



Biographical Suspension

When you aren't you

Missing the meaningful things in your life

Often related to avoidance behaviours is something called "Biographical Suspension". It essentially means you put your life on hold. The things that you once enjoyed might be missing from your life because of your pain, the fear of making your pain worse or even guilt or shame in having pain. You might have been told that you have to stop hiking, gardening or running because you will cause more damage. But slowly, you end up living in a smaller and smaller box and you've lost the things that make you you.

Related to this can be a sense of guilt or shame that you can't take part in the things your family might be doing or you can't get out with your friends like you have in the past. Or you might feel that your friends or family don't understand the pain that you feel.

A Key Message of this book is that you can slowly start doing the things that are important to you.

You don't need fixing before you start doing.

One of the most profound and important questions you can ask yourself is:

"what would you be doing if your pain was less of a problem for you?"

Very glibly we might say "well, start doing that". And for a few it is that easy but for others we want to find any barriers that might be stopping you from resuming the activities in your life that are meaningful to you. Section IV of this book provides some **Recovery Strategies** that can help you identify your barriers and help you start the planning to resume the meaningful activities in your life. But after reading this book so far what do you think are your barriers? Have your thoughts changed about resuming important activities?

Below are some common barriers to resuming activities. Do any apply to you?

- when I start to do things I have flare-ups for days
- I can't do anything until my back/hip/knee get fixed
- I've been told I need to rest and heal
- it hurts too much to do things with my friends and they just don't understand
- I'm fearful that I will cause more damage



Not sure about doing something? Ask yourself:

Will this activity harm me?

Will I pay for this later?

