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**For Immediate Release**

## **The Complexities and Transformation of the Pain Experience**

### Research Summary

*“Few things a doctor does are more important than relieving pain. . . pain is soul destroying. No patient should have to endure intense pain unnecessarily. The quality of mercy is essential to the practice of medicine; here, of all places, it should not be strained.”*

— **Marcia Angell**

Approximately 20% of the U.S. population is suffering from chronic pain and associated restricted mobility, opioid dependency, anxiety, depression, and reduced quality of life (National Institute of Health, 2018). The physical aspect of chronic pain is well documented, but the psychological aspect is far less studied and understood. An unexplored issue is how the *chronic pain journey* may offer patients an opportunity to cultivate a more pro-active, positive viewpoint of their suffering and life-situation. What is it about *their* journey and psychological make-up that transcends physical pain? Can pain treatment programs regularly include psychological interventions that strengthen self-help behaviors and hopefulness?

To answer these important questions, the FRAME Foundation (a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in New York City) is launching a three-stage national four-year research initiative to more fully understand the chronic pain patient’s journey and give a “voice” to the psychology of suffering. Commencing in January 2021, a panel of nationally recognized therapists, licensed clinicians, and psychologists will conduct 75 in-depth phone interviews with adult chronic pain patients with varying medical diagnoses, ages, ethnic backgrounds, and income. Transcriptions will be analyzed for common themes and used to construct a written survey that will be sent to 10,000 chronic pain patients. Our findings will facilitate the creation of a self-help **PAIN Awareness Index** (to be published) of 25-questions that groups patients along a continuum of *pain awareness*



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and potential *action steps* to modify self-imposed barriers that diminish quality of life. This groundbreaking research has been initially funded through Board contributions and private fundraising efforts. FRAME is working on the identification of a corporate sponsor to collaborate in underwriting stage 2 (production of the PAIN index) and stage 3 (dissemination and public awareness initiative) of the research.

Future updates on the research can be obtained by visiting <https://frame.foundation>. Further information can be obtained by contacting Mandy Garten at (646) 450-8710 or [mandy.garten@frame.foundation](mailto:mandy.garten@frame.foundation).