



Chapter 2 Activities

Activity 1: Darn Near Anythings

How about you? What’s been on—or is still on—your “darn near anything” list? Stop for a few moments and think about this. Write down at least three of them before going any further.

Activity 2: Take Inventory

Step 1. You are HERE. Make a list. Take that look around for where pain is showing up in your life. It may be the all-too-common low back pain after a hard day at work. It could be vague tightness in your jaws, chest, or belly that makes it hard to sleep at night. Maybe your thighs are sore from playing a pick-up game of basketball for the first time in months. What about that relentless tension in your shoulders that flares up

whenever you talk to that certain person? Just list them out, big or small, new or old, obvious or mysterious. Dump the pains out of you—body, mind, and spirit—and onto the page.

Step 2. Categorize your pains. We could group life’s various pains in different ways. Here’s a list of five pain categories I’ve identified from my experience for us to use throughout this book. They should look familiar, as I’ve already referred to them a few times.

D = Daily activities pain

F = Financial pain

R = Relationship pain; with others or yourself

S = Sports, leisure activities, and recreation pain

W = Work and business pain; being a student is work, too

Look over your list in Step 1. Mark each item with the letter that corresponds to the pain category it mainly fits in. You may not be totally sure of the cause, but choose what you sense is the category it mostly originates from or impacts.

Step 3. Count them up. Write the number of items in your Step 1 list that fall in each category here.

D _____ F _____ R _____ S _____ W _____

What category is causing you the most pain? Do you have pain problems in other areas that are giving your top category undesired competition? Perhaps your pains fall almost exclusively in one category. Did you know this already, or have you uncovered some important, if uncomfortable, information about your current situation?

Make some notes for yourself.

Step 4. Rate your pain categories. Imagine a continuum of pain that runs from *no pain/I'm feeling great on the left end* of a horizontal line to *excruciating pain on the right end*. For each of the five categories, notice your pain level. Yes, pain varies. Think about and feel how your pain level has been most of today or the past few days. Place a vertical mark through each line that captures your current pain level.

D _____
F _____
R _____
S _____
W _____

Step 5. Rank order these five categories. Decide which pain is most important for you to address now (number 1) to least important (number 5). Of course, you may not have pain in all areas. That makes it easy to fill in the bottom spots. Write down your choices here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 6. Consider how pain is affecting your life from four different points of view.

6a. What do you **sense** because of your pain? How do your body's receptors let you know you hurt? What physical signals are you aware of that inform you about a painful problem? For example: a painful area may be tender to touch. Pain can cause nausea,

or pain can present itself as sharp, dull, throbbing, etc. Use this space to record what you're sensing.

6b. What activities can't you **do** or do you avoid because of your pain? How is your pain limiting you? Maybe you avoid stairs, skip the vacation, walk instead of run. Write your observations down here.

6c. How do these sensations and limitations make you **feel**? What emotions do they stir up in you? Are you mad at someone? Are you afraid you'll never recover? Are you sad you can't play this season? Make your notes here.

6d. What do you **think** about your pain situation? These thoughts might start with "I shouldn't have to...", "I'll never be able to...", or "There ought to be..." You can use this space to write down your thoughts.

Step 7. Be aware of your inventory. Just sit quietly with it, review what you've recorded in Steps 1-6, and notice what comes up. If you really, truly only have one pain in your life right now, this may seem straightforward. If you have several pains in one or more areas, it can be more challenging. Were you already aware of what you tracked in every step of your inventory? Maybe you now recognize some things that weren't

catching your **attention**? Are you seeing a pattern or recurring theme? It's all good to know. Jot down your insights here.

Step 8. Identify the pain at the top of your inventory. What pain is HERE now that would you most like to change? Write down your top pain:

Rate this specific pain on the continuum that runs from no pain/I'm feeling great on the left end of a horizontal line to excruciating pain on the right end. Place a vertical mark through the line that captures your current pain level.

Top Pain

Step 9. State why is this your top priority pain. What's your number one reason for going through this process to relieve this pain? Are there other important reasons to ease your pain? Document your reasoning for wanting to get THERE.

Step 10. Be THERE Now. Travel forward in time to your not-so-distant future. It could be three months or three years from now. Imagine talking with a friend or loved one about how your life has changed after you found and traveled your path to ease or relieve your pain. Consider the best-case scenario and it goes away. If that seems too far-fetched, imagine living your life with your pain lightened up in its intensity or frequency. Not only did you learn to relieve your pain, you applied the same process to increase the joy in your life. Sense it. Do it. Feel it. Think it. Conjure it up in your whole being. Imagination is powerful.

Now, write it down. Write in the present tense, as in “I am” instead of “I will be.” Use positive, specific words that paint successful pictures in your mind. For example, “I’m so proud of myself for walking three miles continuously today. It was so easy and peaceful!”, instead of “I made it three miles today without stopping and without hurting.”

Bookmark this page, print a copy, take a picture, or make a video of you excitedly telling us all about it. Feel free to add more vivid details as they come to you. **Read or watch this Be THERE Now declaration morning and evening.**

Activity 3: Declare Your Commitment to Shifting Your Pain Paradigm and Relieving This Pain.

I COMMIT to the process of shifting my pain paradigm and taking the daily small steps that relieve my pain and move me from HERE to THERE.

Date

Signed