



HURT = HARM

The belief that pain always indicates tissue damage is perhaps the most common assumption that leads to avoidance of activity and increasingly protective behaviours.



NO PAIN NO GAIN

The idea that the only way to get stronger or feel better is to push through pain is another flawed assumption. This is a commonly shared belief (especially on social media), and suggests that the person needs a better understanding of the role of the pain system.



"Shoulding"

Sentiments that suggest the patient is judging themselves for things they currently can't do: "I should be able to keep up with my kids", or "a person should be able to clean a small apartment in one day."

examples of pain-related thought patterns



HELPLESSNESS

An element of catastrophizing (along with magnification and rumination), we can often hear this in a person's description of their history. We can think of it as the opposite of self-efficacy -- the degree to which a person believes that they have control over their situation.



FORTUNE TELLING

"I'm going to end up in a wheelchair" or "this will never work" might be examples of how this shows up for a person with pain. They will feel and behave differently if they think they know the ultimate outcome of their pain.



PERCEIVED INJUSTICE

A type of rumination, this describes a thought pattern that is focused on how unfair it is that the person has chronic pain. It may in fact be profoundly unfair, but since we can't change the past, too much focus on it doesn't help us think and behave differently in the future.