

TAP FM News

International Awareness Day - - SATURDAY 12th May 2007

On Saturday 12th May Fibromyalgia Sufferers throughout the world celebrated International Awareness Day.

TAP FM was no different with information stands in the Welgate Centre and Asda Kirkton.

Thanks must be expressed to Heather Gavin and her team of Volunteers who manned the stands throughout the day and provided information leaflets to those who were interested.

In England there were coffee mornings to "raise their cups to raise awareness and some much needed funds for FMA UK.

In the Netherlands, they held a patient conference with speakers from around the world.

In Germany they held their Fibromyalgi Day Celebrations with a patient conference full of information stands and many local speakers.

In Norway, their conference is attended by lots of government officials willing to learn more about the illness.

In America they have encouraged Fibromyalgia Sufferers to sign a petition to the government the same as in UK.

With all this Awareness Raising, one can only hope more people will get to know what it is and be more understanding and that includes the powers that be!



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The New Committee

Chairman	Richard Stevenson Tel: 01382 509566
Vice Chairperson	Mary Stevenson Tel: 01382 509566
Treasurer	Margaret Scott Tel: 01382 805391
Secretary	Lynne Gavin

Committee Members

Maureen Crighton
David Payne
Pam Shaw
Margaret Halliday
Heather Gavin
Duncan Haggart
Patricia Payne
Lynne Doggart
Janet McFarlane

"It is good when
new people come on
board"
"they bring with
them renewed
vigour and fresh
ideas"



Fibromyalgia Logo

Fundraising Committee:

Catherine Bennett
Joyce Peggie
Isobel Wynne
Morag Kelly
Colette Boland

Dates for your Diary

2nd June—Monthly Meeting

Bring & Buy

4th June—Quiz Night— Fort Bar

7th July—Monthly Meeting

Ian Darling—Arthritis Care

11th August—Monthly Meeting

Karen Shepherd & Laura McDermott

15th August—Quiz Night—Lennon's

1st September—Monthly Meeting

8th—15th September—Awareness Week UK

15th September 2007

Scottish Fibromyalgia Conference

Ninewells Hospital & Medical University

Lecture Theatre

10 am—4 pm

Keep up to date
write the dates
in your diary lest
you forget

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT): Self-Talk - What We Say to Ourselves Affects How We Feel

Excerpted from the book [Taking Charge of Fibromyalgia - A Self-Management Program for your Fibromyalgia Syndrome](#) by Julie Kelly, MS, RN and Rosalie Devonshire, MSW, LCSW - two health professionals who live successfully with Fibromyalgia.

Introduction: Stress Management/Relaxation

Stress is not an external event that produces anxiety or frustration in our bodies; it is our own physical and emotional reaction to external events taking place around us and within us. Studies have shown that there are actual physical changes occurring in our bodies when we are stressed.

Changes which can occur are:

- Muscle tension and pain
- Stomach distress
- Headaches
- Heart irregularities
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Teeth grinding/TMJ
- High blood pressure
- Cold hands/feet
- Insomnia
- Ulcers
- Diarrhoea/constipation

“What We Say
to Ourselves
Affects How
We Feel”

Chronic stress can deplete the body of many chemicals needed for proper functioning, and we can develop various diseases as a result. Research also shows that we can take steps to change the way we respond to stress and create a healing atmosphere for our bodies....The following techniques are useful for reducing the negative effects of stress. With continued practice, these techniques can produce positive changes in how your body and mind react to stress.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Self-Talk: What We Say to Ourselves Affects How We Feel

Researchers trying to help people with Fibromyalgia [and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome] have turned to cognitive behavioural therapy as an additional method of alleviating painful symptoms. A therapist using this technique can teach you how to control disturbing emotional reactions by suggesting more effective ways of interpreting and thinking about your experiences. For example, if you make a mistake at work, you might say to yourself, *I am the most stupid person in the world! I always make mistakes!*

The therapist would point out that you do not always make mistakes and that everyone makes mistakes and feels foolish at one time or another. The behavioural aspect of this therapy asks you to note your mood or feelings when you are thinking these thoughts.

Painful emotions such as guilt, shame, and anxiety can aggravate pain and your Fibromyalgia. We are our thoughts. Negative thinking produces negative behaviour. Some research suggests negative thinking causes illness. If negative thinking causes illness, can positive thinking create health?

"If negative thinking causes illness, can positive thinking create health?"

There are many researchers who believe this is possible. If this idea sounds foolish to you, and you decide it would never benefit your symptoms, you are probably feeling sceptical and discouraged or maybe even angry. Your pain level may increase as you are having these thoughts. On the other hand, if this sounds like a great idea to you, you may feel an uplift in your mood. If you pay attention to your body at the same time, you may notice a slight decrease in your pain level. Our bodies react immediately to our emotions. If we can control our thoughts, maybe we can control our bodies.

There are trained therapists who teach people how to change distorted or faulty thinking. If you can't afford psychotherapy, you can read [*Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy*](#), by David D. Burns, M.D., or his handbook [*The Feeling Good Handbook*](#). Some of the basic ideas of cognitive behavioural therapy are provided for you [here].

CBT treatment typically lasts for six to 20 weeks and requires you to keep track of symptoms, thoughts, and emotions. You will be given homework assignments to work on between sessions. Cognitive behavioural therapy is not in-depth psychotherapy. We cannot teach this technique to you in the limited confines of this book, but we want you to have an idea of what it is all about, so you can decide if it is something you should pursue.

Learning To Notice Stress-Inducing Thought Patterns

During treatment, a cognitive therapist will require you to focus on your negative thoughts and to notice when your thoughts follow any of the following patterns:

All or nothing thinking. "I have Fibromyalgia, therefore, I can't lead a normal life." Wrong. It would be better to say to yourself, "Many people lead normal lives once they get their Fibromyalgia under control, and I can too."

Overgeneralization. You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat. "My doctor misdiagnosed me; therefore, I can never get better."

Disqualifying the positive. Rejecting positive experiences as short-lived and possibly not recurring. "My Fibromyalgia symptoms were better this weekend when I rested, but it will never happen again."

Catastrophising. You exaggerate the importance of things. "I can't keep my house as clean as I used to. Therefore, I am a failure." Are you a failure? No, you just cannot do as much as you used to. Ask for help. Learn to live with a messier house!

Should statements. "I should be able to do all that I did before I had Fibromyalgia." You can't, and if you try, you will have a flare-up and frustrate yourself. Be kind to yourself. Treat yourself gently.

Personalization. You see yourself as the cause of some negative event for which you were not responsible. "My Fibromyalgia must have started because I was not taking care of myself."

CBT Attempts to Change Thought Patterns

No one knows why Fibromyalgia starts; you are not its cause. When you experience problems with distorted thinking, your body reacts to your thoughts within milliseconds. Cognitive behaviour therapy attempts to change your irrational thought patterns by finding the positive in your negative thinking, stopping self-blame, defusing anger, and reducing feelings of being overwhelmed.

Do you say to yourself *I am in pain now and will be forever?* Is that true? Aren't there times when you are free of pain? If you have small amounts of time when you are free from pain, using this technique can increase that time gradually, until you have more time when you are pain-free.

"Many people lead normal lives once they get their Fibromyalgia under control, and I can too."

Notice how high your pain level is when you are thinking about your pain, when someone has made you angry, or when you are hurrying to accomplish tasks.

Notice how low your pain level is when you are engaged in pleasant activities.

Researchers know that psychological factors influence the degree of pain we feel. If you develop healthier attitudes, change negative thinking, and learn to be optimistic, your Fibromyalgia symptoms can and will decrease when used in conjunction with the other treatments described in this book [including relaxation techniques, abdominal diaphragmatic breathing, meditation, relaxation tapes, hypnosis, Yoga, biofeedback, and Tai Chi].

It may take many months to benefit from a change in thought patterns, but it is worth trying. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

This technique can also reduce the risk of becoming depressed.

Positive Affirmations

Another technique that is easy to implement is to use positive affirmations throughout the day. We have provided a list of some for you to try. It is better to say these out loud and repeat them on a consistent basis for the affirmations to work.

*Every day in every way,
I am getting better and better.*

Repeat that 10 times three or four times a day, every day for a month. See if it helps you.

Some people find it helpful to write down positive affirmations on a card to carry in their purse or pocket. Reading the card a few times during the day can keep your positive thoughts on track and prevent negative thinking from creeping into your mind.

"You have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

Positive Thoughts for Coping with Fibromyalgia

- I am confident of my ability to deal with my health and live a good life.
- Things are getting better.
- I am making progress in helping myself feel better.
- Today I can do what I need to do for my recovery.
- I can treat myself gently and with the special care I would give a close friend.
- I am learning what I need to do to take care of my body.
- I focus on positive actions I can take to advocate for myself.
- I look for the good this day can bring.
- I go with the flow of each new day, accepting what I can learn from it.
- I seek out the positive support I need to live with Fibromyalgia.
- I let go of any muscle tension or problems over which I have no control.
- I live with positive expectancy; each day I expect to feel better and more relaxed.
- I counter each stress with techniques I know will reduce negative stress.
- I can surmount any problem that occurs today with calm, problem-solving skills.
- I can look for the resources I need to manage any problems.
- I maintain slow and easy breathing, bringing fresh oxygen to my muscles and taking away muscle waste products.
- I keep my muscles loose and relaxed throughout the day.
- I take time during the day to relax and breathe to refresh my muscles.
- I creatively manage the problems each new day brings.
- I can do whatever I need to do to take good care of myself.

"I can do whatever I need to do to take good care of myself"

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT): Self-Talk - What We Say to Ourselves Affects How We Feel

Changing Negative Self-talk

If you would like to try charting your thoughts on your own, start a journal to keep track of your thoughts. Write down your negative thoughts and the feelings associated with them.

You may be amazed at how often your thoughts are destructive or how quickly you can become pessimistic in your thought patterns.

What is important is to become aware of your thoughts, for without awareness of how often your thinking heads downward, your thinking will be impossible to change. Once you notice your thoughts turning negative, determine the emotion that you feel when you are thinking badly about yourself. You may feel worthless, guilty, angry, depressed, sad, or confused.

"You may come up with your own techniques over time. Share them with a friend."

Once you become aware of a destructive thought, turn it into a more positive statement. Some people find it helpful to imagine a stop sign or a red light in their minds to defuse a negative thought. Other techniques are putting a rubber band on your wrist and snapping it every time a negative thought comes up or paying attention to your breathing to deflect your mind away from negative thoughts.

You may come up with your own techniques over time. Share them with a friend.

Disclaimer: This information is intended for education purposes only and is not to replace the services of a trained health professional.



Reader's Letters

Thank you for your letter expressing the sympathy of the members of TAP FM at the death of my wife Elisabeth McKenzie.

Elisabeth was a great support of TAP FM and she praised the efforts and hard work of the committee. She was grateful for the support and information the group provided for our daughter.

Thank you.

Mr McKenzie

TAP FM was saddened to learn of the death of Elisabeth McKenzie who had been a member for a number of years. Elisabeth was a great supporter of the monthly meetings and was always there to support our fundraising events. She wrote many book reviews and her accurate accounts of the monthly meetings were very beneficial to our housebound members who felt as though they had been there.

The newsletter is not the same without her contributions and the members miss her cheery smile.

Our thoughts go out to her husband and family!

Dear Ed,

Please thank TAP FM for the information that was sent to me. I was very please to be able to speak to Mary who made me feel as though I was not going off my head. Now that I have a name, I think with the help of the support group, I will be able to cope.

Thanks

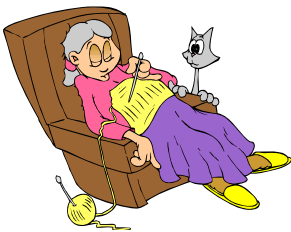
(name supplied)



Fibro Fog!

My car needed to go in for a service so Margaret agreed to go with me to bring me home in her car.

When I arrived at Margaret's she was puzzled as to why I had walked? "You are to take me home in your car" I said, to which Margaret replied "After you have dropped off **your** car!" Mmm!



I had fallen asleep after my lunch and was wakened with a start when the phone went. It was my daughter with a query. I asked her if she was on her way home from work to which she reply, "Mum it is only 1.25pm"

What a dope I felt, I had read the clock as 5.05 pm!

Book Review

Coping with Fibromyalgia—Beth Ediger

This was one of the first books I ever read about Fibromyalgia and it was so easy to read, I learned almost everything I needed to know.

I felt as though the book had been written about me as it described all the symptoms and problems I had.

There are copies for sale on the information table.

Having my own copy means I can dip into it as and when I need to. I can open it at any page and be able to read a little without having to go from cover to cover—great for the days with little concentration.

You can also borrow it from the library

A handy guide that covers diagnosis, symptoms, treatments and coping skills.

Review by Janet McFarlane

Having my own
copy means I
can dip into it as
and when I need
to.



Library Rules

The library is for the enjoyment of everyone and to ensure we know who has borrowed a book there are a few simple rules.

- Your membership card must be used to take out a book
- A reminder postcard will be sent with your newsletter
- There will be a 50p charge per month
- If you miss a month—you need to pay an extra 50p

**“No Card
-No Book
One Card
-One Book”**

Book Review

If you have found a book or information sheet helpful or useful then we would like to know. Tell us what you think good or bad.

Sometimes it is a bit overwhelming with so many books to choose from to know where to start.

Your recommendation could help someone find the right book and help them cope a bit better. Don't be shy!!



Returning your Library Book!

If you are unable to attend a meeting but you would like to return your library book. Please do not send to Ninewells Hosp or leave it with receptions because they do not pass them on.

If you need to post anything please send to

TAP FM Support Group
PO Box 10183
Dundee DD4 8WT

Thrift Shop

High Street, Lochee,
Dundee

9th June—23rd June
In Aid of Group Funds

The shop will be open on the 7th & 8th to receive
items for sale.

Clear out your cupboards, clothes, books household,
bric a brac

In fact anything

Larger Items

Can be up-lifted if needed

Contact: Margaret Scott

Tel: 01382 805391

Advice Surgery

WELFARE RIGHTS
PERTH - TEL: 01738 476700
ANGUS - TEL: 01307 461460

**Money Advice
Support Team**
Dundee - Tel: 01382 432452
Fife - Tel: 01592 416379
Angus - Tel: 01575 575800

Citizen's Advice Bureau

Dundee Tel: 01382 227171
Forfar Tel: 01307 467097
Perth Tel: 01738 624301
Montrose Tel: 01674 673263
Arbroath Tel: 01241 870661
Cupar Tel: 01334 412485
Call for an appointment

Princess Trust

For help and advice with benefit forms etc.

Call for an appointment

Benefits Agency

Dundee Area
Tel: 01382 313419
Angus Area
Tel: 01241 446099
Montrose Area
Tel 01674 6776605
Perth Area
Tel: 01738 412000

Dundee North Law Centre Tel: 01382 432458

If you have any legal problems or worries and would like to obtain a advice or assistance - we can help!
Call for an appointment!

D.I.S.I.P.

Disability Information Service in Perthshire

Tel: 01738 440099 / Fax 01738 687546

Email: disip@disip.org.uk

Website: www.disip.org.uk

Contact Us

TAP FM Support Group

PO Box 10183

Dundee

DD4 8WT

Tel: 0871 750 1710

email: tapfm@btopenworld.com

We're on the Web

www.btinternet.com/~fibromyalgia

The items below are available for the benefit of our members, at the same time generate a small income to T.A.P. FM Support Group.

You can purchase them from the information desk at the meeting or they can be sent for an additional cost to cover postage.

Items For Sale

Help TAP FM

TAP FM Pens - 50p

Logo Badges - £1.50

Ribbons - 50p

Car Stickers - 75p

*** Buy all 4 - £3 ***

Buy your Pens, Badges and Ribbons
and help support TAP FM
and promote
Fibromyalgia Awareness

Help for Yourself!

Plug Mates - 65p each
to help pull out your electrical plugs

Walking Stick "Frog" - £1.99

To hang it on the Table

Trolley Coin Key Ring - £1

7 Day Pill Dispenser - £1
a helpful reminder if you've taken
your pills or not!