

Willingness to do something different



The Chinese Finger Trap is a tube of woven straw as big as your index finger. You push both index fingers in, one at each end, and as you pull them back out, the straw catches and tightens. The harder you pull, the smaller the tube becomes, and the stronger it holds your fingers. If the trap is built strongly enough, you would have to pull your fingers out of the sockets to get them out of the tube by pulling, once they've been caught!. Alternatively, if you push into the finger trap, your finger will still be in the tube, but at least you will have enough room to move around and you can free yourself!

Now, if we equate your life itself with the Chinese Finger Trap, it's not about getting free of the tube (or chronic pain) it's about how much "wobble room" you want to have in your life. The more you struggle, the more restricted your movements will be. If you let go of the struggle (and find ways of changing your responses to your situation), the more freedom you have to make new choices.

So, the message is one of willingness to change your response to your situation. Whilst a desire to struggle and fight is natural, it can often get us stuck. Instead, we can work towards improving your quality of life through developing skills and knowledge around pain management.

So, rather than struggling against your condition (which of course is the most natural thing to do – a bit like struggling frantically to try to get out of quick sand, shouting and waving your arms frantically and moving one foot forward – instantly doubling the pressure downwards!) we have to start to acknowledge the fact that fighting against the pain simply does not work and it wears us out in the process! (in order to escape from quick sand, you have to stop struggling, distribute your weight and lie flat, spread eagle, to maximise contact with the surface – hopefully you then won't sink and you can log roll to safety!)