## **EXERCISE: NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR PAIN**

I would like you to spend time thinking back to our videos about emotions, negative thoughts about chronic pain and the impossibility to control these feelings. The more you fight them, the stronger they become. It is like being in a quicksand.

Notice how long the struggle has been there for you and reflect on the feeling of being in this struggle. Reflect on the costs that you have experienced as a result of being stuck in the struggle. Reflect on the things you did to control your 'unwanted party guest', and what was the cost associated with these control strategies.

Take time to monitor your negative experiences such as bad moods or negative thoughts, especially as they relate to your chronic pain. When these experiences are present, notice what it is that you try to do to deal with these experiences. Take notes regarding these efforts. What do you do to keep the unwanted party guest away?

However, don't try to change anything at this time. If nothing happens on a particular day of the week, leave the boxes blank.

Day of the week	Situation	Experience (negative thought or emotions)	What did you do to try to control the negative experience and what was the cost associated with it?
Example	I got in an argument with someone	I felt angry because the pain is affecting every aspect of my life	I cancelled all my activities for that day because I wasn't in a good mood.

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