

## Six Attitudes to Avoid (The 6 F's)

(from Freedom From Chronic Pain [www.freedomfromchronicpain.com](http://www.freedomfromchronicpain.com))

Each time you have pain or other MBS symptoms, your brain is looking to you to see how you will respond. It is simply afraid and you don't want to be angry at the brain, but rather you want to teach it that it's actually safe; that the pain or other symptoms are not dangerous at all!

These are things that we naturally do that will have the opposite effect from what we want. They will reinforce the brain to create MORE symptoms. We will teach you to stop having the following reactions to your symptoms.

### 1) FEAR

Avoid fear: Do not be afraid of these sensations. Even though they are very real, and even though they can feel overwhelming at times, please don't fear them. They cannot harm you. They are just sensations and there is no physical damage or injury.

### 2) FOCUS

Avoid focusing on the symptom: Do not pay too much attention to the sensations. Do not monitor them or watch for them or anticipate them. Do not worry when they will come or if they will come. Do not check if they are better or worse. Just notice them, knowing that they are simply neural circuits in your brain, that they are not harming you, and that you are safe, and you will recover.

### 3) FIGHTING

Avoid fighting them. Do not try to fight them or push through them. You are inadvertently giving them more power over you when you push back at them. Don't yell at them to go away. Remember that your brain is afraid, like the child lying in bed worrying about a monster in the closet. Treat your brain with kindness and soothe it.

### 4) FRUSTRATION

Avoid being frustrated at the symptom. Know that you will get better over time. Frustration leads to increased pain or other symptoms over time.

### 5) FIGURE

Avoid trying to figure this out. We already know what this is. This is MBS and nothing else, nothing more. Don't try to figure out if the pain or other symptoms are being caused by foods, or the weather, or certain activities, or by "overdoing it." These are not causes, but simply triggers of the brains' neural circuits. Don't go online to look up your symptoms to see if you have some kind of rare or scary disease. You don't!

Note: It is OK to check with yourself when a symptom arises to see if there is some stressful situation on your mind at that moment, but we will cover that later in the program. Much of the time, the brain will be activating your symptoms out of habit or due to a trigger, rather than some stressful situation, even though stress did cause the symptom to occur in the first place.

### 6) FIX

Avoid trying to fix the problem. Obviously, you want to fix this problem. We get that! But sometimes we try too hard. Spending all of your time in trying to fix the problem puts too much emphasis on it. It gives it too much power over you. It has taken over your life. Rather, we want to go with the old expression: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." You are not broken or damaged. You are actually whole and healthy. We just need to teach your brain that fact. So, we want you to live your life. We want you to spend more time doing things that are fun and enjoyable; doing things that are important and meaningful to you; doing things that provide you with purpose; doing things that help others who are close to you; and doing things that provide you with joy. These are powerful ways to retrain your brain out of MBS.