

ENERGY (AC)COUNTING: A Data Set of Cutlery and Kitchen Utensils

1. SPOON

description: object consisting of a handle and a shallow indentation used for lifting soft food such as soup to the mouth.

materials: most commonly metal/steel, wood, or plastic.

theory: Spoon Theory is attributed to Christine Miserandino to describe energy rationing when chronically ill. Energy is equated with spoons, and the amount of spoons per day amounts to different possible activities that each cost spoons.

related terms: spoonie, low spoon day

links: <https://butyoudontlooksick.com/articles/written-by-christine/the-spoon-theory/>

2. FORK

description: object with a handle and four long tines used to poke into food in order to lift them to the mouth or to fixate them on a plate so that they can be cut with a knife. Food can also be positioned on the fork's head to be lifted.

materials: most commonly metal/steel, wood, or plastic.

theory: Fork Theory was proposed as an addition to Spoon Theory by Jen Rose based on the expression: "Stick a fork in me, I'm done". Forks are a metaphor for external stressors that 'poke' and can cause accumulative hurt by for example leading to sensory overload or accumulative micro-aggression burnout.

related terms: fork limit, pitchforks

links: <http://jenrose.com/fork-theory/>

3. KNIFE

description: object with a handle and a cutting blade (sometimes serrated). As cutlery, knives are used to cut or move food. Knives can cut into a variety of objects.

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materials: most commonly metal/steel, ceramics, or plastic.

description: Knives describe energy-related experiences in two ways:

1) When a person is out of spoons, they can sometimes reach deeper into the drawer and pull out a knife. Pulling a knife when one is out of energy has consequences as it can impact the total amount of spoons one has later or shift the spoon cost of other activities. This is attributed to Terry Masson.

2) As traumas that are worse than forks and require time for (sometimes impossible) healing. This suggestion for Knife Theory comes from Jen Rose.

related terms: nutella as a metaphor for life

links: <https://medium.com/@tilaurin/the-knife-hypothesis-a-companion-to-spoon-theory-d20764c28349>

4. SPORK

description: object with a handle and a shallow indentation from which small tines are cut out. This combines the possibilities of spoons and forks into one object but is not as effective as either.

materials: most commonly metal/steel or plastic.

theory: Sporks are used to describe energy-related experiences in two ways: 1) Spork Theory is an attempt to bring Spoon and Fork Theory together in order to account for both experiences. 2) On her blog My Bendy Life, Lizzie describes sporks as irritating things that are less reliable than spoons and that can stab a person in the back. Experiences of chronic illness and dynamic disabilities can be better described by this sneaky object.

related terms: sporkie

links: <http://mybendylife.blogspot.com/2017/03/spork-theory.html>

5. WHISK

description: an object with a handle and loops. Used in the kitchen to mix and blend ingredients or to add air. Whisking can change the consistency of food irreversibly.

materials: most commonly metal/steel, plastic, or bamboo.

theory: Ashley L. Peterson suggests whisks as a metaphor for thinking about sensory overwhelm and anxiety. A whisk is a way of speaking about moments

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when too much is spinning around, and orientation is lost. Whisks can have lasting impacts, as the whirl they produce changes materials.

related terms: mental illness cutlery drawer

links: <https://mentalhealthathome.org/2020/11/24/mental-illness-cutlery-drawer/>

6. BUCKET

description: a container with an open top. Engaged in the household for collecting, transporting and using water.

materials: most commonly plastic, metal or wood.

theory: @autisminsightsandme describes autistic people's varying tolerance to sensory stressors with the metaphor of a bucket. Loud noises, plan changes, emotional overload and more are liquids poured into the bucket. Activities such as stimming can remove some water from the bucket. If more stressors are poured in than can flow out, a meltdown occurs.

related terms: meltdowns

links:

https://www.reddit.com/r/autism/comments/kz9kr0/visual_for_meltdowns/html

7. WITHDRAWALS AND DEPOSITS

description: terms to describe financial transactions, in this data set read as budgets for food.

materials: can be made by spending paper-money or electronic transactions.

theory: Maja Toudal recommends making two lists for autistic people: One with activities that withdraw energy and one with activities that provide energy or allow for energy to be replenished. Each activity is then measured by adding a number between 0 and 100. When withdrawals are performed, deposits have to be made to counter balance.

related terms: energy accounting, boosters, and drainers

links: <https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/the-energy-accounting-activity-for-autism-3a245e34bdfb>

8. SENSORY DIET

description: a diet is an organized way of consuming food aligned with certain nutrients.

materials: foods, lists, timings.

theory: a sensory diet is a way of organizing and scheduling sensory input throughout the day with the purpose of fulfilling one's sensory needs and preventing sensory overload. The idea is that the effects of sensory triggers can be lessened by scheduling regulating sensory experiences.

related terms: regulation, sensory strategies

links: <https://www.theottoolbox.com/sensory-diets-for-adults/>