



Handling Emotions Discussion Questions

1. When you feel unsettling emotions, such as anger, sadness or fear, how do you respond? Are you more likely to distract yourself or sit with the emotion until it passes?
2. How do you talk to yourself when you feel guilt, anxiety or depression about your pain? What are ways you practice self-compassion during this time?
3. Do you have a counselor, therapist or good friend to talk to about the challenges of living with pain? If yes, is it helpful? If no, would you consider finding someone to help you process emotions?
4. Do you tend to accept tough emotions? Have you found a way to be kind to yourself when you face difficult feelings?
5. What are ways you have been able to stop negative thoughts from spiraling out of control? For example, thoughts such as 'this pain will never improve', can increase pain. When you mindfully acknowledge the thoughts and practice loving-kindness, you can better manage chronic pain.
6. Do you actively seek and schedule activities that bring you joy? If yes, does it help with your mental health and pain management? If no, what are your thoughts on giving it a try?
7. Some people benefit from keeping a gratitude journal. If you've tried this, was it helpful? If you haven't tried gratitude, would you consider it?
8. Sleep also affects our emotions. Do you see a connection between your sleep quality and your mood?
9. Why am I so out of control with my feelings?
Learn to normalize these feelings by understanding how pain affects your nervous system. Use self-care strategies to help lower stress, anxiety and pain.

*If your suicidal thoughts become more intense, call 988 (new suicide and crisis line) and or use a crisis text line at 741741 (text any word, such as Hello). Also think about who else you can reach out to who will listen.