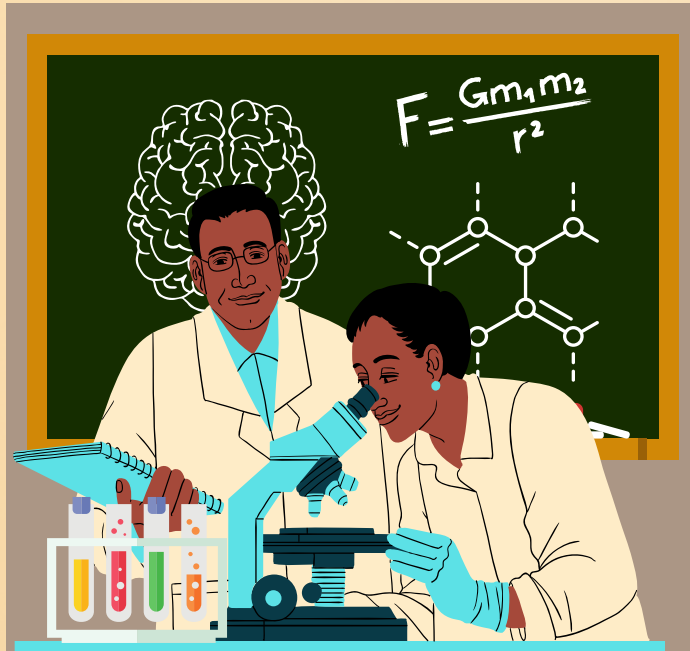




SELF TALK

THE MIND AND BODY WORKING TOGETHER



THE SCIENCE

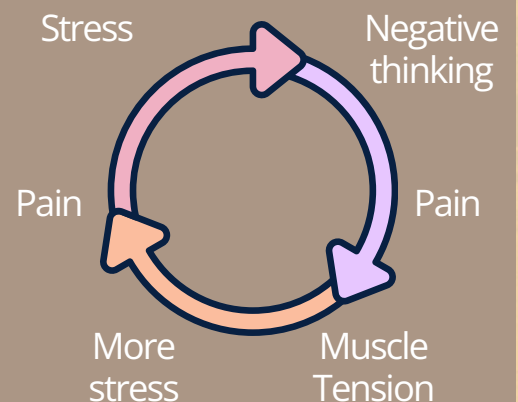
Stress can make pain feel worse by tightening muscles. Believing we can manage our pain helps the body make a natural pain killer, called endorphins, which can make us feel better.

People with muscle and joint pain reported they could better handle stress after learning to think positively. They said it also helped their bodies work better - their joints felt better and they could do more.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH TELL US?

FAULTY THINKING

When we feel sad or anxious, this can make us feel worse, leading to more stress, pain, and tension. When we decide to participate in activities even when we are in pain, this can break the negative cycle.



OVERCOMING NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Negative thoughts can make us feel hopeless and increase stress or pain. Examples are imagining the worst (catastrophizing) or assuming bad things will always happen (overgeneralizing).



HOW TO USE POSITIVE THINKING TO COPE WITH PAIN?



STOP

Try to notice when you have a negative thought. Stop and write it down to track it.



ASK

Ask yourself if that thought is helpful or unhelpful.



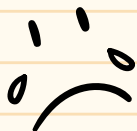
CHOOSE

Choose a new positive thought to replace the negative one. Keep a journal of thoughts (see below).

EXAMPLE OF A THOUGHT JOURNAL

My negative thoughts

There's really nothing I can do to help my pain.



My positive thoughts

Some days are tough, but there have been days that are better, and there are things I can do to help with my pain.



References

Michael G. DeGroote Pain Clinic. Self-talk: Our mind and body work together [Internet]. Hamilton (ON): Hamilton Health Sciences; 2016 Feb 4 [cited 2024 Dec 4]. Available from: [dpc/ptedPainClinicSelfTalkMindAndBody-th.docxdt/February 4, 2016](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/chronic-pain-using-healthy-thinking).

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