does not mean you are “giving up”.

LEARN MORE about Acceptance and Grief

Coping with Grief and Loss –

www.helpguide.org/articles/grief/coping-with-grief-and-loss.htm

The Ways We Grieve – www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-truisms-wellness/201702/the-ways-we-grieve

Ontario
Chronic Pain
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