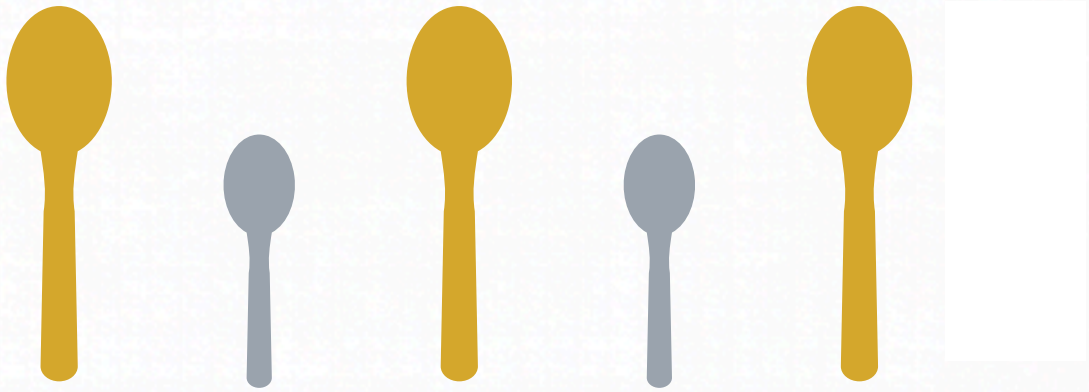
How to use your spoons



What Spoon Theory is

Created by Christine Miserandino (2003) to explain life with lupus: each day starts with a set number of spoons and every task costs some. Masking, sensory load and transitions can cost Autistic people far more than others see.

Ideas for individuals

- Count out today's spoons first.
- Write a task on each spoon you spend.
- Keep a spare spoon for the unexpected.
- Notice which tasks give spoons back, without blame.
- Use the spoons as a burnout check-in.

AUTISTIC REALMS
Neurodiversity Affirming

How to use your spoons



Ideas for families, parents and carers

Use spoons to make life more manageable, not to earn rest. Invite the Autistic person to help decide what spends and what saves their spoons. Respect their choices.

Encourage them to check in with their body and mind before spending. Celebrate when they use spoons in ways that help them feel safe, calm and connected.

Be flexible, as some days need more care than others. Kindness and understanding come first.



Ideas for therapists and practitioners

Use spoons as a strengths-based conversation tool, not a compliance measure. Work collaboratively and follow the Autistic person's lead.

Explore their spiky profile and monotropic interests, plan supports and practise self-advocacy. Respect their communication style and processing needs.

Adapt examples, language and pace to fit the individual. This is their system, and your role is to support, not direct.



Ideas for educators and workplaces

Offer spoons as a way to understand and support energy management, sensory needs and wellbeing.

Co-create practical adjustments that reduce unnecessary demands and increase inclusion.

Build a culture where needing support is normal. Listen, believe and adapt. Small changes can make a big difference.

Spoon Theory by Christine Miserandino (2003). Spoons and guide by Helen Edgar, Autistic Realms. This design: CC BY-NC-ND 4.0