

# TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY AND CHRONIC PAIN

## Part IV: Pain and Anxiety

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### Pain and Anxiety

Anxiety is closely related to pain, and each can make the other worse. Anxiety can add to memory or sleep problems. Anxiety may lead a person to believe that a bad outcome is likely or certain. This type of thinking is called "catastrophizing".

Pain can change your thinking. Often, we have thoughts that we're not fully aware of called "automatic thoughts". They can influence our emotions and the things we do, even if we don't realize it. Pain by itself or with depression, anxiety or PTSD can make people have more negative automatic thoughts. These thoughts can make people do things that may make their pain worse. A therapist who practices cognitive behavioral therapy can help change these thinking patterns.



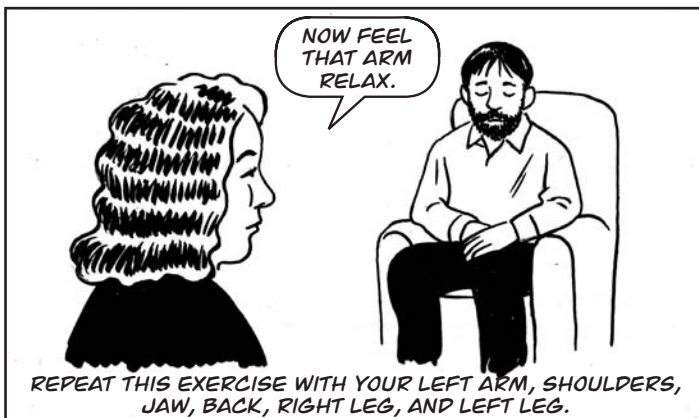
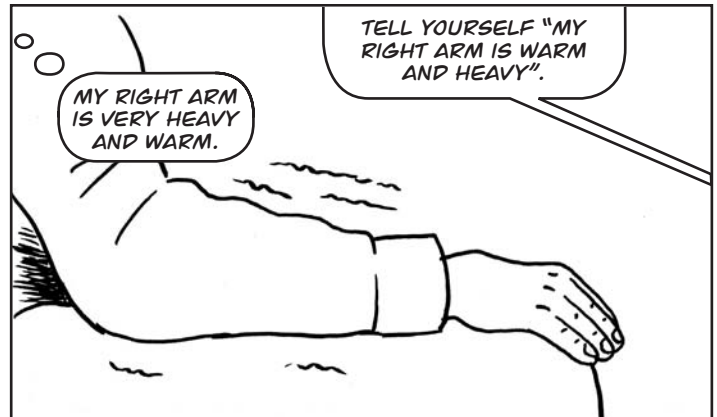


## Finding What Works

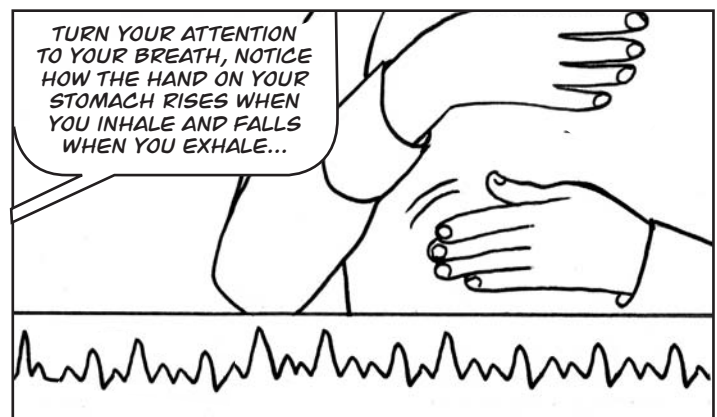
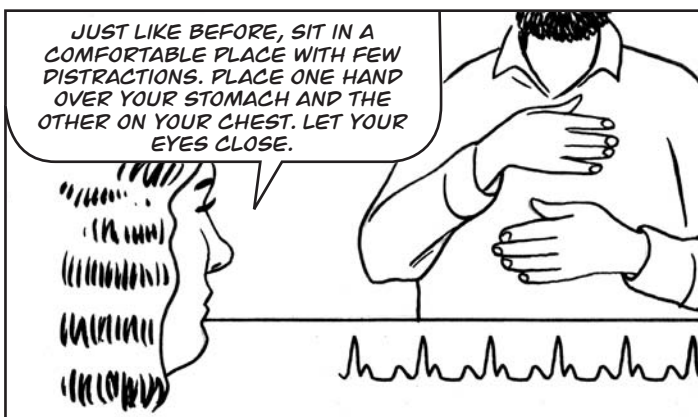
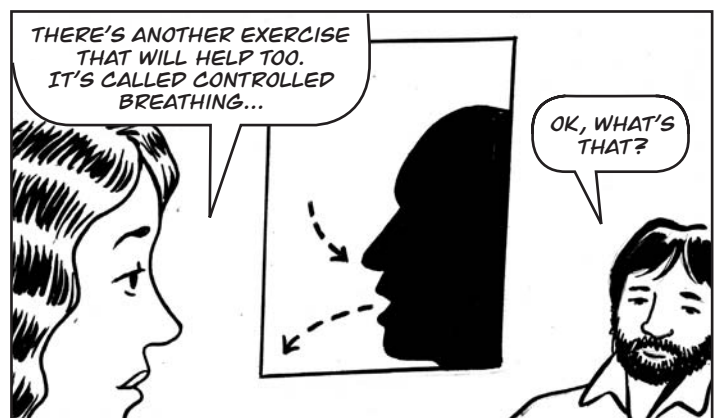
Remember both pain and how to manage it are personal. Something that works for you may not work for someone else. Don't be discouraged if you don't find the right method to manage your pain right away. At the end of this factsheet there is a log that you can use to record your pain. Tracking your pain for two weeks and showing the log to your doctor is a great way to begin.

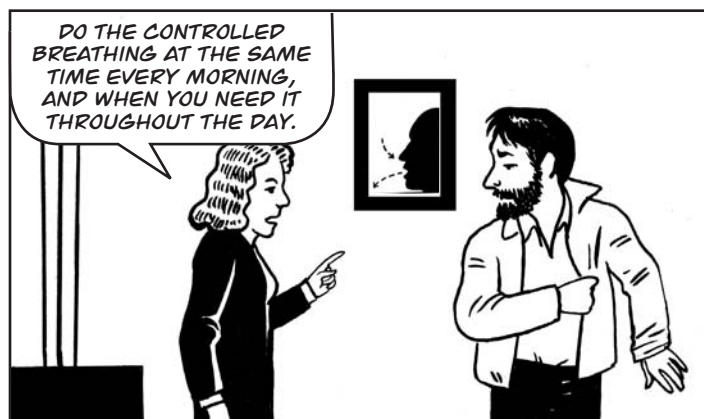
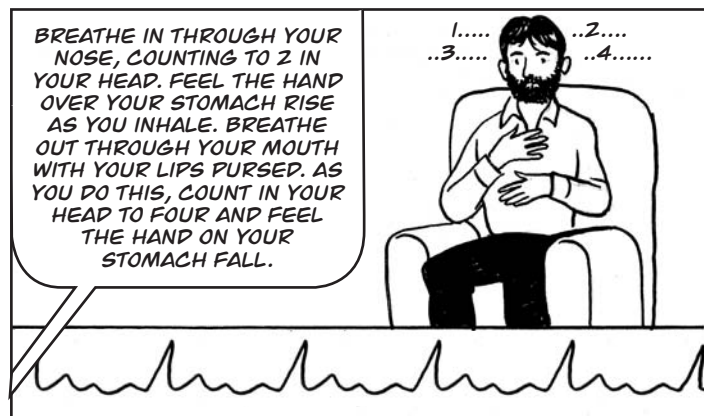
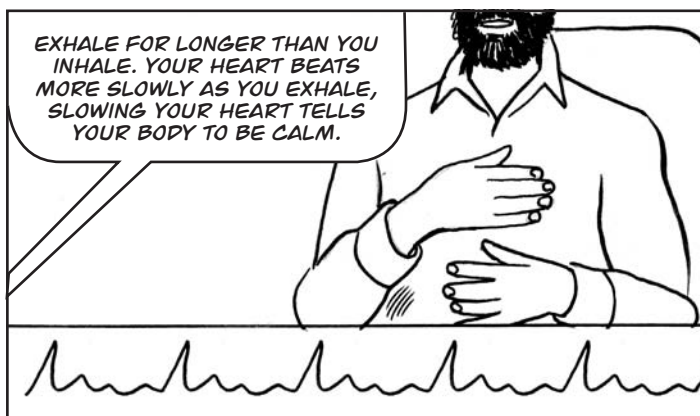






A FEW MINUTES LATER...





### On Demand Pain Management Strategy #3

**COPING THOUGHTS-** When you're in pain it can be helpful to think encouraging things to yourself. Grounding yourself with coping thoughts can help get through a stressful or painful time. It may be a good idea to make a list. Some examples are:

- "I know I can handle this."
- "It could be worse."
- "This is tough but I will survive."
- "I am strong enough to do this."
- "I have gotten through more difficult things."



# Activity Log

You can use this log to track activities or events that may be related to pain.  
This log can also be used to record your pain management practice.

Date/Time							
What was happening? (Event or activity)							
For how long/ When?							
Did you have pain? (0-10) (Where?)							
Other emotions?							
What thoughts did you have?							
What did you do in response?							

## DISCLAIMER

This information is not meant to replace the advice from a medical professional. You should consult your health care provider regarding specific medical concerns or treatment.

## SOURCE

The information presented in this four-part InfoComic series has been adapted from parts one and two of the factsheet TBI and Chronic Pain. The factsheet and this comic have been developed concurrently and present the same information.

The factsheet TBI and Chronic Pain was written by Silas James, MPA; Jeanne Hoffman, PhD; Sylvia Lucas, MD, PhD; Anne Moessner, APRN; Kathleen Bell, MD; William Walker, MD; CJ Plummer, MD; Max Hurwitz, DO.

## AUTHORSHIP AND ILLUSTRATION

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Please send any feedback or questions about this InfoComic to [tbicomic@uw.edu](mailto:tbicomic@uw.edu)



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