Explaining RA With the Spoon Theory

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Understanding the Spoon Theory

Explaining your condition has become almost a part of the territory of having a chronic illness like rheumatoid arthritis (RA). When people can’t see visible evidence of a condition, they may doubt the pain and experiences you endure.

For Christine Miserandino, trying to explain her experiences with lupus to her friend drove her to come up with the now-famous explanation used by many people around the world — the spoon theory.

Using spoons to represent energy, she explained each activity she completes in a day “costs” a certain amount of spoons. She has a certain amount depending on the day, and once they run out she has no more energy left.

Chronic illness sufferers across the globe are now using her theory to help others better understand what they’re going through. Read on to learn more!

what is Spoon Theory?

The **Spoon Theory** was created as a way for people with chronic illness to explain their experience to others.

= ENERGY

IN THE U.S. ALONE there are at least 112 MILLION people living with one or more CHRONIC ILLNESSES[I]

Despite this, there is still a lack of understanding towards sufferers.

HOW IT WORKS

When you have a chronic illness, you have a **limited number of spoons** for each day — and each task you complete **costs a certain number** of spoons.

Once your spoons are gone, they're gone.

Say you have **10 tasks** to accomplish in a day — like showering, getting dressed, going to work, etc. — and only **10 spoons for that day.**

Some tasks may require more than one spoon, so some things won't get done. You could dip into your spoons for the next day, but then you'll have even fewer spoons tomorrow.

> The difference in being sick and being healthy is having to make choices... the rest of the world doesn't have to.[II]
>
> - Christine Miserandino, spoon theory creator.

AM I A SPOONIE?

The theory has a following of people with a range of conditions who call themselves **Spoonies**.

Conditions the Spoon Theory Applies to Include:

- Lupus
- Fibromyalgia
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Multiple sclerosis
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Chronic pain syndrome
- Osteoporosis
- COPD

Show the Spoonies in Your Life You Care.

Share to get the word out about chronic illness and end stigma against sufferers.

Follow the discussion using #Spoonie #SpoonieProblems #SpoonieChat #SpoonieLife

Resources

I http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/overview/
II http://www.butyoudontlooksick.com/articles/written-by-christine/the-spoon-theory/

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