



BALANCING ACTIVITY

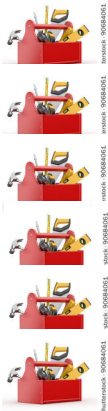
You could complete the activity measure at the end of this handout to identify how different activities require different amounts of resources. You can use this exercise to consider how to balance low, medium and high level activities more effectively. Having a healthy balance of activity will help you take control and work towards having a daily schedule that you value and enjoy.

Consider how to mix activities to help you to maintain your baseline, ensuring that you do not have too many high or medium impact activities on any one day.

There are several ways that activity levels can be modified. We have listed six below and have called them 'The Toolbox'.



Your activity Toolbox



Prioritisation

Planning and organising

Pacing

Problem Solving or adapting

Communication

Gaining support and help

Prioritisation

Take a close look at all the things you do. Is there anything that you can stop for a while or that is non-essential? It might be a committee you belong to, some voluntary work or other things that you have 'always done'. This is the time to re-evaluate and put yourself higher on the list. Is there a balance between activities or have you had to prioritise work or household tasks to the detriment of doing activities that you value such as leisure pursuits or hobbies.

Planning and Organisation

Can you change the time or the day that you carry out some activities so that:

- a. you spread the load over the week and don't do too much on one day.
- b. change some things to when other people are around to help, or when it is quieter e.g. shopping.



Are you planning in time to practise relaxation.

How is your sleep routine .Are you establishing a good pattern that will support your activities in the day?

Pacing

Pacing is a key element to managing activity and many people already do it to some extent. It involves breaking tasks down into small manageable chunks, with rests in between and enables you to carry out a task that may otherwise be too much. The chunks can be spaced over as long a time period as you need. An example might be preparing a meal by doing the vegetables in the morning.

Consider the motto “Little and often” in response to any lengthy activity. You will find that you manage to achieve more in the long run.

Recognise your capacity. Consider any method that could help you, for example, using an alarm if you need to.

You could apply the tolerance /baseline approach to help you pace activities.

Problem solving/Adapting

To grade an activity means to change how you do it to reduce its impact on you. Examples may be: sitting down to do the ironing, or to wash up, using a labour saving device such as a dishwasher. Asking someone to drive you rather than drive yourself.

You may like to attend to your posture or the way you organise a task.

Communication

In order to put in place the above you often have to communicate your needs effectively and explain what you intend to do in order to manage your condition more effectively. e.g. saying no, setting boundaries on your time or even explaining to your loved ones that you are able to do certain tasks.

Gaining support and help

Are there any activities that somebody else can do on a regular basis? It might be simply asking a member of your family to clear the table after each meal, or getting someone to walk the dog twice a week. Delegation works best if it carried out regularly rather than a one-off. This can help you plan what you have left to do.

Remember the golden rule of delegation: if you delegate you cannot criticise!