University of California San Francisco

San Francisco Migraine Education Day
April 25, 2020

Coping with Migraine: Value-Based Living

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Headache is not merely a problem of the body or the mind but rather a biopsychosocial disorder –

a physical disorder subject to psychological, social influences, and environmental stressors.

American Headache Society

Headache Toolbox—Behavioral and Other Non-Pharmacological Treatments for Headache

Penzien, D. B., & Taylor, F. R. (2014). Behavioral and other nonpharmacologic treatments for headache. *Headache: The Journal of Head and Face Pain*, *54*(5), 955-956.

Pain monster – the struggle

What can we do next?

Illustration by Tim Pacific from http://askmagazine.org/learning-to-live-with-the-monster/

Pain monster – Drop the rope

Illustration by Tim Pacific from http://askmagazine.org/learning-to-live-with-the-monster/

Pain monster – Engaging in your values

Illustration by Tim Pacific from http://askmagazine.org/learning-to-live-with-the-monster/

Overview

Coping with Migraine: Value-Based Living

Research shows that non-pharmacological treatments are effective for managing headache and migraine, including:

- Lifestyle modification
- Stress management skills
- Psychotherapy
  - A Values-Based Approach based on ACT
  - Values versus Goals

Coping skills for migraine

A biobehavioral approach

Lifestyle modification

- ✓ Sleep hygiene
- ✓ Daily exercise
- ✓ Eating regularly scheduled meals
- ✓ Stay hydrated
- ✓ Limit caffeine and alcohol

Biopsychological

- ✓ Relaxation training
- ✓ Biofeedback
- ✓ Cognitive behavioral therapy
- ✓ Social support

Add a "values-based" approach

A Values-Based Approach

Image from https://vidaaventura.net/how-core-values-can-change-your-life/

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

Psychological approach using metaphors and experiential exercises

- **Reduce avoidance** of negative thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations
- Recontextualize and accept these experiences, **clarify personal values**, and commit to **behavior change**

What "acceptance" doesn't mean: giving up, not trying new treatments, letting the pain win

Key components include:

Mindfulness -- observing, curiosity, present moment

Actions based on values – values-congruent living

Harris, R. 2009. ACT Made Simple. New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

Values Versus Goals

- Values can never be achieved or completed
- Values provide direction
- Goals can be achieved
- Goals can move us towards or away from values

Example: Value=being a good parent

Neglecting child
Don't take to doctor

Pick up from school
Change diapers, Make lunch

Values Versus Goals

VALUES	GOALS
Creativity	Spend 5 min/day drawing
Health	Gentle yoga 10 min/day
Family	Call family once/week
Work	Update 1 line on resume
Advocacy	Participate in support group www.migrainecommunitygroups.org

Real Life Example

28 year old woman with fibromyalgia and migraine

Sadness, loss of life passion for horseback riding, isolation, tried many treatments

Values-based approach: community, animal welfare, outdoors, health

Identifying Values

Image from https://vidaaventura.net/how-core-values-can-change-your-life/

Valued Living Questionnaire

Below are areas of life that are valued by some people. We are concerned with your quality of life in each of these areas. One aspect of quality of life involves the importance one puts on different areas of living. Rate the importance of each area (by circling a number) on a scale of 1-10. 1 means that area is not at all important. 10 means that area is very important. Not everyone will value all of these areas, or value all areas the same. Rate each area according to **your own personal sense of importance**.

Area	**not at all important**									**extremely important**
1. Family (other than marriage or parenting)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Marriage/couples/intimate relations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Parenting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Friends/social life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. Work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. Education/training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. Recreation/fun	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. Spirituality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. Citizenship/Community Life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10. Physical self care (diet, exercise, sleep)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Opportunity to Practice

This afternoon you have a chance to attend a virtual art therapy session

- What values might this align with?
- Creativity? Arts? Community? … ?

Challenge

- Make a commitment today to spend 3 minutes:
  - Take 1 minute to take 5 slow breaths
  - Take 1 minute to identify at least 1 value important to you
  - Take 1 minute to list 1 goal that would move you towards that value

ACT Resources

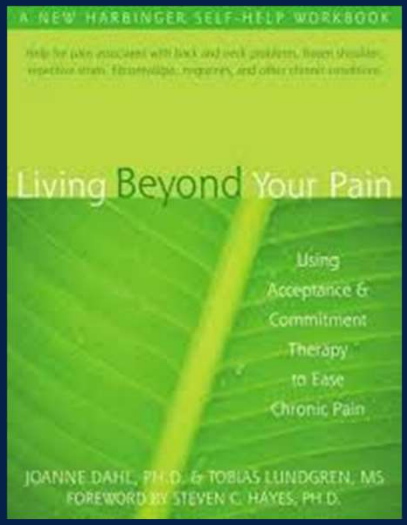
How to learn more about Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Website: https://contextualscience.org/

- Find an ACT therapist here

App: ACTCoach (free)

Book: Living Beyond Your Pain: Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to Ease Chronic Pain by JoAnne Dahl PhD



Values card sort activity: http://www.motivationalinterviewing.org/sites/default/files/valuescardsort_0.pdf

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Questions or comments?

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Thank you!