

Living Well with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome and RSD

Julie Keck Olson, PhD
Clinical Psychologist



Symptoms of CRPS and RSD

- Primarily **PAIN**: Continuous burning or throbbing pain, usually in your arm, leg, hand or foot. Sensitivity to touch or cold. Swelling of the painful area. Changes in skin temperature — at times your skin may be sweaty; at other times it may be cold.



My Personal Story: I have chronic regional pain syndrome

- At the time, I was a psychologist, working with your average depressed or anxious person for about 12 years. Then, one day, I was walking down the stairs with a client to the garage where our cars were. She was afraid to go in the garage herself or in the elevator because she had been sexually accosted in those situations.
- Suddenly, my right foot slides out from underneath me and I go tumbling down the slippery tile stairs, all 13 of them. I tried to break my fall with my wrists and I ended up crushed like an accordion. Landed on cement. I passed out. My client thought I was **DEAD**.

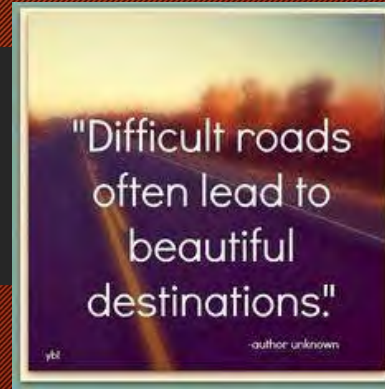
My client calls 911 and the paramedics get there to try and read my pulse from my wrists, when I end up screaming-- Hey, I wasn't dead! That was the good news. And I didn't break my neck. Yay!

- Okay, so that started the 15 year journey of me getting my crushed wrists put back together. I had to get pins put in 9 places in each wrist. The pain was excruciating. They sent me home to a mother who couldn't care for me. I had to learn how to survive and get better.
- I started using assistive devices as soon as possible to go to the bathroom and to shower. 2 weeks later, I'm back living at my own apartment by myself. The surgeon was brilliant and put my wrists back together with mechanics and then ordered occupational/physical therapy for my hands.



How do people cope with pain?

- I became a pain sufferer and researcher
- How do people cope with this high pain?
- I wanted to know for myself and I wanted to turn my accident around and find a way to help others.
- I try to learn something through every experience I have, whether perceived as good or bad in the moment, it can be turned into something for good in the long run.
- What I learned to help me may or may not help you, but it is a start.

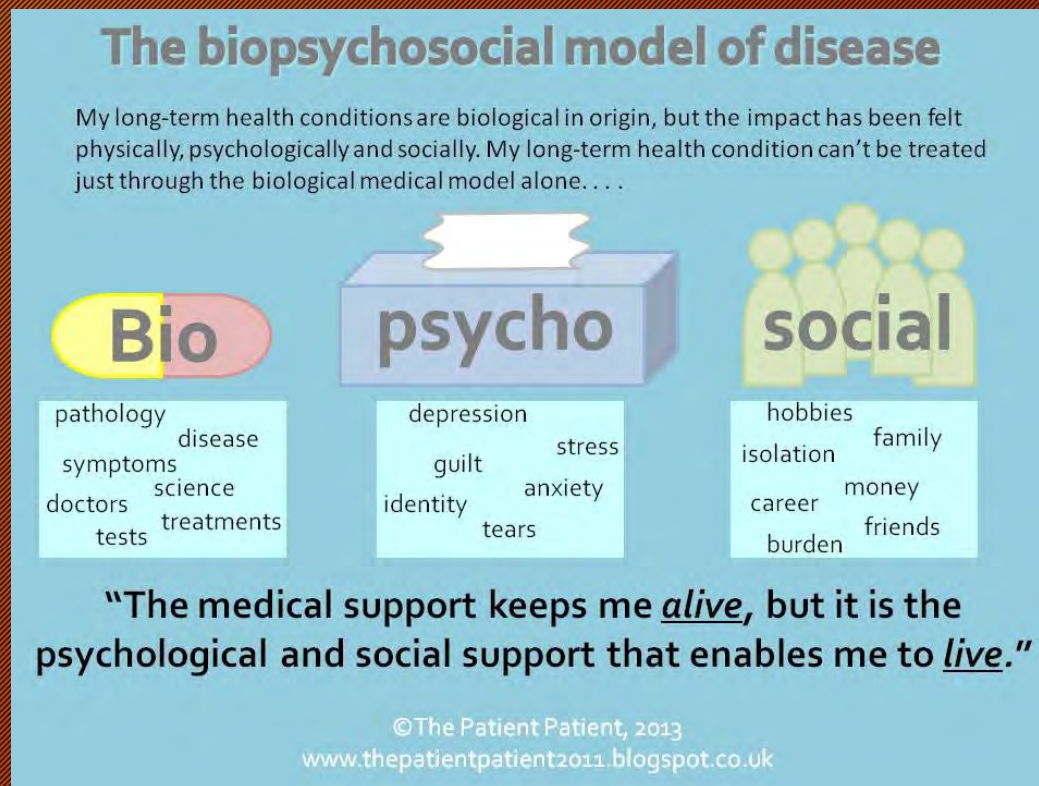


But, *SERIOUSLY*, how do people DEAL???

- Most of what I learned in grad school to become a psychologist was to help people in emotional pain.
- I found that information to help immensely, but I had to add the body, the soul, and the mind in this mix of therapies.



CRPS may be understood as a *biopsychosocial* disorder: pathophysiological (bio), psychological, and social factors interact in a highly complex manner.



I had to learn how to:

- Write, type
- Hold a cup
- Use a fork
- Turn a knob
- Turn a key
- Hold a phone
- Pull a tissue out of a Kleenex box
- Wipe my butt,
- get dressed, Etc.



ACCEPT Help

- Strive to be INTER-Dependent, not Independent



Improvise, ADAPT and OVERCOME



Pain Management

- Medical Model says there must be a “cure”
- Psychological model says, “Pain Management”



Multidisciplinary approach

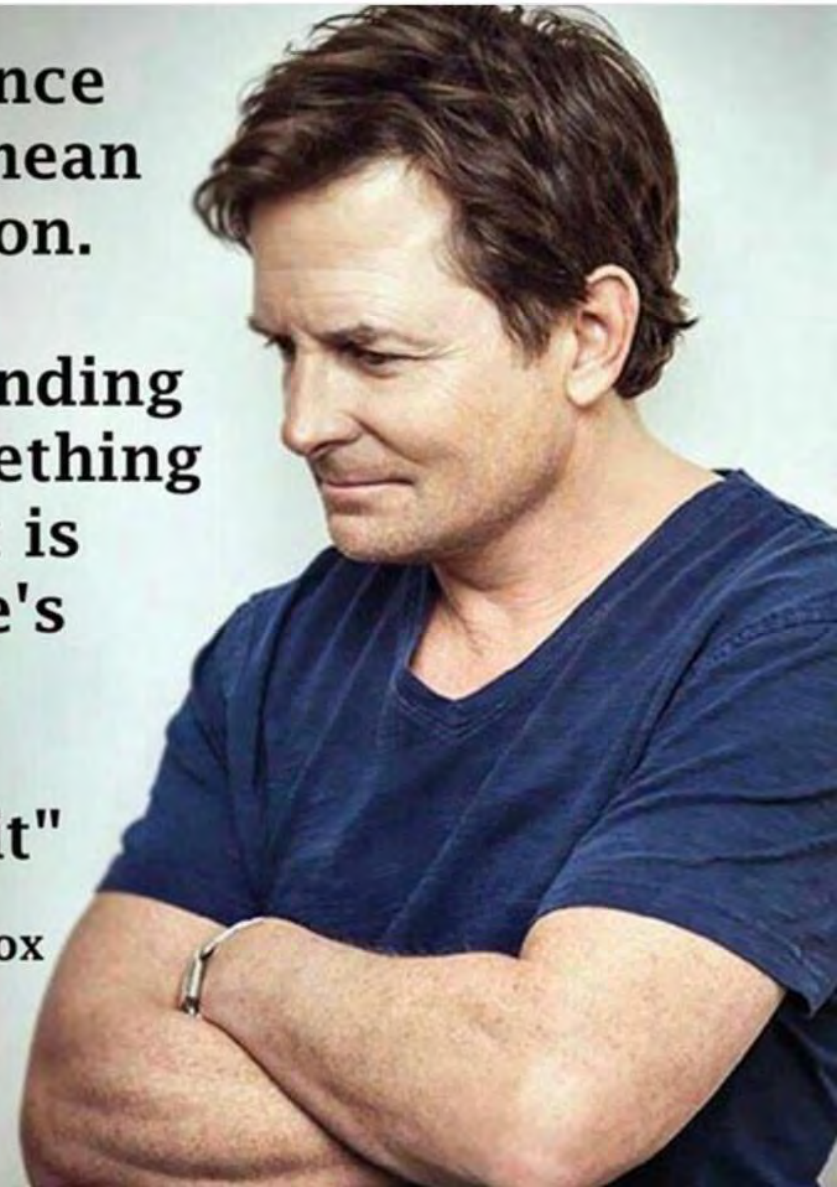
- Get a Treatment Team
 1. General Provider Doc
 2. Pain Doc or Surgeon
 3. Counselor or Psychologist
 4. Family Therapist
 - Get Family involved
 - Be honest with Spouse, children
- Massage therapist, chiropractor, etc.



Accept your Diagnosis

**"Acceptance
doesn't mean
resignation.
It means
understanding
that something
is what it is
and there's
got to be
a way
through it"**

- Michael J. Fox



Use your medication and medical team



Eat an Anti-Inflammatory Diet

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY FOOD LIST

OILY FISH  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- ↑ levels of omega-3 fatty acids- Dramatically reduces inflammation- Eat at least 2 portions of fish per week	CHILLI PEPPERS  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Capsaicin, anti-inflammatory components of chilli peppers.- ↑  chilli pepper = ↑ capsaicin- Pain reliever- Consume in moderation <small>TIP: Eat as many and as much of a variety of fruits and vegetables as possible</small>	AVOID foods that create inflammation in the body <ul style="list-style-type: none">X refined oilsX sugarX simple carbsX processed foodsX saturated fatsX trans fatX alcoholX white riceX white flourX white breadX pastaX pastries
GINGER  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Alleviates "stomach problems"- Cut into coins and add to food and beverages	ALMONDS + WALNUTS  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rich source of omega-3 fatty acids- Reduces inflammation	Minimize Pro-inflammatory Omega 6 oils: corn, safflower, sunflower, peanut, soybean oil
TUMERIC  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Yellow spice common in Indian cuisine (i.e. curry)- Curcumin a compound in turmeric may help to reduce inflammation	OLIVE OIL  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Oleocanthal a compound in olive oil, prevents the production of pro-inflammatory enzymes- may lose health benefits when heated	VINCHAY FIT CARDS
BERRIES  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Anthocyanins compound in berries possess anti-inflammatory properties	GARLIC  <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Anti-inflammatory benefits across body systems	

Psychological Aspects of Pain

- 1. Personal life before pain – Personal life after pain
- 2. Unaware of how long this will be
- 3. Changing work and free-time abilities
- 4. Sense of powerlessness > frustration > anger > depression

Look at your automatic thoughts and feelings



Counter-argument Extreme Thinking -

"I can learn my new limits"

"This is the new normal"

"I can reach out for help if I need it"

"The pain can seem outrageous, but I always get through it. I learn what works."

"There will be challenges ahead, but I can learn to deal with them. I am resilient. "



Every day is a new day. Sometimes I take it hour by hour, minute by minute...



Try Art or being creative



Distract yourself by the natural beauty around you.



Talk it out,
learn to manage stress & emotions

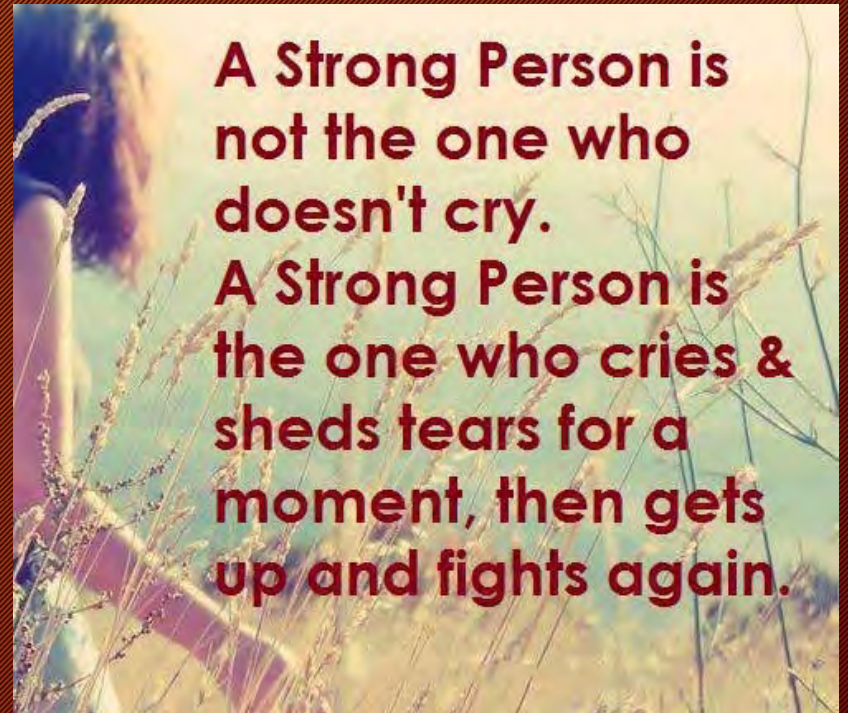


Try

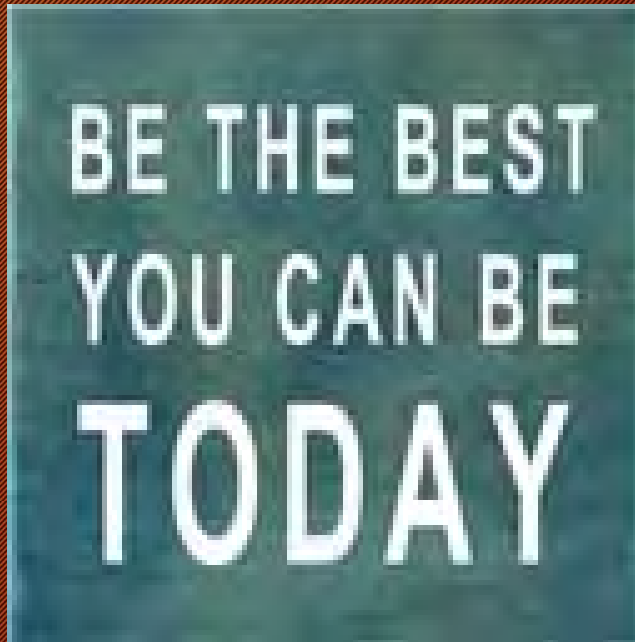

counseling
and psychological
services



**A Strong Person is
not the one who
doesn't cry.
A Strong Person is
the one who cries &
sheds tears for a
moment, then gets
up and fights again.**



Try as hard as you can to get out of bed



Find peace by moving away from negativity

Beautiful things
happen in your life
when you distance
yourself from all the
negativity and drama.

TheLawOfAttraction.com

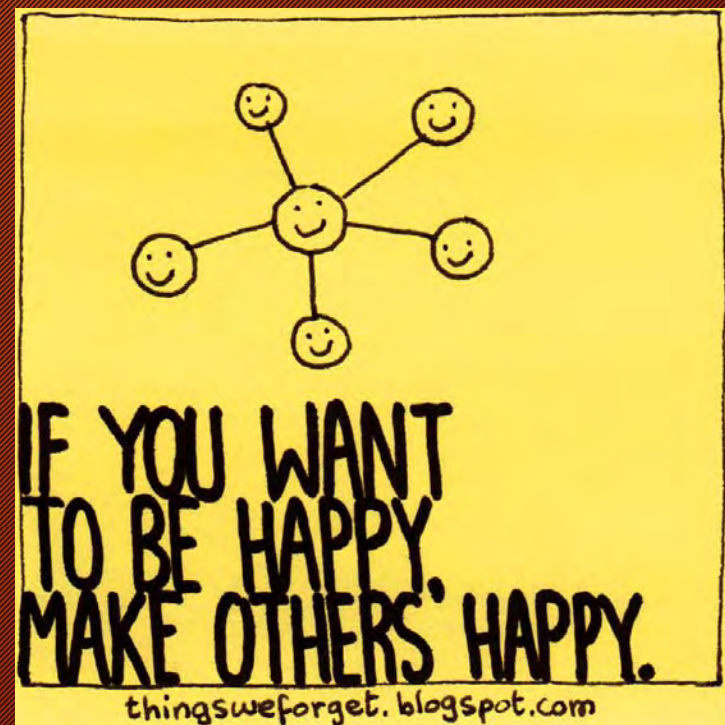


Go to or visualize where you can be calm

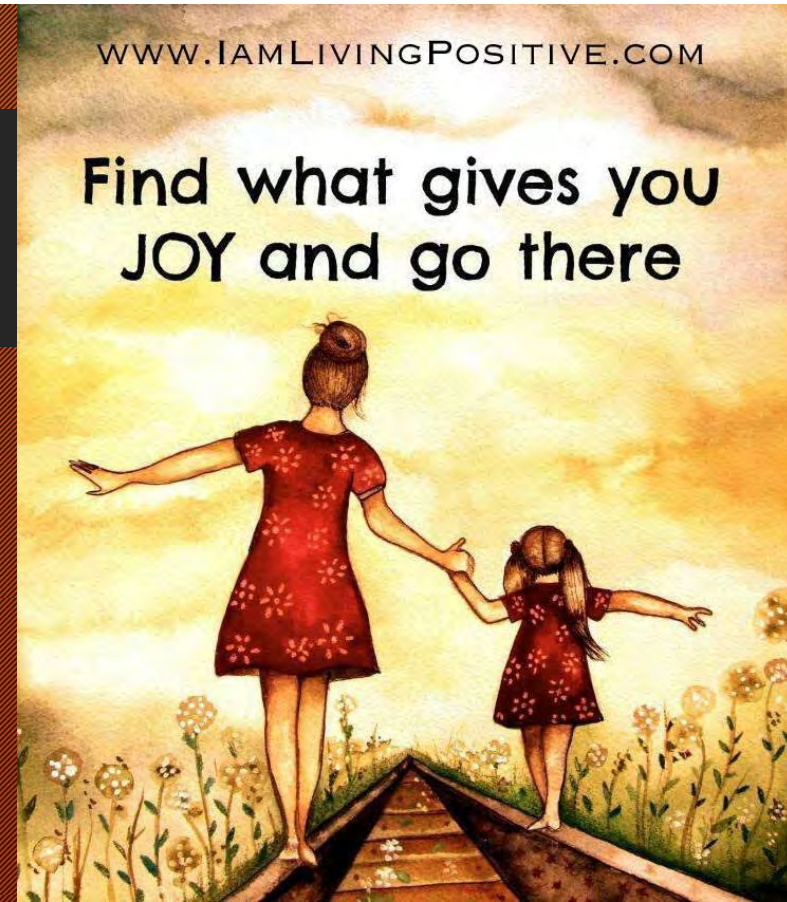
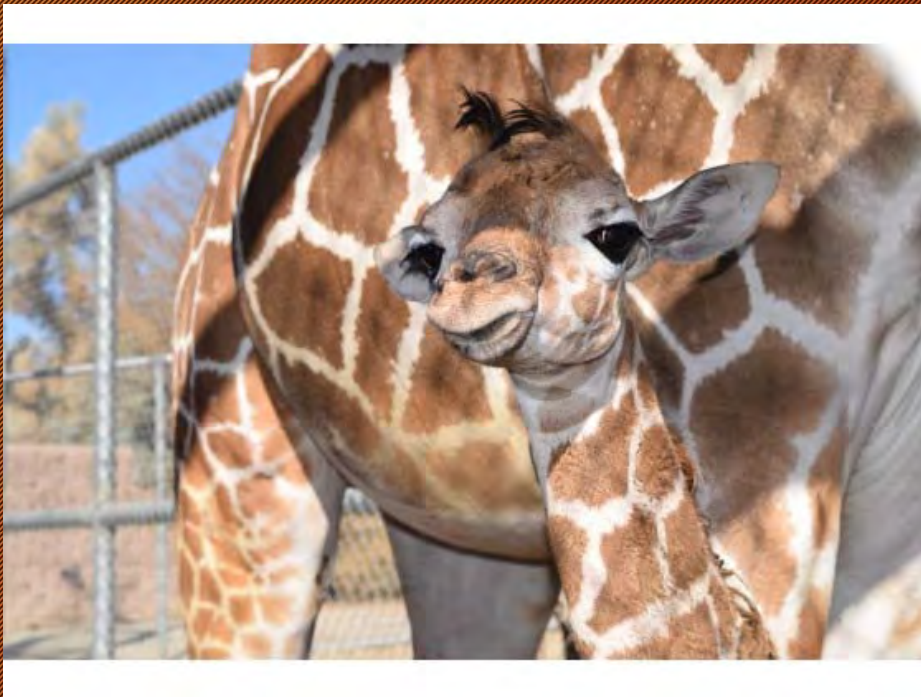


Have Compassion for self and others

I'm learning to
**LOVE
MYSELF**
it's the hardest
thing I've ever
done.



Find Happy Moments



Have sex if you can

Sex lowers blood pressure, boosts self-esteem, and increases feelings of intimacy with your partner.

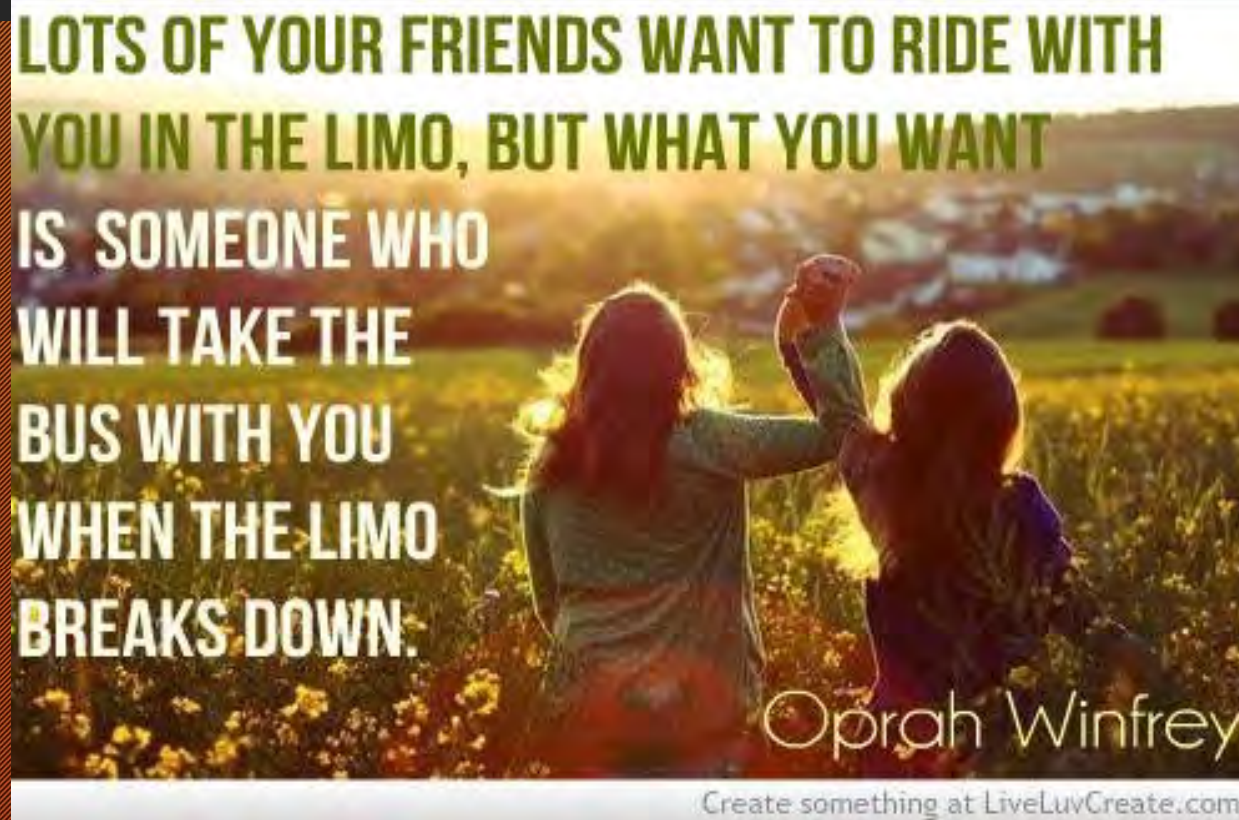
It can also help you sleep better, which is a great benefit when you've spent sleepless nights stressing about problems.



Be around happy Animals



Call on friends who “get you”



Being grateful brings happiness



Music Therapy



One good thing about

Music,
when it hits you,
you feel no pain.

- Bob Marley



Enjoy your children



Laugh



BENEFITS OF LAUGHING

- Reduces heart disease
- Natural pain killer
- Improves breathing
- Helps you lose weight
- Gives good sleep
- Decreases stress
- Makes you look young

THERE'S NO
REASON NOT
TO LAUGH!

Watch your favorite comedian



Living well vs Suffering



- What does it mean to live well with CRPS and RSD?
- Suffering is certainly happening.
- But, you are a complex person and you can learn to live well in between the suffering.
- You aren't suffering all of the time. Make the most of the time you are able.

Say YES to life

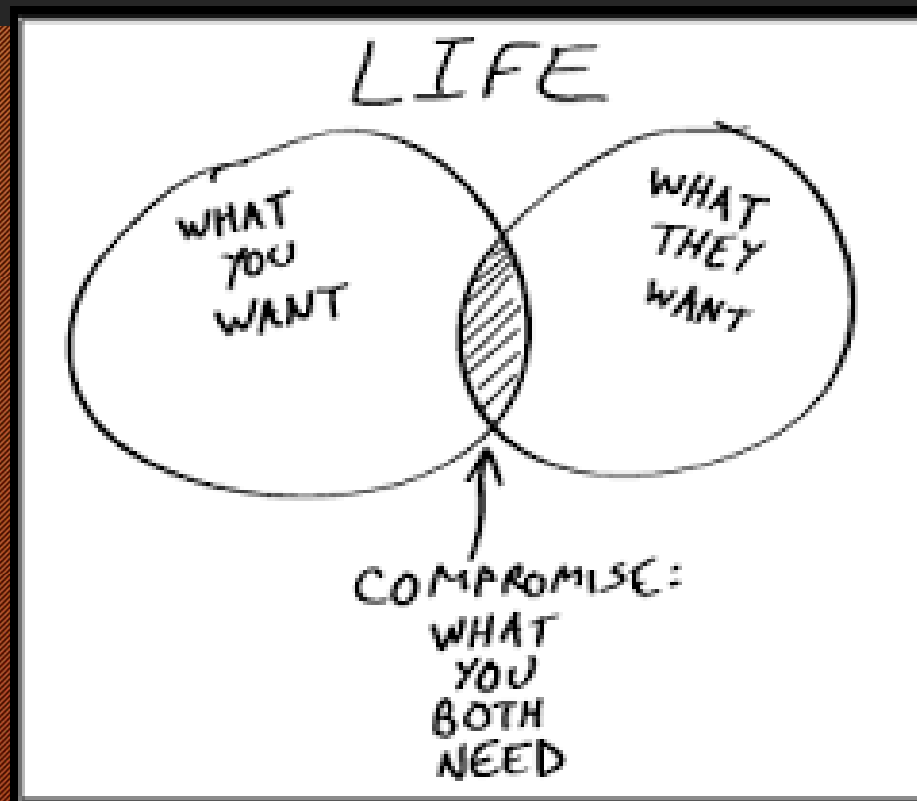
YOU CAN DO
anything,
BUT NOT
everything.

WWW.THEMODERNTULIPBLOG.COM

Say NO to requests you can't do

'No'
is a complete
sentence.

Compromise



Meditate, pray, be mindful,
focus on something else



Choose to Change your perspective



If you change the
way you look at
things, the things
you look at
change.

~ Dr. Wayne Dyer

www.ChetzToqom.com



Don't over do, REST

Let her sleep, for
when she wakes, she
will move mountains.



Let's take Heather For example

- Heather has had so many set backs in her careers because of injuries and pains.
- She bounces back
- Figures out what she can do.
- Goes to school to study "Support w/ RSD"
- Get's her Doctorate
- Uses her medical team as much as possible
- Worries she's going to over do it some day, but she keeps going
- Has flares
- Keeps on going





Knows she is going
to have good days
and bad days.

Tries to plan to do
things on good days

Rests and recovers on
the bad days.



Resilience



It's been
a rough
week, but
I made
it...How
about you?

Remember-- tomorrow is another day



Don't give up HOPE

