

### **3. Living With Pain**

- **Acknowledging the presence of pain, we can focus on minimizing its impact on life by adapting our activity schedule to prevent pain flare-ups.**
- The following worksheets are designed to enhance awareness of our limit, reduce overactivity that worsen pain and facilitate the resumption of/ engagement in activity previously halted by pain.

## A. My Typical Day

How does your typical day look like at the moment?

	Working Day	Day Off
<b>0600 – 0800</b>		
<b>0800 – 1000</b>		
<b>1000 – 1200</b>		
<b>1200 – 1400</b>		
<b>1400 – 1600</b>		
<b>1600 – 1800</b>		
<b>1800 – 2000</b>		
<b>2000 – 2200</b>		
<b>2200 – 0000</b>		
<b>0000 – 0600</b>		

1. Do you regularly do things that help you feel good or relax?  
→ If not, see “Pleasant Activity Scheduling”
2. Do you exercise regularly and engage in enough activities?  
→ If not, see “Fear Of Pain” and “Activity Pacing”
3. Do you at times stay active for too long that pain flares up?  
→ If yes, see “Activity Pacing”
4. Are there activities you would like to pick up/resume?  
→ If yes, see “Fear Of Pain” and “Activity Pacing”

## B. Pleasant Activity Scheduling

Pleasant activity scheduling means planning proactively and arranging pleasurable activities regularly in your diary. It helps to shift our mind from internal distress to encounters in the environment. This can serve as a mental break during stressful times.

Furthermore, positive feelings arise from these activities can positively influence the way we think, even if temporarily. This helps to set the stage for changes and findings to happen. Although it cannot “cure” pain completely, positive feelings can also help to “close the gate” of pain perception, thereby easing our perception of pain.

In the space below, please list some activities that...

- *You enjoy doing.*
- *Helps you to calm down or feel at ease.*
- *You know a lot of people enjoy and you do not hate it.*

## B. Pleasant Activity Scheduling (cont.)

Among the activities listed above, which of them...

- *Require no planning, only take 15 to 30 minutes to complete and you could start any time you wish?*
- *Require some planning but you could start preparing immediately?*
- *Appear unlikely to intensify sensations of pain?*

In the coming week...

- *Pick two days that you do not have a packed schedule.*
- *Spare time to engage in one or two pleasant activities you feel confident to try without much resistance.*

## Pleasant Activity Scheduling: Practice Record

**Date:**

What pleasant activity did you do today?

What about the activity you enjoyed the most?

What else did you notice during or after the activity?

**Date:**

What pleasant activity did you do today?

What about the activity you enjoyed the most?

What else did you notice during or after the activity?

## C. Fear Of Pain

Some people affected by pain can begin to plan their lives around the purpose of “avoiding pain”. Preoccupation with the prospect of pain flare-up can lead to reluctance to exercise or even avoidance of normal daily activities. This can negatively impact long term adjustment because lack of activities can lead to emotional distress, stiffness and increased pain.

*Have you stopped doing something because you fear that this might lead to increased pain?*

*If you could resume these activities, how would they benefit your health, relationships, or mental well-being?*

*Have you avoided pursuing a new habit or turned down a new role at work/ in life because you fear this would increase pain?*

*If you could try taking up these habits or new role, how would they help with your well-being or development?*

## C. Fear Of Pain Coping Plan

Balancing between inactivity and overactivity is a crucial step in living with pain compassionately. This can be achieved by (i) confronting our fear of pain and (ii) pacing our activity.

What do you want to do because it might benefit your health, relationships, well-being or development?

What do you need to prepare before engaging in the activity?  
When and where do you plan to do it? Are you doing it alone?

What you threat system might say to you that can trigger your fear, worry and urge to avoid the activity?

Which of the following practices we covered in the earlier sections of this workbook could help you respond to your fear in self-compassionate way? *(You can choose more than one.)*

- |                                                   |                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mindful Breathing        | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Place Imagery        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perfect Nurturer Imagery | <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate Reappraisal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate Self-Talke | <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate Imagery     |