



HEAL YOURSELF

7 Steps To Living
A Pain-Free Life!

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A pain-free life CAN be yours. I'm sharing these 7 ways that you can achieve it...without medical intervention!

Be willing to make lifestyle changes.

Dr. Phil had a question he asked his guests frequently while interviewing them: “So, how well is that workin’ for you?” Obviously, when someone is having significant pain on a continuous basis, whatever they are doing to try to make the pain go away is not working. Now, someone can take a pain medication and it may temporarily relieve the pain but soon the pain comes back because the root of the problem is not being addressed. So one needs to be willing to make some changes in what they are doing. This is something that seems to be one of the biggest obstacles for people. Most people just want to pop a pill and hope everything magically goes away and they don’t have to make any type of changes in their lifestyle. However, typically this is not the case for getting significant and long-term relief

from pain. There needs to be a commitment to do whatever it takes to become pain-free.

Remember it is a process.

It took a while for you to get where you are and it will take some time to get better. Determining what the root cause of your pain is can be difficult if you only use Western medicine modalities. Sometimes it cannot be determined with just bloodwork and other traditional testing. You can try to determine the root cause by your own process of elimination and studying on your own. However, having someone educated in natural medicine help you find the root cause is typically a faster way to know what direction to move in and what will work on getting your body balanced so the organs, glands, and systems can do the jobs they are designed to do.

In our Western culture, we are used to popping a pill and 20-30 minutes later we get relief from the symptoms. However, unless we are popping a pill every 4 hours around the clock, chronic pain will return. We want to identify and get to the root of the problem so we don't

have to be dependent on prescription or OTC medications to get us through the day. However, real healing takes time.

Eat healthy food, drink clean water and avoid sugar.

We hear we need to eat healthy food and drink water a lot but do you really know what that means? It can be very challenging identifying what healthy food really is. We can go out to eat and think getting a salad from the salad bar is a good choice because its fresh food and everybody tells you eating a salad is good for you. However, depending on what type of restaurant you go to, it could be one of the worst items to choose. A lot of times there are chemicals put on the items on a salad bar to prevent them from turning brown or dried out or just plain unappealing. So if you choose to eat off the salad bar, you could be putting a lot of chemicals in your body, which is toxic, and that could cause more problems than if you pick something else off the menu. Become more aware of what you are actually eating.

If you are grocery shopping, PLEASE READ THE LABELS of anything and everything you are purchasing. Again, a lot of times we think we are

choosing something healthy because the label says “100% Natural” or “Organic” and we believe it. Sometimes this is true and other times it is very far from the truth. The FDA allows the manufacturers to put these words on their labels even if it is not 100% true. You need to ALWAYS read the label on any food you purchase. If you see the words “natural flavoring”, it is possible it is some type of chemical and may actually be part MSG. If there are words on the label you cannot pronounce, more than likely it is some type of chemical and you do not want to put it in your body. The shorter the list of ingredients, typically, the safer the food.

Rule of Thumb for how much water to drink is half your body weight in ounces a day. Obviously, this can vary because we are all different but this is a good place to start.

Sugar is a big problem. Typically, pain is due to some form of toxin and sugar feeds toxins. Chemicals, heavy metals, parasites and Lyme bugs love sugar. Often when you are craving sugar its due to these bugs wanting to eat. When you eat sugar you are feeding the things that are probably causing your pain. Stop ingesting sugar and foods that turn into sugar.

Manage your stress in effective ways.

Everybody has stress and we know it's something that comes whether we want it to or not. However, we can change our mindset or our perception about various stressors that we encounter. We have a choice of how we are going to respond or react to stress. We can choose how we interpret what is happening at the time.

Also, there are things we can do to decrease how stress affects our body. One of the easiest and most effective ways to decrease our physiological, mental and emotional response to stress is to do deep breathing exercises. This is just a simple technique of "breathe in, breathe out" and block out any other thoughts. I am a very visual person so I picture the air going in through my nose, down my trachea, into the bronchi, down into the bronchioles and then into the alveoli where the gases exchange and then picture the reverse happening as I breathe out. Sometimes your mind may wander and that's ok. As soon as you recognized that happening just bring your mind back to "breathe in, breathe out".

Work on balancing all aspects of you – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

In our Western Culture we basically focus only on the physical part of our bodies when it comes to our health. Unless there is a mental disease identified, typically we don't even discuss anything but what is going on with us physically. After all, we don't want to end up in a mental institution or labeled as mentally unstable.

We are created as a whole. We are a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual being. If one of these components is out of balance, it can cause any one of the other ones to go out of balance. So if we have been under a lot of stress and our emotions are out of balance, it can cause physical manifestations. If there are physical symptoms, it can cause emotional or mental or spiritual imbalances. In Chinese Medicine there is a process called "The Law of Five Elements". Some of you may be familiar with the elements which are called Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood. I love this process. The Chinese recognize that there is a particular emotion related to each major organ in the body. If that particular organ is out of balance, the emotion connected to that can

become out of balance. The emotion connected to the liver is anger. Have you ever heard the expression “He is an angry drunk”? Or “He died of a broken heart”? The emotion connected to the heart is sadness.

We need to pay attention to how we are as a whole being. What are we feeling? What are we thinking about? What does our soul desire? Then when we recognize something is off or out of balance we need to take action and change so we can become healthy again.

Do half of what you think you can do.

So often those of us who have some type of chronic pain will have a day when we feel better and then we think “Oh wow, I need to get as much done now as I possibly can because I don’t know when I will feel good enough to do anything again. I need to take advantage of this opportunity. There is so much that has to get done so I need to just keep working until its done.” Any of this sound familiar? The challenge is we tend to do way more than our body can tolerate and then we pay for it for days, weeks or even months afterwards. The pain that follows can be so intense and we suffer significantly for the time we spent

getting things done. One can end up being in bed for days and even weeks because of what was done in one day.

As your health improves, you can increase your activity and last longer being comfortable and not worry about having to pay with pain and fatigue for the time you spent doing the things you thought were very important to do.

One thing I use to ask myself when I was at my worst was “Is somebody going to get hurt or will someone die if I do not do this?” It sounds dramatic but sometimes we have to take dramatic steps to get better. Those of us who experience chronic pain typically have many things in common and one of them tends to be we have SO many things on our “To Do List” and we feel we have to get them done no matter what. I became so fatigued and in so much pain, I was pretty much bedridden for a year. One day stands out so vividly in my mind. I crawled down the hallway to my living room and dining room area and started to cry because they were not clean and I was too weak to do anything about it. My once spotless home no longer existed. I was devastated and there was nothing I could do about it. That day was a turning point in my life. Really, how important is it to have a spotless home? I needed to change my perspective on many things in order for me to get my health

back and be able to function again. That's when I started my new mantra "Is somebody going to get hurt or will someone die if I do not do this?"

I started doing an exercise called "The Placemat exercise". You take a piece of paper and draw a line straight down the middle. On the left top section write "Me" and on the Right top section write "God" (or what other term you may use for a Higher Power. I believe in a powerful God so I used the name God). On the side that is titled "Me" you write down only those things that you can do and that need to be done that day. On the other side, write down all the other things that need to get done. Some days there was only one thing listed on the "Me" side and 2 pages of all the other things listed on the "God" side. It was an amazing experience. I started noticing the things on God's side were getting done and I wasn't the one doing them. I have shared this exercise with many of my patients and they have had the same experiences. Try it.

Keep a health diary to find patterns.

When I was experiencing chronic pain, I continually asked “why?” “Why am I having so much pain?” “Why is it different today than yesterday?” “Why does it hurt here today when it didn’t yesterday?” I didn’t have the answers I wanted, not even one of them. So I decided to start tracking several different things to see if I noticed any patterns related to how much pain I was experiencing and where the pain was located. If I could identify a cause for some of the pain, I could change some things to lessen or eliminate my pain. One of the first things I did was document all the food and drinks I had. I documented if I was having cravings and what they were. I also documented the phase of the moon, where on my body the pain showed up and also rated the pain level from 0-10. I documented how I was sleeping and for how long, what supplements I was taking, my energy level (0-10) and stress level (0-10). How was my digestion? What was the weather like? In tracking all this information, I was able to identify several patterns that were affecting my health so I made changes which made an impact on my goal to better health.

BONUS Steps

Keep a gratitude journal.

Make it a habit to write down at least 3 things you are grateful for every day. It has been proven that you will literally shift at the cellular level when you focus on being grateful. When you are experiencing pain, it is difficult to shift your focus from your pain and your emotions going downhill and your thoughts being negative. If you focus on the good things in your life, you can actually shift to feeling better and typically experience lower pain levels. I tell my patients it doesn't have to be big things that you express gratitude for. You don't have to win the lottery in order to be grateful. When I was really sick, I would get what is termed "cluster migraines". I would get one migraine on top of another, as many as 7-8 in a day. They would last up to 2-3 weeks at a time. So sometimes one of the things I would be grateful for is that my headache wasn't as bad in the evening as it was in the morning. Of course I was grateful to have a supportive husband and children who loved and cared about me but I would also look at what was happening

right then and find things that I was grateful for that very day. Try it. It makes a difference.

Find things that help you feel joy.

I ask my patients with chronic issues, “So what puts joy in your life?” Most of the time (sad to say) there is total silence or a “I don’t know” response. It’s important to find things that put joy in your life, that put a smile on your face. What gets you off feeling sorry for yourself and helps you feel good inside, even if it’s for just a short period of time? Again, this doesn’t have to be a big thing. One of the things that puts a smile on my face and just lifts my spirits instantly is seeing beautiful flowers. I try to have fresh flowers around me on a consistent basis because of the positive effect they have on me. It can be just a simple single daisy. You may not have the same response to flowers as I do and that’s fine. Just find some things that will lift your spirits and put some joy in your life. You may not know right away. That’s ok. Look and experiment with some things to see what puts that sparkle in your eye and joy in your heart. What made you smile and feel good when you were a kid? Start there and keep trying things out until you have a good list of things to bring into your day or life when you are feeling down

and discouraged. There will be things you can put in your environment to lift your spirits and get your mind off your troubles. Don't forget to add some of the big things to that list as well.

About Linda Potts

Linda D. Potts, ND, DCRC, RN, BSN, MBA, MBE, is owner and director of Healing Waters Wellness Center, LLC in Maryland. After 25 years as a registered nurse, Dr. Potts' passion for blending Eastern and Western medicine began after a combination of increasingly debilitating illnesses over a six-year period left her bedridden for a year. Following a Health Screening in late 2003, she used homeopathic remedies and other supplements and modalities and substantially regained her health by 2004.



Inspired, Dr. Potts became a Certified BioEnergetic Practitioner in 2004 and began performing independent Health Consultations. Since then she has earned her Master's in BioEnergetics, a Doctorate of Clinical Religious Counseling, served as an adjunct Professor at Kaplan University and is a Board Certified Doctor of Naturopathy.

As a counselor, Dr. Potts uses a holistic approach to find out where clients are out of balance and suggests supplements and other forms of treatment, such as homeopathic remedies, chiropractic care or acupuncture, to help the body heal itself.

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