

## **Caring For Your Body When You Experience Pain...or at Any Time**

*These are based on Tai Chi principles and may help you get through rough times. They have helped me cope with head pain for decades. It can be extremely challenging to relax and accept what's occurring when you are hurting. However, fear, anxiety, tension and resistance of any kind just make pain worse. Practice these processes daily so that they become part of your life. Then apply them when you face challenges. Always remember that you are not alone. Print this out and post as a reminder. Good luck! Tricia*

**We seldom pay attention to areas of our body unless they are hurting.** When they feel good, we tend to ignore them. Take time each day to notice and appreciate all the parts of your body that feel good right now.

**We tend to dislike parts of our bodies that are painful.** Our bodies respond to our thoughts and emotions. The painful parts of your body need the love, acceptance and attention that only you can give them.

Develop the habit of feeling and observing your posture. **Check in with your feet or sit bones, head, hands and breathing.** Proper posture reduces stress on our muscles and joints.

**Do you hold your breath when experiencing pain** and tension or while concentrating? Breathe—and let your belly relax and expand as you breathe in and release tension as you breathe out. Practice relaxed breath awareness anytime to bring you back home into the present moment.

**Without realizing it, we often tense areas near the painful parts of our body,** tense large joints when neighboring joints are hurting, or tense facial muscles while concentrating or experiencing pain. Practice keeping your body as relaxed as possible. Let the pain be where it is without involving the neighbors!

**Be kind and gentle** to your body, to others, and in your thoughts about yourself and others. Every thought and emotion influences every cell of our bodies. Kindness nurtures body, mind and spirit.

Remember: Move gently, and as fully and completely as you can every day.  
**Calm your body and mind as you move through the challenges of each moment.**

Based on "Relating to Your Body" in the ROM Dance® Program manual

Harlowe, D., & Yu, T. (1984, 1989). ROM Dance®: A Range of Motion Exercise and Relaxation Program. St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center and the Board of Regents of University of Wisconsin System, Madison, WI: Uncharted Country Publishing (1997 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed)

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