

## Sample of knitting quotes from people with chronic pain

"Knitting means, I can subjugate pain to the status of discomfort. The movement needed by knitting seems to create a state of mind in which I'm more able to downgrade pain to a background feature."

"Knitting has enabled me to challenge my own stereotypes about myself. I can't be useless if I can knit even a simple scarf. My concentration can't be that bad if I can knit lace and socks and complicated patterns."

"I am disabled living with chronic pain. I have recently begun knitting and have completed several projects and have had a wonderful change in my mental attitude since finding the benefits of this craft."

"I found that knitting helped calm my thoughts and while I was knitting and putting stitches in order it was easier to put my own mind in order."

"Knitting requires me to think creatively, to plan, prepare, organise, co-ordinate and control just one small aspect of my life. Then any other changes are manageable."

"On a bad day, I can think about projects. On a good day, I can work towards realising them."

"The knitting itself helps to train your mind because your mind is occupied concentrating on what you're doing so no negative thoughts can get through"

"I am convinced that the repetitive meditative and creative aspects of knitting was what has gently helped me back into a more fulfilling life. I have absolutely no doubt that knitting daily for over six months 'reset' my brain in some way and also that Stitchlinks allowed me to open up again after the long years of dealing with illness and disability on my own had just worn me down and closed me down. Thank you so very much for what you are doing."

"Knitting calms me down like nothing else in the world. My brain, while I am knitting, is like a collage of my daily life. As strange as this is, I only think good things while knitting. Somehow knitting doesn't let you think negatively. Or, if it does, it puts a good spin on a bad thought somehow. I'm always happy when I'm knitting."

"If you sit all day doing nothing the pain is unbearable but if you have your hands busy and your mind off the pain then it is easier to deal with."

"It's something that I can do and have control over. A lot of days I don't feel like I have control over anything."

"Keeping your fingers busy somehow seems to free up the mind to wander, imagine, dream and fantasise."

"When I'm lonely I knit and feel better."

"It is so meditative. I sit and knit and am lost in my own quiet world. It brings me an enormous boost in self esteem, making beautiful garments, bags and shawls that people praise."

"Even when I feel absolutely exhausted and am in terrible pain I know I can sit and knit even if I can only manage a few knit and pearl rows and this helps me to forget the pain for a while. When I feel low because that day I am housebound I know I have knitting to do which lifts my spirits and gives me a 'raison d'etre"

"Stitching stopped me from going over to somewhere that I may not have returned from, I don't really understand why but the focus of each cross stitch and the repetition of each stitch back and forward across the canvas rocked and soothed my soul. Knitting has given me hope and a true belief in me, even though others have always believed me to be capable of doing anything I wanted, I have always doubted that and the 'stitching' has somehow encouraged me otherwise."

"Knitting is calming, it helps with concentration and calms, the benefits are like meditation or prayer."

"I feel that if I hadn't been able to knit and cross stitch over the last year I would have lost my sanity totally. To still be able to feel vaguely useful and to produce items that bring pleasure (and warmth) to others is a life-saver."

"I firmly believe that having my knitting to get out of bed for and take my mind off things saved my life - I cannot imagine surviving how bad I felt otherwise."

"It kept me engaged with pleasure, texture, colour and the belief that I was still an able person even though most bits of me didn't work well."

"If I couldn't knit I would be in a ball rocking to cope. Knitting is a great way to ease the pain, the stress, reduce medication and has a wonderful side effect of losing weight. Knitting is what gets me through the day! "

"If I hadn't kept myself occupied with stitching, I would have hibernated to the point of death. It gave me something else to think about and at the end of the day I had something to show for the effort of staying alive."

"Knitting made me see that I could do something on my own."

"I can focus on the repetition instead of the pain. I can make things for those in need instead of laying around being a person in need. Now that I am coming to the end of my surgeries, I find that others are asking me to teach them knitting. Now, instead of just helping me de-stress and ignore pain, it is moving into a reason for socialization and bringing joy to others."

"Nothing makes you feel less sorry for yourself than discovering that despite all other setbacks, you still have skills that can make you useful to other people and therefore deserve a place in society."

"I have found that just the distraction helps take my mind off the pain. The feeling of accomplishing something that can be used by someone is a much better thing than just doing a crossword puzzle or reading a book. There are many times when I feel like I serve no purpose to anyone and then I am reminded of the blankets, sweaters and stitched pieces I have made for others. It is a great picker upper."

"Knitting enables free-flowing and restorative thought. If ever I am feeling stressed or low I reach for my needles and am soon feeling uplifted. Knitting enables me to channel my emotions into the garment I am creating, and helps turn negative emotions round to positive ones."

"Knitting takes away that 'useless' 'in-valid' feeling you get when you are chronically ill. I can be useful again."

"Within a row, I could feel the muscles in my neck loosen up and my body began relaxing for the first time in months. I could almost feel my brain unkinking itself, realizing that it wasn't all that bad and calming down."

"I can actually feel all the tension just fade out of me. I become totally focused on the rhythm of my hands and I can just let go of everything I've been carrying around all day. I really wish I'd taken it up years ago when I was suffering from depression because I think it would have probably helped me a lot more than medication."

"My knitting kept me sane! I concentrated on my stitches instead of the pain. My breathing was calm and deep."

"The meditative process allows one to switch off ones mind and focus on a guilt free past time. The achievement of having completed a knitting project, however big or small, is satisfying."

"Now I am physically stronger knitting helps me relax when I'm frustrated by the difference between what I want to do and what I am physically capable of in life. It promotes me feeling good and engaging with life. I am also sure that learning new techniques, reading, designing and trying out new ideas means I am using my brain in ways I otherwise would not and that must be healthy too."

"Knitting calms me down when I'm stressed, gets me excited when it feels like there's no point living, gives me something to think about that is outside myself, a reason to get up in the morning."

"You feel as if you can do something after all, you're not completely useless. After a while your confidence starts to grow again."

"My specialist noticed that the knitting has kept my hands mobile as he was expecting me to loose my fine motor movement by now. Knitting has saved my fine motor movements & my sanity. Knitting has meant that I can carefully cook, work on the computer or do limited housework. I would be lost with out it."

"I find the back pain easier to cope with as when I am concentrating on my knitting I can stop letting the pain take over my every waking thought."

"I took up knitting as a way to take my mind off the pain and depression of infectious arthritis. It worked very well. I am thoroughly convinced that the knitting speeded up my recovery time as without it I was concentrating on how miserable and angry I was, which isn't exactly conducive to healing."

"Knitting allows me some measure of control when it comes to my medications and allows me to be an active participant in managing my pain and from there my health."

"In my view the NHS would save far more money by resolving issues related to pain. When I am knitting I feel that I can cope with the pain more easily. It's still there but I have something better going on so I can ignore it. I look forward to waking up, I can imagine how my projects will turn out and be excited by the prospect. My life has changed beyond recognition."

"I use my knitting as a place, a hobby all mine and just for me. A place I can be meditative and just feel the structure of the yarn and the almost hypnotic click-clack of the needles. It helps me heal."