



Explaining Depression With the Spoon Theory

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

Understanding the Spoon Theory

Chronic illness is difficult to explain — this is something the millions of people living with one (or more) know very well. When people can't see visible signs of illness, they doubt your experiences — this is very common for people with depression.

This lack of understanding is exactly what Christine Miserandino was trying to navigate while explaining her lupus to a friend. Through her explanation, the spoon theory was born.

Using the spoons, Miserandino described to her friend how much energy it takes to live with a chronic illness. Though it may not always seem like it, it takes a great deal of effort to complete tasks and get through the day.

Chronic illness sufferers around the world have found the spoon theory useful in explaining not just the pain, but what it actually *feels* like to live with their condition.

what is Spoon Theory?



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

= ENERGY

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IN THE U.S. ALONE
there are at least
112 MILLION
people living with one or more
CHRONIC ILLNESSES¹

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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.²

— 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 | ★ Arthritis |
| ★ Fibromyalgia | ★ Diabetes |
| ★ Depression | ★ Cancer |
| ★ Anxiety | ★ Chronic pain syndrome |
| ★ Chronic fatigue syndrome | ★ Osteoporosis |
| ★ Multiple sclerosis | ★ 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

1 <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/overview/>
2 <http://www.butyoudontlookick.com/articles/written-by-christine/the-spoon-theory/>

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