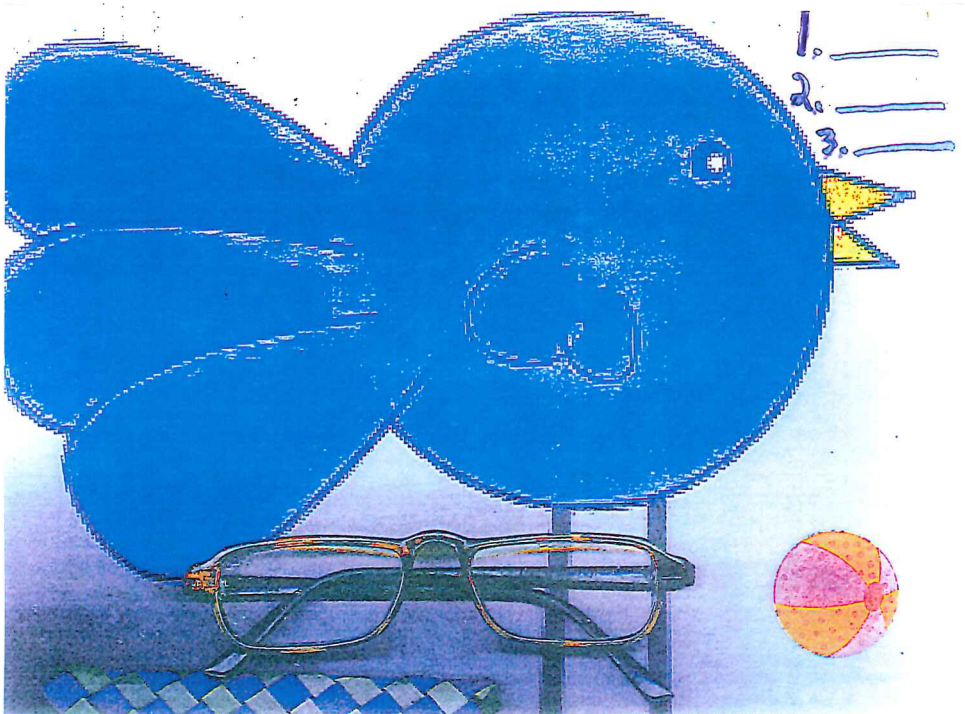


Healthy perspectives in addressing chronic illness

Live Better Series: “I can live a vital and meaningful life.”

Tom Lavin MFT, LCADC, ACATA, Marque Munger, MHT1/Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services



Bluebird: I can live a vital, meaningful life. And, I accept I will sometimes have pain, and other times have joy, in my life.

New Pair of Glasses: to change my life, and grow in wisdom, I need to look at things differently.

Beach ball: I need to stop avoiding my life by pushing thoughts and feeling underwater. By being mindful, I will let my thoughts and feelings come up and accept them for what they are.

Finger trap: It is healthy for me to “accept what is as it is”. When I struggle against “what is”, I trap myself and cause suffering for myself. Accepting does not necessarily mean I like it.

1, 2, 3: I can live a vital and meaningful life by choosing and committing to values that are important to me—NIKE Therapy “Just do it!”, make a plan, don’t procrastinate, take action. Letting go and letting be is also a way of taking positive action.

What is a “chronic illness”? _____

Two examples of a “chronic illness” _____

8 Psychological stressors—briefly respond to each one and how it may pertain to you:

1. “I am not the person I used to be.” _____

2. “Others don’t treat me the way they used to.” _____

3. "Everyone else is moving on with their life. Me—I'm stuck."

4. "This illness has overtaken my life." _____
5. "My life is no longer worthwhile or meaningful." _____
6. "I am a burden to others." _____
7. "Why has life done this to me!?" _____
8. "I don't want to deal with this and I'm not going to." _____

10 characteristics of coping---circle characteristics you currently have or would like to develop and discuss with your class or healthcare professional

1. Defiant power of the human spirit. "I have an illness, but the illness does not have me. My diagnosis does not define me."
2. Learn to respect and like myself as I am: "I am me and I am ok, as I am today."
3. "I am more than my illness. I identify my strengths and talents and use them in creative and productive ways to make my life and other people's lives better."
4. "I have lost some aspects of my life and functioning—it's ok to grieve those losses."
5. "I'll take this problem on as a challenge and maintain a perspective that there is an opportunity in this problem. I will use this as an opportunity to grow in wisdom and compassion."
6. "I take responsibility for my life: making healthy lifestyle choices, dealing with stress, growing as a person and living a life that is meaningful to me."
7. "With humility, I will take legitimate pride in myself and how I am addressing these life challenges."
8. "I will look for opportunities for how I might help others."
9. "I will maintain an attitude of gratitude—being aware of good in my life and looking for how I share my blessings with others are less fortunate."
10. "I will remember it is ok to ask for help. Part of taking responsibility for my life is knowing *when, who, and how* to ask for help."