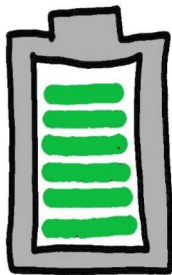
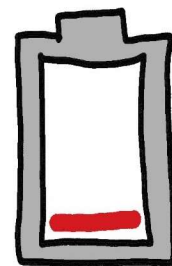


Energy Management

Energy accounting is a tool co-created by Maja Toudal and Dr Tony Attwood to manage the day to day stress experienced by a person with autism.

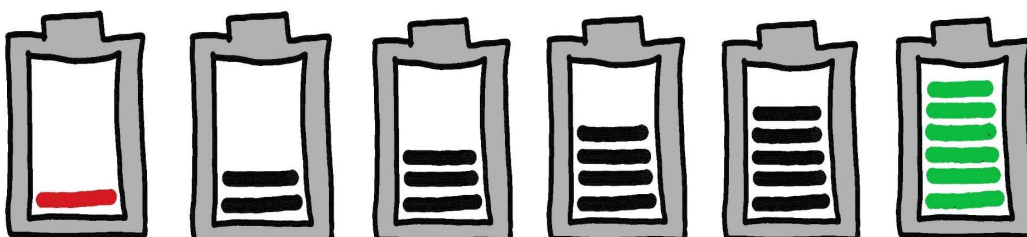
Think of your child's energy levels like a rechargeable battery. Throughout the day, they experience things that 'drain' their battery. These things might include regular activities such as getting ready for school, noise or other sensory experiences, as well as one-off activities such as a medical appointment or party.



There may also be things in your child's day that re-charge their battery. Time spent with a special interest, or listening to music for example. Spending time doing these things can restore your child's energy levels.

Energy accounting is a useful framework for making sense of the balance between activities that drain and recharge your child's battery. When energy levels get too low, meltdowns are more likely to happen as your child has little emotional energy left to manage any further demands. The idea is that when an activity, or several activities drain your child's battery, that time needs to be put aside to recharge it to prevent their battery draining completely.

Many children understand the concept of a battery. It can be useful to use this as an analogy to help them understand how to manage their own energy levels and mood.



Energy Management

Tips for using it with your child

- You know your child best. Whilst some children may be able to sit down and make sense of this straight away, others may need a more gradual approach.
- Your child will likely be familiar with needing to charge the battery on their phone, tablet or games console. This can be a helpful example to use to explain the idea that everyone has things that 'drain' and 're-charge' their batteries.
- Aim to start by making a list of things that 'drain' and 're-charge' your child's battery. If possible, try to do this with your child. It may be easier to start with the things that 're-charge'. If they're unsure, it might help to make some suggestions e.g. 'I've noticed that you like listening to music, is this something that helps you re-charge?'
- Encourage your child to rate each activity according to how much energy it uses or restores. Some children may not yet be able to make sense of this – don't worry if this is the case. You can choose together how to rate the activities, for example out of 10, or out of 100.
- Try to bring the language into daily life. You could do this by commenting on your child's activity, or your own. For example 'that trip to the dentist really drained my battery, I'm going to sit down for a few minutes with a cup of tea to recharge'.

