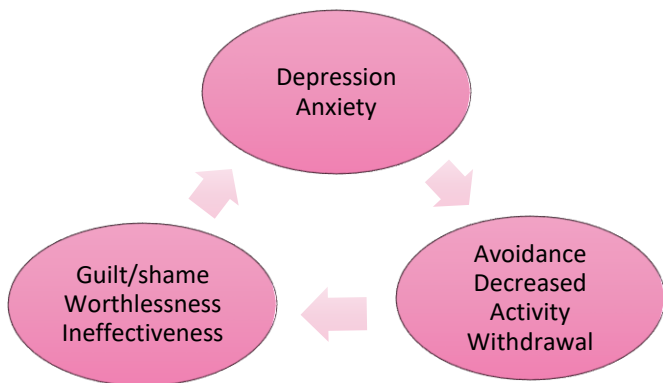


LIFE WITH CHRONIC PAIN

AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

Chronic pain refers to pain that occurs beyond an expected timeframe following illness or injury and has a significant impact on our thoughts, moods, and behaviors.

- ❖ 30-50% of people with chronic pain also struggle with **DEPRESSION** or **ANXIETY**
- ❖ People with chronic pain are **3X** more likely to develop symptoms of **DEPRESSION** or **ANXIETY**



CHRONIC PAIN AND MOOD

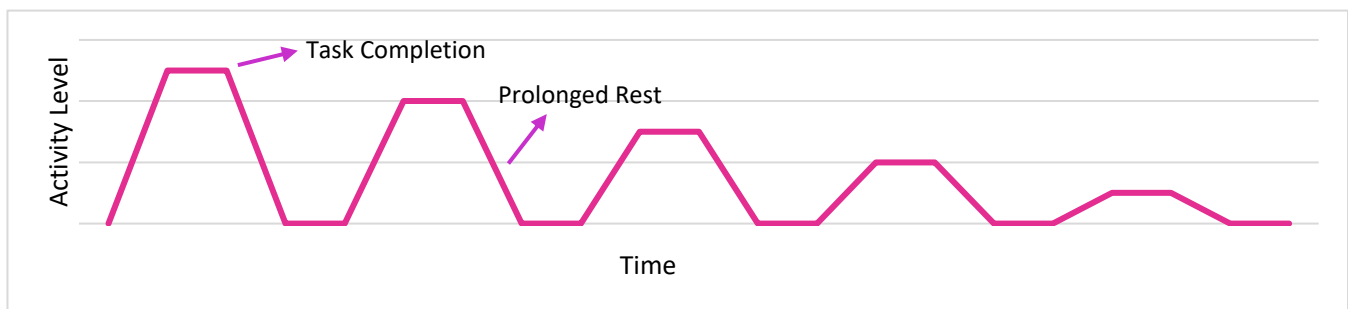
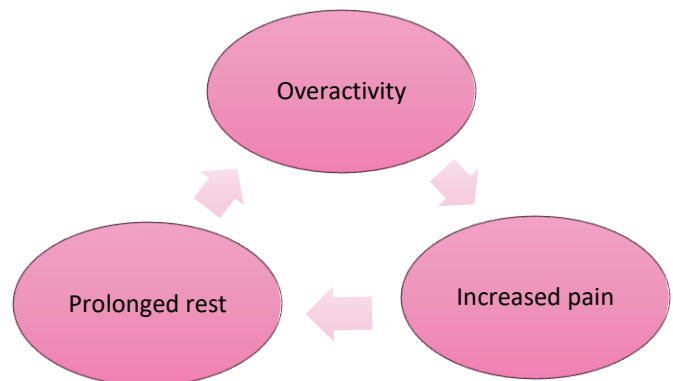
Chronic pain makes everyday tasks more difficult, which may lead us to neglect our responsibilities and avoid activities we enjoy.

By decreasing our activity, we may begin to experience trouble sleeping, increased stressed, or feelings of guilt or inadequacy that perpetuate feelings of depression and anxiety; creating a cycle that is difficult to break.

HOW DO WE TYPICALLY BREAK THIS CYCLE?

Typically, we break our cycle of depression and/or anxiety by increasing our activity. However, we often find individuals with chronic pain attempt to take care of all neglected duties in a short period of time, creating a new cycle.

This creates a long-term pattern that is often referred to as the “**ROLLER COASTER**” pattern of functioning.



HOW SHOULD WE BREAK THE CYCLE?

ACTIVITY PACING

or increasing daily activity in a structured fashion to achieve consistency.

The trick is engage in activity even when pain is present. (Vowles & Sorrell, 2006)

1. Identify values

- Work/Achievement
- Relationships
- Positive Growth and Health
- Leisure

2. Set some goals and make them SMART

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

S Specific
M Meaningful
A Adaptive
R Realistic
T Time-bound

3. What steps can I start to take to complete these goals?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Additional Suggestions

Assemble a team of chronic pain specialists including:

- A physician*
- A pain specialist*
- A therapist*
- A physical therapist*

Engage in treatment options like

- Talk therapy*
- Stress reduction*
- Medication*
- Peer support*
- Pain programs*

<https://www.psych.com.net/depression.central.chronic.pain.html>

PREVENTING RELAPSE (VOWLES & SORRELL, 2006)

The word relapse refers to falling back to a former state and can occur when functioning decreases. By continuing to pursue value-oriented goals and coping strategies, we can prevent relapse.

It is common for us to experience setbacks, which is identified as a temporary slow down that impedes progress for a period of time. It is crucial to continue to engage in activity shortly after a setback to prevent relapse.

Step 1: Commit to your value:

Step 2: Identify potential setbacks

Step 3: Create a plan to handle the setback

