The healthy way to live with chronic illness is to work at overcoming the physical and emotional problems caused by the disease. Successful self-managers are people who think of their disease as a path. They are willing to take an active role and learn new skills to negotiate this path.

10 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL SELF MANAGEMENT

To Take Care of Your Illness:
1. Be informed about the nature of your illness. Recognize the symptoms. Understand their causes.
2. Have regular doctor visits: Keep a journal of symptoms and communicate them accurately. Take medications as directed. Note any reactions.
3. Begin regular exercise in some form: Walking, chair exercises, raking leaves, yoga, going up and down stairs.
4. Change your diet to promote symptom management. Begin a program of healthy eating. Know what is in the food you buy.

To Carry Out Your Normal Activities:
5. Continue friendships and social activities within your capabilities. Isolation is not a healthy choice.
6. Perform household chores on a schedule that fits your energy. Ask for help when you need it.
7. Take up a pleasant activity or hobby. Reward yourself.

To Manage Your Emotional Changes:
8. Recognize that feeling blue, angry, or frustrated are all normal parts of chronic illness. Learn new skills such as relaxation techniques, to manage these emotions.
9. Be kind to yourself. Recognize self-criticism as counterproductive to your good health.
10. Reach out to family and friends. This allows others the chance to be kind. Everyone wins!

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