

WHEN THE MIND CAUSES PAIN – FACT SHEET

Chronic pain is a serious public health concern. Chronic pain affects more than 40 million Americans. Anxiety disorders affect more than 17 million Americans, with an additional 19 million suffering from depressive illnesses. The cost to the economy as a result of these disorders is billions of dollars each year. The cost in human suffering is *Immeasurable*. Recent scientific studies clearly defined the relationship between physical pain and emotional pain. Both the symptoms of physical pain and an individual's mood must be evaluated when an individual seeks treatment and relieve from aches and pains to the body. The pain is real, but there is a *mind body link* and body and mind must work together harmoniously to obtain the best treatment result. The body may be experiencing pain, but often the pain can be emanating from emotional distress. Often the body knows a person's emotional state before they do and responds with aches, pains and other physical symptoms.

- Among patients with depression, 80% (four out of five) first present to their doctors exclusively with physical symptoms. The most common are: joint and back pain, fatigue, insomnia, dizziness and headaches.
- Patients with painful physical symptoms are nearly three times as likely to experience high depressive symptoms.
- In treated depressed patients, those with residual symptoms were three times more likely to relapse than those without. Of the patients with residual symptoms, 90% had mild to moderate physical symptoms.

In a recent study conducted by **Freedom From Fear**, the impact of physical symptoms on work, social life and family life were explored. Almost 90% believe that depression or anxiety could cause painful physical symptoms. Among the findings are:

- Nearly 40% of patients visiting primary care physicians have symptoms of depression. Of these, 80% also experience pain.
- 89% of the participants believe anxiety and depression can cause painful symptoms.
- 50% of the participants who were diagnosed with medical conditions such as arthritis, migraines, diabetes and other medical conditions that have painful symptoms, reported that on days when they felt anxious or depressed their pain is more severe.
- 60% of the participants with undiagnosed medical conditions said that on days they feel anxious or depressed there is a moderate to severe change in their physical symptoms.
- 40% of the participants said their physical symptoms disrupt their work moderately to extremely.
- 43% of the participants said their physical symptoms disrupt their social lives moderately to extremely.
- 47% of the participants said their physical symptoms disrupt their family life/home responsibilities moderately to extremely.

For further information about *When The Mind Causes Pain*, visit our website, www.freedomfromfear.org, or contact Joanna Barbagallo at 718 351-1717, extension 19