PAIN AND RECOVERY – How our beliefs about pain influence recovery?

Unfortunately the aches and pains many of us suffer are associated with medical conditions, disability, injuries, or surgery. Pain is a source of stress and can be debilitating and emotionally hard to cope with. Why is it that some people suffering pain can maintain a high quality of life despite ongoing discomfort while others do less well physically and emotionally? Research is shedding more light on what factors mitigate pain-related impacts on day-to day life.

For a variety of reasons some of us are psychologically more resilient than others. Resilience refers to how well a person deals with and bounces back from the difficulties of life. Resilient people possess more positive beliefs and cope with stress more effectively. They also tend to possess a greater sense of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy a fancy term that refers to how much someone believes in her or his capability to influence life events. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how we feel, think, motivate ourselves and behave. People with positive beliefs and greater self-efficacy manage their physical and emotional distress in more healthy ways. They also cope better with the emotional impacts that can occur after injury, surgery, or living with a chronic health condition. The loss of physical capacity, or a significant role in life, or the loss of self-esteem can be significant. The emotional impacts are significant and can result in anxiety, depression, feeling of grief, and anger. Coping with feelings like these is an additional challenge which makes it even harder to find the resiliency needed to cope well with and get through the challenges of the physical rehabilitation.

The good news is that it is possible to learn how to become more resilient.

* Find and nurture a sense of purpose
* Build positive beliefs in your abilities
* Develop a strong social network
* Embrace change
* Build optimism and positive thinking
* Nurture yourself
* Develop your problem-solving skills
* Establish goals
* Take action to solve problems
* Keep working on your skills

There are many self-help books and online resources available to support anyone to work on their resiliency. Life coaches and psychologists offer expertise to support building resiliency.

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