

Coping with Transverse Myelitis

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Overview

- Common emotional experiences
- Quality of life
- Coping skills

Perceptions



Diagnosis



Onset of a long term condition

- May be unpredictable
- Lack of knowledge
- No prior experience
- Take time to sink in
- Leave people fighting to make sense or meaning

Uncertainty



Emotional experiences

- Low mood (~48-50%)
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Grief
- Denial

MOTIVATIONALBUCK.COM



OVERWHELMED

SURE, I CAN HANDLE THE LOAD. NO PROBLEM.

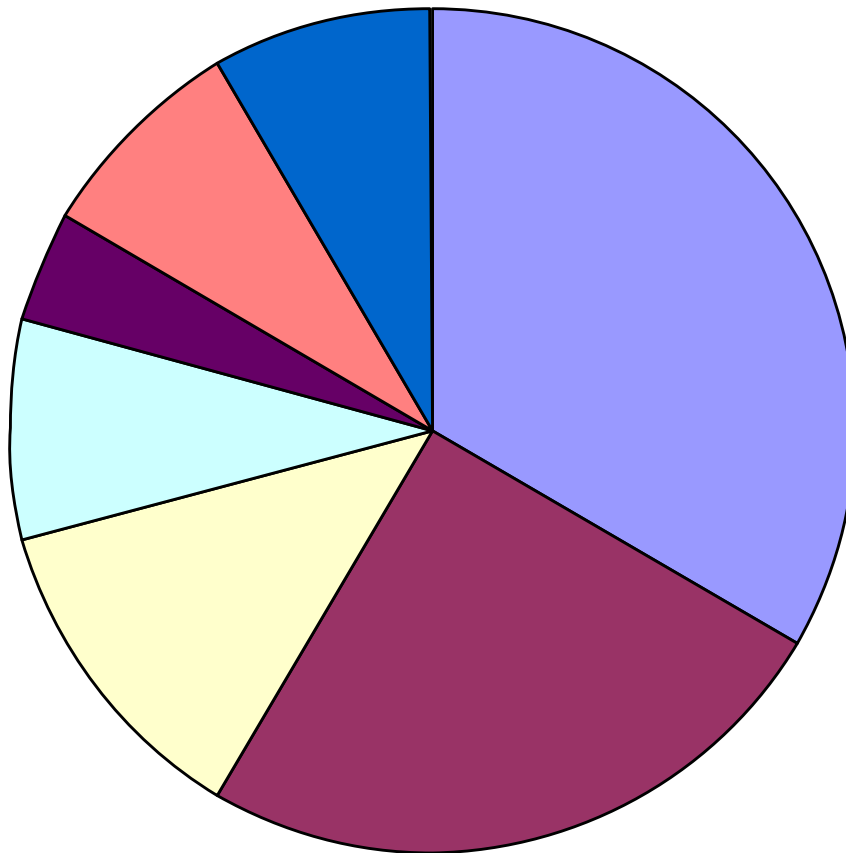
Quality of life

World Health Organisation:

“Individual’s perceptions of their position in life...in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns”.

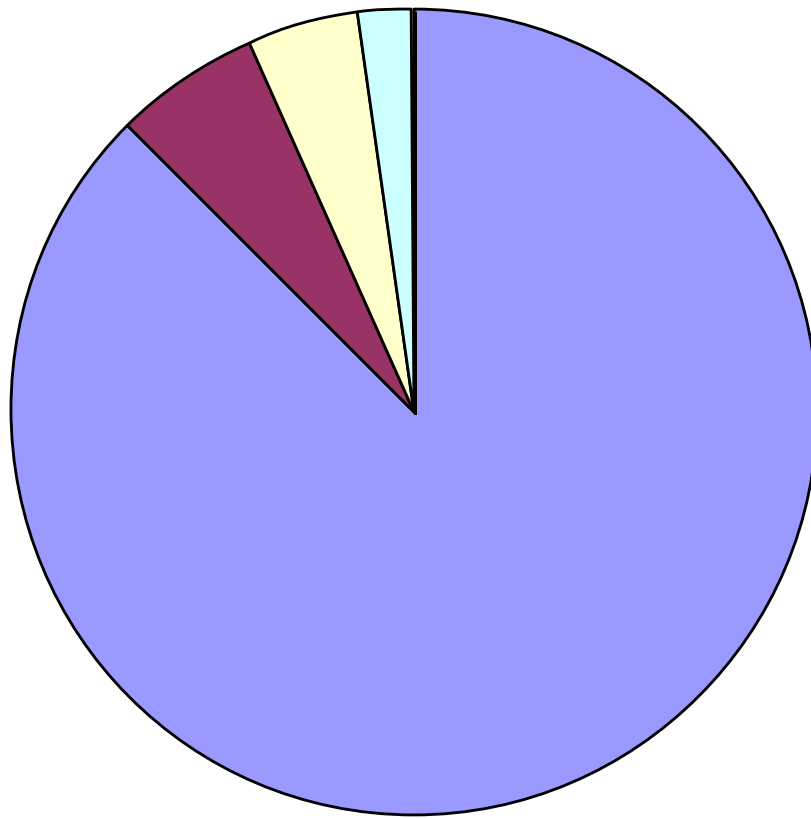


Who am I?



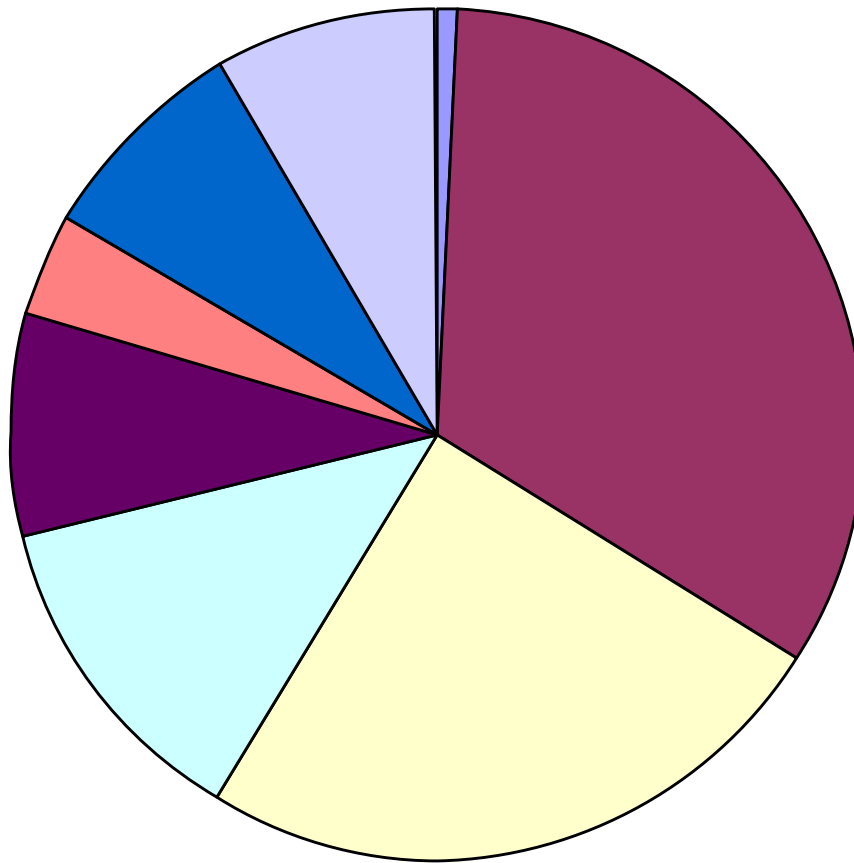
- Doing well at work
- Time with family
- Going out with friends
- Hill walking
- Growing things
- Learning new things
- Music

Your condition can take over...



- MS
- Doing well at work
- Time with family
- Going out with friends
- Hill walking
- Growing things
- Learning new things
- Music

Just one part of your life



- MS
- Doing well at work
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NMO quality of life study (2013)

1. Role in life and purpose
2. Expectations
3. Independence vs. support
4. Impact of physical symptoms

How to improve quality of life?

1. Information
2. Peer support
3. Coping strategies
4. Use professional health care services

1. Information



2. Peer support



3. Coping strategies

Things you can do



Set SMART goals



Be proactive with your wellbeing



Relaxation breathing



Progressive muscle relaxation



Set SMART goals



4. Professional support

What can a Clinical Psychologist do?

- Offer help coming to terms with diagnosis
- Assess memory and thinking and suggest ways of overcoming difficulties



Conclusions

- Work out what is most important for your quality of life
- Manage your emotions:
 1. Get informed
 2. Use your peers for support
 3. Use coping strategies proactively and reactively
 4. Use professional help if needed
- Be proud of your achievements!

Take each bit at a time...





IT'S
NOT
ALL IN
YOUR
HEAD

Anxiety,
Depression,
Mood Swings &
Multiple Sclerosis

PATRICIA FARRELL, PhD