**Living with Pain and/or Long-Term Health Conditions**

Sessions: 8 Sessions Time: 1.5 hours (could be subject to change)

Therapy type: CBT (Step Three)

**Who is the course for?**

Clients will benefit from attending this course if they are struggling with chronic pain and/or a long-term health condition/s, and if their primary goal is to manage the impact their physical health is having on their mental health.

**What is a long-term health condition?**  
A long-term condition is defined as a condition that cannot, at present be cured, but can be managed by medication or other therapies *Examples:* Diabetes, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Asthma, HIV, Chronic fatigue syndrome, Heart Disease, Chronic pain (including fibromyalgia), Lupus, HIV, IBS, Crohn’s/Colitis, Cancer, Tinnitus, Parkinson’s, Arthritis (AND MORE)

**Additional information to consider around suitability:**

* The client must meet the general IAPT suitability criteria (please consult with your managers if uncertain).
* Risk must be at a level in which it can be safely managed in a group environment.PHQ 9 (Q 9) should be no great than one (with thorough risk assessment and crisis management plan completed at assessment). This can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and discussed further with the group facilitators; however, the group is not suitable for anyone with active suicidal thoughts or self-harming behaviour.
* Please consider readiness and motivation for change. If the client has any ongoing medical investigations, or new symptoms/changes in health, this may be a barrier to engaging with many of the modules on the course. If this is the case, please consider if they would benefit from this when they have a confirmed medical diagnosis and a greater understanding of their symptoms and future.
* If the patient is unable to attend regular appointments due to physical ill health, please explore if this patient would benefit from a 1-2-1 therapeutic intervention.
* The patient must be aware this is a psychological treatment and be onboard with the rationale for therapeutic interventions. Please be aware of any perceptions/cognitive barriers regarding mental health support in relation to physical health, such as thoughts that professionals “don’t believe them” or “think its all in my head”.
* Please be aware of secondary motivations for therapeutic interventions.
* Please consider if the patient has any concerns/questions about group therapy? (Worries about being in a group, feeling pressured to speak etc.).
* Please consider if the patient can commit to attending, doing homework, simple diary keeping, and maintaining confidentiality and respect for others in the group setting.

**What do we cover in the group? (Aims & objectives)**This group is skills based but is collaborative between the facilitator, patient, and peers in the group. The core skills explored are below:

* Understanding the impact living with a long-term health condition has on our emotions.
* Physical symptoms of stress and the impact on our bodies
* Pacing and activity
* Values and goals
* Acceptance and self-compassion
* Managing unhelpful thoughts
* Relapse prevention

**What the group does not offer:**

* Pain management
* A quick fix
* Peer led support.
* PIP or benefit related advise, support and evidence.

**How is it presented?**  
We are currently offering the group face to face at Stepping Hill – Oasis Building on a Thursday (time tbc) and remotely via Microsoft Teams (time and day tbc).

NOTE: Please ask the client for their preference at assessment so we can allocate accordingly.

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