

Moving with Ease with yogaplustherapies.com

This is a great strategy to get moving if you are recovering from injury, trauma or have experienced persistent pain.

Ignoring the pain message & pushing through just leads to pain “Flare Ups”, while resting & avoiding movement and activity cause lost fitness, lost condition, increased stiffness & more discomfort.

Moving with Ease is a middle way to start to move more... The aim is to reduce reactivity in your pain system & the protectometer in a slow step by step method.

FOCUS on what you want to do, something you would like to achieve, as a goal, not trying to STOP pain.

Focus on getting WELL - start a healthy lifestyle plan.

Be patient, not will take time & effort. Just keep focused on your goal. Change will occur slowly and you will be able to do more with less discomfort.

The aim is to UNLEARN pain and restore your Protectometer back to a normal balanced state. To do this do which you feel a SAFE, and practice so you no longer feel the danger or threat.

Try these 9 skills:

Breathing Slowly Calmly - Practice breath awareness; Feel its rhythm - inhaling & exhaling; Feel the breath in your body ie belly rising & falling; allow the breath to lengthen... allow it smooth... allow it to soften... Take softening into your body, releasing tension & pain... Reduce your breathing to between 4 & 7 breaths per minute.

Body Awareness & Reducing Tension - Practice taking your awareness to the body; Scanning from head to toe... Softening & releasing tension... letting go of danger... notice connections to feelings & moods... let go of tensions in the mind... go deeper...find place of safety

Gentle Conditioning Exercises - Gently contract a muscle... feel it firm... go only to the edge of pain... follow guidelines for moving with ease below. Hold it for a time, then relax. Repeat as advised. Strength, mobilise, improve aerobic fitness where you need. Often easiest to start with ISOMETRIC moves ie no movement just contract & relax...

Moving with Ease Process - move gently - step by step towards your goal - get guidance from your physio
Just go to the point just beyond the edge of pain

Ask yourself “Is this safe?” “Will I regret this tomorrow?” Modify movement if you need... however don’t anticipate also, just be present to see what happens.

Keep my breathing calm...

Keep my body calm & free of tension

Monitor discomfort & Adjust for Comfort

Yoga & Tai Chi can be great ways to practice this skill...

Restoring Function - step by step move towards your goal - do something each day to reduce danger & increase safety. It maybe movement, or breathing or body relaxation, or what you say to yourself, or meditation

Pacing Yourself - Keep checking that you are not over doing it. Watch “good” days where you feel you can do more. Stay consistent, and include pauses to rest & recover.

Staying Healthy - Poor lifestyle habits can lead to increased nervous system reactivity. Eat well, whole foods, lots of colour, fresh, less processed. Cut down sugar, caffeine, alcohol. Include more anti-inflammatory foods, like ginger or turmeric. Avoid smoking. Work modifying your stressors or reaction to your stressors in life. Have some FUN. Be with friends, family or supportive groups. Find things to do you LOVE.

Watching what you say to yourself - The key to recovery is reducing the threat & danger your brain is perceiving. Do what you feel is safe & watch what you say to yourself. Focus on what you can do, not what you can’t.

PAIN plays an important role in keeping us safe - it acts a a protectometer. Pain is measure of danger signals from our body & what our brains thinks it means. Inflammation, anticipation of pain & stress ramp up pain. Pain learns. Avoiding & pushing through pain don’t help. You can retrain pain by reducing DANGER messages & increasing SAFETY messages. Movement & slow breathing are important ways to also modify pain.