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Supporting Someone Living with Chronic Pain Workbook

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Disclaimer

This workbook has been created by Safe Haven Connect CIC to provide general information and practical guidance for people supporting someone living with chronic pain.

It is intended for family members, friends, carers and volunteers. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment.

If you have concerns about someone's health or wellbeing, seek advice from an appropriate healthcare professional.

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Supporting Someone Living with Chronic Pain

PAGE 1 – Understanding Chronic Pain

Living with chronic pain can affect every part of a person's life.

Unlike short-term pain, chronic pain continues for months or even years. Some days may be better than others, and pain levels can change without warning.

Pain is not always visible.

A person may look well on the outside while experiencing significant physical discomfort, tiredness or emotional strain.

Understanding this can help you offer support with patience, compassion and respect.

♥ Chronic pain may affect...

- ☐ Physical activity
- ☐ Sleep
- ☐ Energy levels
- ☐ Mood
- ☐ Concentration
- ☐ Work or education
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Confidence
- ☐ Daily routines
- ☐ Other:

♥ What do I hope to learn from this workbook?

♥ How can I become a better supporter?

Remember

You may not be able to see someone's pain, but that doesn't make it any less real.

Believing, listening and supporting the person with kindness can make a meaningful difference.

Support the person—not just their pain.

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PAGE 2 – Understanding Their Experience

Everyone experiences chronic pain differently.

Pain can vary from day to day, and some days may be much harder than others. A person may need more support one day and feel more independent the next.

Listening to their experience without judgement helps build trust and understanding.

Remember, they are the expert on their own body.

 They may experience...

☐ Good days and bad days.

☐ Fatigue or exhaustion.

☐ Difficulty sleeping.

- ☐ Reduced mobility.
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating.
- ☐ Frustration.
- ☐ Anxiety or low mood.
- ☐ Feeling misunderstood.
- ☐ Other:

♥ What helps them on difficult days?

♥ How can I support them today?

- ☐ Listen without judgement.
- ☐ Believe what they tell me.
- ☐ Be patient.
- ☐ Offer practical help.
- ☐ Respect their limits.
- ☐ Encourage them without pressure.
- ☐ Ask what they need.

☐ Other:

♥ Things I have learned about their condition

♥ Remember

A person living with chronic pain doesn't expect you to fix their pain.

Often, they simply want to feel believed, understood and supported.

Listening with compassion can be just as important as offering practical help.

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PAGE 3 – Respecting Their Limits

Living with chronic pain often means balancing activity with rest.

On some days, a person may be able to do more. On other days, even simple tasks can feel exhausting.

Supporting someone means respecting their limits without making them feel guilty or judged.

Remember, resting is often an important part of managing chronic pain.

♥ How can I respect their limits?

- ☐ Accept that plans may need to change.
- ☐ Be patient on difficult days.
- ☐ Encourage rest when needed.
- ☐ Avoid comparing them to others.
- ☐ Ask what they feel able to do.
- ☐ Respect when they say they need a break.
- ☐ Offer help without taking over.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Things that can make their pain worse

♥ Things that usually help them

♥ One thing I can do to make today easier

♥ Remember

A person living with chronic pain is not being lazy or lacking motivation.

Many people push themselves just to get through the day.

By respecting their limits and offering support without judgement, you help them feel understood and valued.

Support with patience, encourage without pressure and always believe their experience.

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PAGE 4 – Offering Practical Support

Living with chronic pain can make everyday tasks more difficult.

Simple acts of practical support can reduce stress and help someone save their energy for the things that matter most.

Always ask what would be helpful rather than assuming they need assistance.

Practical ways I can help

- ☐ Help with shopping.
- ☐ Prepare or deliver a meal.
- ☐ Help with household chores.
- ☐ Drive them to appointments.
- ☐ Walk the dog or care for pets.
- ☐ Collect prescriptions.
- ☐ Help with gardening.
- ☐ Offer company on difficult days.
- ☐ Other:

Things they may be finding difficult

♥ One practical thing I can do this week

♥ How can I offer help respectfully?

- ☐ Ask before helping.
- ☐ Respect their answer.
- ☐ Encourage independence where possible.
- ☐ Be patient if plans change.
- ☐ Offer support without judgement.
- ☐ Let them set the pace.
- ☐ Other:

♥ Remember

Supporting someone doesn't always mean doing big things.

Small acts of kindness, understanding and practical help can make everyday life feel much more manageable.

Helping someone keep their independence while offering support is one of the greatest gifts you can give.

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PAGE 5 – Supporting Their Emotional Wellbeing

Living with chronic pain doesn't just affect the body—it can also affect emotional wellbeing.

Pain, fatigue and changes to daily life can sometimes lead to frustration, worry, sadness or loneliness.

By offering patience, understanding and encouragement, you can help someone feel supported during both the physical and emotional challenges they may face.

 Signs they may be struggling emotionally

- ☐ They seem quieter than usual.
- ☐ They appear frustrated.
- ☐ They seem anxious or worried.
- ☐ They avoid social activities.
- ☐ They lose interest in hobbies.
- ☐ They seem more tired than usual.
- ☐ They become easily overwhelmed.
- ☐ Other:

♥ How can I support their emotional wellbeing?

- ☐ Listen without judgement.
- ☐ Believe what they tell me.
- ☐ Encourage rest when needed.
- ☐ Invite them to activities without pressure.
- ☐ Celebrate small achievements.
- ☐ Check in regularly.
- ☐ Be patient on difficult days.
- ☐ Other:

♥ What usually lifts their mood?

♥ One thing I can do today to support them

Remember

Pain affects more than the body.

Feeling believed, understood and supported can make a real difference to someone's emotional wellbeing.

You may not be able to remove their pain, but your compassion can help lighten the weight of carrying it alone.

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PAGE 6 – Looking After Yourself as a Supporter

Supporting someone living with chronic pain can be emotionally and physically demanding.

You may sometimes feel worried, frustrated or helpless because you cannot take away the person's pain.

Looking after your own wellbeing is important. When you care for yourself, you're better able to provide patient, compassionate and consistent support.

 How am I feeling today?

☐ Calm

☐ Happy

☐ Tired

☐ Stressed

☐ Overwhelmed

☐ Worried

☐ Frustrated

☐ Hopeful

☐ Other:

♥ This week I will...

☐ Take regular breaks.

☐ Get enough sleep.

☐ Eat healthy meals.

☐ Spend time outdoors.

☐ Talk to someone I trust.

☐ Make time for my hobbies.

☐ Accept help when it's offered.

☐ Practice self-care.

☐ Other:

♥ People who support me

1.

2.

3.

♥ One thing I will do for myself this week

♥ Remember

Supporting someone with chronic pain doesn't mean carrying their pain yourself.

It's okay to ask for support, take time to rest and care for your own wellbeing.

When you look after yourself, you're better able to continue supporting someone else with patience, kindness and understanding.

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PAGE 7 – Encouraging Independence and Quality of Life

Living with chronic pain doesn't mean a person stops wanting to live a meaningful and fulfilling life.

Although they may need to do things differently, encouraging independence, choice and enjoyable activities can improve confidence, wellbeing and quality of life.

Remember, support should empower the person—not take over.

Ways I can encourage independence

- ☐ Respect their choices.
- ☐ Encourage them to work at their own pace.
- ☐ Offer help without taking over.
- ☐ Celebrate their achievements.
- ☐ Encourage hobbies and interests.
- ☐ Support realistic goals.
- ☐ Ask what they feel able to do.
- ☐ Other:

Activities they enjoy

- ☐ Going for gentle walks.
- ☐ Spending time with family or friends.
- ☐ Reading.

☐ Gardening.

☐ Listening to music.

☐ Watching favourite films or TV.

☐ Arts and crafts.

☐ Other:

♥ One activity I can encourage this week

♥ How can I help improve their quality of life?

♥ Remember

A diagnosis doesn't take away someone's hopes, interests or dreams.

By encouraging independence, respecting their choices and helping them stay connected to the things they enjoy, you can make a positive difference to their wellbeing.

Support the person to live their life—not just manage their condition.

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PAGE 8 – Looking Towards the Future Together

Living with chronic pain often means adjusting to a different way of living, but it doesn't mean giving up on hopes, goals or meaningful experiences.

Supporting someone means encouraging them to focus on what is possible, celebrate progress and continue building a life that has purpose and enjoyment.

Remember, even small achievements are worth celebrating.

 Ways I can encourage hope

- ☐ Celebrate small successes.
- ☐ Encourage realistic goals.
- ☐ Focus on what they can do.
- ☐ Support hobbies and interests.
- ☐ Encourage social connections.
- ☐ Remind them of their strengths.
- ☐ Be patient during setbacks.
- ☐ Other:

♥♥ Goals they would like to achieve

♥♥ One way I can help them move towards that goal

♥♥ My message of encouragement

Write a message you would like them to remember on difficult days.

Remember

Progress isn't measured by how much someone can do compared to others.

It's measured by the courage to keep moving forward in a way that works for them.

Every act of encouragement, understanding and kindness helps build confidence and hope.

Support them to focus on possibilities, celebrate progress and believe that life can still be meaningful.

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PAGE 9 – My Chronic Pain Support Plan

Every person living with chronic pain has different experiences, needs and goals.

A personalised support plan can help you provide encouragement, practical help and emotional support while respecting the person's independence and choices.

Remember, the most valuable support begins with listening.

What helps them most?

- ☐ Being listened to.
- ☐ Having their pain believed.
- ☐ A calm environment.
- ☐ Practical help.

- ☐ Time to rest.
- ☐ Gentle encouragement.
- ☐ Flexible plans.
- ☐ Spending time with people they trust.
- ☐ Other:

My Three Priorities

1.

2.

3.

People and Services That Can Help

1.

2.

3.

My Personal Reminder

When supporting someone living with chronic pain, I want to remember...

Remember

The best support isn't about fixing someone's pain.

It's about helping them feel heard, respected and understood while encouraging them to live the fullest life possible.

Compassion, patience and understanding can make even the hardest days feel a little lighter.

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PAGE 10 – My Commitment as a Supporter

Congratulations on completing this workbook.

Supporting someone living with chronic pain requires patience, compassion and understanding.

Although you may not be able to remove their pain, you can help them feel believed, respected and less alone.

Every kind word, every act of support and every moment of understanding can make a meaningful difference.

Remember, your role is not to fix the pain—it's to support the person living with it.

I Will Remember To...

- ☐ Believe their experience.
- ☐ Listen without judgement.
- ☐ Respect their limits.
- ☐ Encourage independence.
- ☐ Offer practical support when needed.
- ☐ Be patient on difficult days.
- ☐ Celebrate progress, however small.
- ☐ Look after my own wellbeing too.

My Personal Reminder

When supporting someone living with chronic pain, I want to remember...

My Support Promise

"I will support this person with kindness, patience and compassion. I will respect their experiences, encourage their independence and remember that every person's journey with chronic pain is different. I will continue learning, listening and offering support without judgement."

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Final Thoughts

Living with chronic pain can be challenging, but no one should have to face it alone.

Your understanding, encouragement and willingness to stand alongside someone can help them feel stronger, more confident and better supported.

Thank you for taking the time to learn how to provide compassionate support.

Explore more free workbooks, resources and wellbeing tools at:

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 Supporting people, families, carers and communities with compassion, understanding and hope.