**Week 5 Assignment**

Based on my own anecdotal experience emotions can place your body in a heightened sense leading to a more intense send of pain perception (anxiety, depression and anger are examples of emotions that can have this effect). Positive emotions have an opposite effect and actually decrease perceived pain. The literature we are studying seems to agree with my own experience, one of the interesting concepts we learnt this week is Malzack and Wall’s theory.

Malzack and Wall’s theory on Gate Control is fascinating to investigate, the theory is a well thought out concept that the dorsal horn of the spinal cord acts as a flow control of sorts, in other words a gate that regulates the flow of nerve impulses from the peripheral fibers to the central nervous system. The theory postulates that the gate is influenced by peripheral fiber activity as well as signals flowing down from the brain. *(Katz & Rosenbloom, 2015)*

Through qualitative phenomenological thematic analysis, blogging in relation to chronic pain has been shown to have a positive effect on people who blog and also consume content produced by others that blog. It seems a combination of being able to share ones difficulties as well as relate to others has a net positive effect on the individual. This then explains based on the gate control theory previously discussed why people seem to find the pain more manageable, put simply as these individuals are likely to feel more positive emotion their chronic pain is reduced.

“This research aimed to examine the experiences and interactions between people with chronic pain who blog about their experiences and other people who live with chronic pain. Study findings extend the current understanding about online blogging as an avenue of social support by identifying the use of a VOSS by bloggers and blog readers which enables the establishment of a virtual “community”. It provides a conceptual understanding of how bloggers and readers who share experiences of chronic pain can establish relationships. Through sharing experiences of different offline environments related to pain, blog users are able to engage in a sequence of steps leading to experiences of virtual social support. This mechanism by which virtual social support can be established provides new insights into the way in which health professionals can provide support for people with chronic pain in accessing additional support through the online blogging environment. Further research into the VOSS could be carried out to determine if it occurs across other blogs and other virtual environments focusing on a wider variety of health conditions.” (Tsai, Crawford & Strong, 2018, para 32)

I believe though what eventually acts as a positive on emotions is going to be different from individual, it may be worth exploring different methods to establish which outcome is best suited for you. There are many methods that I would be interested in trying myself in the future such as meditation another option would be simply to find time to break away from the more urbanized lifestyle the majority of us live these days. A simpler life with simpler solutions may be the trick!

**References:**

Katz, J., & Rosenbloom, B. N. (2015). *The Golden Anniversary of melzack and wall's gate control theory of pain: Celebrating 50 years of Pain Research and Management*. Pain research & management. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from

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Tsai, S., Crawford, E., & Strong, J. (2018). Seeking virtual social support through blogging: A content analysis of published blog posts written by people with chronic pain. *Digital health*, *4*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2055207618772669> or [download the PDF](https://my.uopeople.edu/pluginfile.php/1644840/mod_book/chapter/389562/Link%20to%20article%20on%20Seeking%20virtual%20social%20support%20through%20blogging%20A%20content%20analysis%20of%20published%20blog%20posts%20written%20by%20people%20with%20chronic%20pain.pdf).