

10 tips for dealing with CFS/ M.E

Some of these suggested difficulties below will really resonate within you, some wont. These are some common problems that appear to almost always go hand in hand with ME. If you can honestly, openly and objectively look at yourself and your behaviours, you will be in a better place to recover.

Some of these concepts have been adapted from other ME treatments and therapies, and the changes alone have made drastic improvements, and in many cases, complete recovery for many. I however do believe that treating unresolved emotion and stress with EFT is the largest component to healing, so ensure that you combine the two. Don't be too harsh on yourself – there is no blame to be had here, however, if you are flexible and willing to make some changes in your life, your health will follow. Remember, it takes time to make changes, be patient and loving towards yourself and see the wonderful results that follow.

1. Be more honest and assertive

One of the most common difficulties sufferers have is being open and honest about their feelings. Being able to express your emotions can prove difficult for some, and it was an aspect of my illness, and indeed, my personality that was by far the most challenging to overcome. It's often a result of feelings of low self worth, and also can stem from families where expressing anger or upset was deemed 'inappropriate' while growing up.

You may notice that in particular situations where you feel you *can't* show how you feel or express your negative emotions in front of others, that all of a sudden, symptoms of the illness begin to show. The first step is to find constructive ways of showing your emotions and having your own voice being heard among others.

2. Learn to say 'no'

Learning to comfortably say 'no' in response to unfair demands, or when you don't want to do something is vitally important. It is critical that you are able to see the connection between your symptoms and when they strike. Very often when you wont say no, your body will. You have to learn to listen to your body, and listen to your heart. If this rings true for you speak up! Speak your truth and be honest when you want to say no and you'll see a big and immediate shift in your physical symptoms. The first few times you actively speak up you might notice your emotions and symptoms flair up in response. Don't be afraid, you can remove yourself from the situation. After your body realises you can deal with this yourself

and that you will say no if you feel you have to then your symptoms will be less likely to strike because you have taken the action required. If the very thought of saying 'no' or letting someone down makes you feel uneasy, then you want to get tapping on it as soon as you can!

3. Listen to your body

Be aware of your symptoms. When a physical symptom rears its ugly head be appreciative! This is your body giving you a message. Listen to what it is alerting you to and take immediate action to rectify. A common example could be if a family member happened to ask you to hang out the wet washing, or tidy the kitchen while they are out at work that day. Now, the reality is that you are in a weakened physical state, so actually doing this for them may cause you severe exhaustion - maybe you're already too exhausted to do it, but you don't say 'no', you don't speak your true feelings to this family member, and you push on once they're gone because you feel you 'should' (are you noticing any common familiar difficulties?)

Either before you start or during the work your fatigue immediately worsens, your arms and legs might tingle or feel like jelly, you could become light headed and find it a real struggle to hang up those few garments of clothing. Can you see how your body has protected you because you didn't protect yourself. Do not over rule your body. When you notice a symptom that seems to be out of the blue, have a think about what has just happened, or what were you thinking about and find the link.

The illness is an adaption to stress, and it will continue to serve a purpose unless you learn coping strategies for these difficulties yourself. When you no longer need it and can handle life yourself, it will trust you to get on with the job.

4. Assertively set limits to avoid burn out

There might be times where although you want to say no, there are things that must be done. This is where assertiveness must come in to play and it is key to set mini goals, and break the time down into manageable chunks so as to avoid the body taking control. Realistically assess how long you might be able to do that particular activity, and give yourself a buffer by explaining your condition to whoever might be involved, and don't feel guilty in letting them know you might only be able to do ten minutes. Let your body know it can rely on you and that you won't push it to burn out any more, and it will learn to relax. You haven't been able to trust your body recently – let it know that it can trust YOU.

5. Resolve old emotional issues and traumas

Think back to when your symptoms or illness originally began. What was happening in your life around that time? Note down all stress, emotional upsets, and especially any traumas – illness, accidents, deaths, significant changes to life. These are your key triggers, after which your body decided it just couldn't handle any more. We will resolve these using EFT.

In resolving the key triggers which caused the illness at the beginning, and reducing the stress levels with EFT, you can in effect re-set your body back to normal levels and let it know that the perceived danger has passed. You can also cure yourself of other conditions and past issues too. Do not underestimate how essential this step is, or how incredible EFT is!

7. Reconsider your work commitments

A common theme I have noticed again and again in my patients is an unfulfilling work life. This can become a deep rooted subconscious resistance to getting better. If you hate your work, or the job you were in was particularly stressful or difficult, there's a good chance that your current condition is providing some sort of a solution – even if it is in a somewhat roundabout way. Notice that your body has, in effect taken charge and has said 'no' to your job. Perhaps you are so ill now that you are not able to work any more.

I noticed a big shift in my symptoms after I told my parent's that I didn't want to go back to working for them when I got better. I was terrified of their reaction, I feared that they would be angry and that I would let them down. Every symptom flared as I spoke to them. I developed a high temperature, my face was red hot, I felt dizzy and faint and I began to cry my eyes out. Despite what I had anticipated, they were supportive and accepting, and assured me that it was alright. What a relief! Immediately I began to feel much better. The realisation that I had a choice, and the fact that I no longer felt trapped and subconsciously needed an 'excuse' for not being able to work there (notice that I hadn't said 'no' to it before) freed me up. I felt better than I had in a long time. That burden was off of my shoulders. If this feels true for you, you can use EFT to work on the fear of speaking up. As you think about confronting whoever it might be, notice how you feel, physically and emotionally and tap on it and clear it out. That way, when you approach the situation, you will feel much more calm and balanced to deal with it.

8. Allow yourself more 'me' time

What about **M.E**? Often, we feel guilty for giving to ourselves. Perhaps deep down we have core beliefs that say that we are not 'good enough' and do not deserve, but making time for yourself and being able to have time out are important so that you can refuel. Running on empty is what M.E begins with, and it's perfectly acceptable to explain this to others if you need to justify your need for 'me' time. You might like to create time in your day to go for a walk, or paint, read a book, have a bubble bath, or watch a movie. Choose things which make you happy, and that you feel give you time to relax and therefore feel refreshed to get on with

any other tasks. If someone asks you to do something that interferes with your 'me' time, you'll need to be assertive, and don't feel bad or guilty about spending time on yourself instead of doing for someone else. Again, you can tap on feeling guilty or bad about that, and get rid of that feeling once and for all.

If you are asked to do something which threatens your 'me' time, consider it carefully. Firstly, think about whether you are **REALISTICALLY** able to do it. For example, agreeing to do the hoovering when it will likely leave you in bed for the rest of the day is not a realistic option. Secondly, do you really want to do it? Are you feeling compelled to say yes in case you are rejected or you anger the other person? If so, get tapping! Never do something out of guilt because it will likely aggravate your condition. Instead, you might like to say, 'I know you're needing help right now, but I'm trying to re-charge my batteries in the hope that I'll get better. I'm afraid that if I do X, it'll make me more ill for the rest of the day. Sorry.'

9. Ask for support

Openly ask for support when you need it. Tell others how you are feeling and tell them what you need. Don't be naïve enough to think that they should instinctively know just because you would. Ask for hugs, tell friends or family when you need someone to talk to, or when you need some company. Consider looking for a local support group or go online to ME/CFS associations and websites, it's important to stick together and realise that you are not alone. It's also a great way to make friends who will be understanding to your situation.

10. Avoid worrying over your illness

Worrying over your health has been known to make the symptoms much worse. This is because the fear response is related to chemicals and reactions as the adrenaline malfunction which causes ME. However, it's really tough not to worry over something that has taken over your whole life. This doesn't mean you should never feel concern, but try to think along the lines that you are doing all you can do to get better, and if you do feel worried, tap on how worried you feel, get rid of it and get on to the next issue. Treat yourself with kindness and try to fill your time with more positive things that you enjoy.

This was a short sample chapter of our E-book program 'Self Help Treatment for CFS/ME'. If you would like to purchase the full version for just £10 (\$15.46) on our website. Click the following link <http://www.thelife-clinic.com/store> to browse our online Store or purchase.