

How To Be Ill

A quick guide to living with chronic illness.

1. Accept it

We're told to 'fight' or 'battle' our illness but the thought of fighting something puts us into a stress response, creating more inflammation and generally making matters worse. Not only that, it's exhausting too! By accepting your situation as it is right now, you stop this from happening, and make it easier to move onto the next step.

2. Take 100% Responsibility

Whilst it's not your fault you've become unwell, you alone are in charge of what happens next. By taking responsibility, you have more control over the steps you can take to get well again. Your Doctors, and anyone else looking after you are all part of a team, and you're in charge.

3. Get the message

It's important to understand that you're more than just your body. There's always a story behind why you've become unwell, and we need to listen to what your body is trying to tell you. Louise Hay's book 'You Can Heal Your Life' may be able to start helping you with this process.

4. Build a Team

As well as your Doctor, you need a whole team of people to support you through your illness. Make a list of people who would lift you up on a bad day, help with childcare when you need extra rest, or anything else you need. Ask them if they'd mind, and if it makes you feel better, what you can offer them in return. It may be that you can't give back right now, but you could sometime in the future, so see what you can work out.

5. Be Gentle With Yourself

Illness is always a sign that we need to take extra good care of ourselves. This means on the mental and emotional levels as well as the physical ones. Refuse to criticise yourself if you can't manage as well as you'd like. This takes practice but gets much easier over time.

6. Focus on the Positive

Mindset is the single most important factor when it comes to recovery from illness. Whatever's going on, try to write down three things you're grateful for every morning, and three more every evening. Focus on the positives of every situation, and put reminders around your home to do that.

7. Believe and Learn

If you have a pulse, you have the potential to be well. By staying positive and hopeful that you can return to good health, you make the process much easier. This needs to be fed by learning how to take the best care of yourself, so try watching some online videos, read some books, and speak to as many experts as you can.