Famous People Suffering from Chronic Pain Conditions

Each year, Adriaan Louw has 30 hours of direct teaching with the residents at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa on pain science consisting of the Therapeutic Neuroscience Education (TNE) class, follow-up in-depth TNE classes, graded motor imagery and ultimately a research project.

In-between TNE classes, residents have to complete some pain science homework:

1. Search the Internet for stories where people experience a significant trauma (nociceptive event), yet experienced little to no pain; put into a PowerPoint and share with the class.

2. Search the Internet for famous people who “despite their pain” have excelled. This may include pain-related disorders or other medical issues; put into a PowerPoint and share with the class.

As we build the resident’s familiarity with pain science, and especially the ability to share stories, we believe both of these projects provide valuable “ammunition” to discuss pain with patients. For example, sharing with a patient (with compassion) a story of someone like Morgan Freeman who despite having fibromyalgia for the past 8 years, still performs at a high level may be helpful for the right patient. Many people, despite having “labels” are able to get on with their life…

Singer and Dancer
Paula Abdul
CRPS

Actor
Ben Affleck
Chronic migraines

US World Cup Soccer Player
Michelle Akers
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Actor
Alec Baldwin
Lyme Disease

Actor and Comedian
Lucille Ball
Rheumatoid Arthritis

Model
Tyra Banks
Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Editor Elle magazine in France
Jean Dominique Bauby
Stroke
Wrote a book by eye-blinking the alphabet. His story has been made into a movie.

Kansas City Chiefs Safety
Eric Berry
Cancer

Actor
Halle Berry
Diabetes

Singer
Toni Braxton
Lupus

New England Patriots Linebacker
Tedy Bruschi
Stroke with paralysis

Actor and TV Host
Nick Cannon
Lupus

Wellness Activist
Kris Carr
Survived vascular cancer and has written and spoken about her struggles and triumphs.

Actor
Lynda Carter
Irritable Bowel Syndrome

TV Host
Neil Cavuto
Multiple Sclerosis

Singer
Cher
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

continued
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Actor
George Clooney
Chronic pain in his spine
Nirvana Lead Singer
Kurt Cobain
Irritable Bowel Syndrome
Actor, Writer, Producer, Director
Lena Dunham
Endometriosis
Soap Opera Actor
Susan Flannery
Fibromyalgia
Actor
Michael J. Fox
Parkinson’s Disease
Actor
Morgan Freeman
Fibromyalgia
Pop Singer
Selena Gomez
Lupus
Evangelist
Billy Graham
Parkinson’s Disease
Seattle Mariners’ Center Fielder
Franklin Gutierrex
Irritable Bowel Syndrome
NHL Hockey Player
Josh Harding
Multiple Sclerosis
Reality TV Star and Talk Show Host
Elisabeth Hasselbeck
Celiac’s disease
Actor
Michael James Hastings
Fibromyalgia
American Business Man
Howard Hughes
CRPS
Artist
Frida Kahlo
Fibromyalgia
Reality TV Star
Kim Kardashian
Psoriasis
President
John F Kennedy
Irritable Bowel Syndrome
Actor and Comedian
Jerry Lewis
CRPS
Actor
Tobey Maguire
Chronic pain
Actress
Jenny McCarthy
Irritable Bowel Syndrome
Guitarist for Pearl Jam
Mike McCready
Crohn’s Disease
LPGA Golfer
Kristy McPherson
Juvenile Arthritis
Fitness Instructor and TV Host
Jillian Michaels
Polycystic ovary syndrome
PGF Golfer
Phil Mickelson
Psoriatic Arthritis
Social Activist
Florence Nightingale
Fibromyalgia
US Olympic Distance Runner
Marla Runyan
Stargardt disease
Actor
Ben Stiller
Lyme Disease
Actor
Elizabeth Taylor
Chronic Pain
Actor
Kathleen Turner
Rheumatoid Arthritis
Country Musician
Clay Walker
Multiple Sclerosis
TV Host
Montel Williams
Multiple Sclerosis
International Tennis Star
Venus Williams
Sjogren’s Syndrome