



THE SPOON THEORY

It is a metaphor used to describe the mental or physical energy (or 'spoons') that a person has available for daily activities (C. Miserandino, 2003)

Background

Everyone wake up with a certain number of 'spoons' which we must conserve throughout the day to avoid burnout and meltdowns. Various activities and demands use up these 'spoons'. The Spoon Theory helps us understand how people with disabilities or chronic illness have to plan/ration their energy for the day.

Using spoons

Various activities and demands in our day use up these 'spoons', for example having extra pressure during a test, an argument combined with a sensory-overload trip to the shops, might lead to burn out or meltdown. Social expectations, masking, sensory differences, unexpected changes, all contribute to an autistic person to use up more spoons.

If you had 12 spoons a day...

How would you use them? Feeling burnt out the day before or having a bad night's sleep means that you will wake up with less 'spoons' than normal.

1 spoon

Get out of bed
Get dressed
Take pills
Watch TV

2 spoons

Bathe
Style hair
Read/study
Surf the net

3 spoons

Make & eat a meal
Housework
Shopping

4 spoons

Make plans and socialise
Go to work
Exercise