

## PSYCHOLOGY CAN ALSO HELP



Chronic pain is a health problem that often involves a considerable impact on morale and quality of life, particularly if one suffers from it every day without a break.

That means you may be listless and less active, feeling a lot of stress and tension, or assailed by unpleasant emotions.

Perhaps you've noticed that you have not often been in a good mood since suffering from chronic pain. You may be feeling sad, discouraged, anxious or even angry. You may have found your fuse is sometimes short; you can be impatient and sometimes you just want to be left alone. Perhaps you're also fearful that chronic pain has changed your life forever. Although these thoughts and emotions are often associated with chronic pain, they negatively affect your sense of well-being and quality of life.

Fortunately, when your morale is undermined, there are things you can do!

### **Pain ↔ morale**

The way you perceive pain can have a significant impact on your morale... and on the pain itself! If, for example, you're afraid the pain will take control of your life, that fear itself can immobilize you, with a consequent negative impact on your quality of life.

If you see the pain as your worst enemy and you wish it had never existed, this attitude can lead to anger and discouragement, making it even more complicated to manage your pain. That's not to say you should be thinking that the pain is your best friend, of course. What's needed is a balanced point of view: Chronic pain is a medical condition that you didn't ask for, but you're living through; you can, to a certain extent, control it.

Learning to control your pain means adapting to it and gradually learning to accept it a little more. Health professionals who specialize in the domain, such as psychologists, doctors or nurses are there to help you help yourself to change the way you perceive pain when required. Don't hesitate to go to them for advice.

### **Keeping up your morale despite the emotional yo-yo!**

- Stay busy and plan activities you can do alone or in a group. The more your attention is held by pastimes you love, the less you'll be bothered by your pain.

- Make goals. For example, have activities planned so when you wake up, you already know what you're going to do that day. Plan more long-term activities too, such as going to a restaurant, travelling in a group and so on. Planning activities you look forward to helps you lead an active life, counteracts boredom and fosters social relationships. Don't be shy to keep your calendar full... especially with fun activities.
- Remember, you're a useful person who can still contribute to society even though you may not be able to do the same things you used to do. You need new activities that you would be proud to accomplish. For example, if you're no longer working, you can still do volunteer work, help out your friends, or contribute to your family. Doing this will have a positive impact on your morale and your social life.

Keep going forward and live  
your life fully!

By putting these suggestions  
into practice, you'll adapt more  
easily to chronic pain and the  
limits it imposes on you.

**That way, you can keep going forward  
and live your life fully!**