



# Explaining Lupus With the Spoon Theory

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

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## Understanding the Spoon Theory

If you have lupus, you know that when people can't see visible evidence of illness they may doubt your pain. So, it often comes down to the lupus sufferer to explain their experiences to friends and family — but how can this be accomplished?

Christine Miserandino was trying to explain to her friend what it was like to live with lupus when the spoon theory was born. Essentially, the theory is a way for chronic pain sufferers to show others what it is like to live with their condition.

The theory has made such an impact that there is now a following of people who refer to themselves as “Spoonies.” These are chronic illness warriors who connect with each other and share experiences online.

Read on a join the conversation!

# 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 ILLNESSES**<sup>1</sup>

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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.<sup>2</sup>

— 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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