

## Energy Accounting

**Source:** *Energy Accounting: Stress Management and Mental Health Monitoring for Autism and Related Conditions*, 2024, Maja Toudal & Dr Tony Attwood, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, UK.

One of the causes and characteristics of autistic burnout and depression is long-term energy depletion.

Imagine that in your mind you have an energy bank account and that throughout the day there are withdrawals or deposits of energy. The following are **possible** withdrawals and deposits for a neurodivergent person.

<b>Withdrawal</b>	<b>Deposit</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Socializing</b></li><li>• <b>Change in routine or expectations</b></li><li>• <b>Making a mistake</b></li><li>• <b>Sensory sensitivity</b></li><li>• <b>Coping with anxiety</b></li><li>• <b>Negative thoughts</b></li><li>• <b>Crowds</b></li><li>• <b>Being teased or excluded</b></li><li>• <b>Sensitivity to other people's moods</b></li><li>• <b>Over analysing social performance</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Solitude</b></li><li>• <b>Special interest</b></li><li>• <b>Physical activity</b></li><li>• <b>Animals and nature</b></li><li>• <b>Computer games</b></li><li>• <b>Sleep</b></li><li>• <b>Drawing</b></li><li>• <b>Reading Harry Potter books</b></li><li>• <b>Listening to music</b></li><li>• <b>Favourite food</b></li></ul>

In the table below, make a list of the daily withdrawals and deposits of energy in your life in the activity/experience columns.

**Ledger**  
**Energy Account**

<b>Withdrawals</b>		<b>Deposits</b>	
<b>Activity/Experience</b>	<b>(0-100)</b>	<b>Activity/Experience</b>	<b>(0-100)</b>

With energy accounting, we need a form of 'currency', that is a numerical measure or value of how much an activity or experience is energy draining or refreshing from day to day.

The second part of this activity is to rate from zero to one hundred, the energy range of each activity or experience in your withdrawal or deposit columns. For example, on some days, socializing can drain you of energy at a value of around 20 but on other days could be 100. The entry in the ledger above would be 20-100. In the deposit column, on some days listening to music would have an energizing value of 15, while on other days a value of 40. The entry in the ledger would be 15-40.

The next part of this activity is to apply the concept of energy accounting to your experiences on a particular day. Use the Daily Energy Account Form below to list the specific activities or experiences that were either an energy withdrawal or deposit yesterday. Then write the value of each from zero to one hundred to measure how draining or energising they were.

Then add all the numerical values in each of the two columns to see if your energy bank balance at the end of yesterday was in debit or credit, i.e., in the black or in the red.

If it was in the black, with more energy deposits than withdrawals, this is good energy accounting, and you will have energy reserves in your energy bank account to cope with subsequent energy draining experiences over the next few days.

If the account is in the red, with more withdrawals than deposits, you will need to achieve more energy 'income' tomorrow or over the next few days. If you do not achieve a 'healthy' energy bank balance, the lack of energy in your account will increase the depth and duration of your lethargy and depression.

**Daily Energy Account Form**

<b>Date:</b>			
<b>Energy Account</b>			
<b>Withdrawals</b>		<b>Deposits</b>	
<b>Activity/Experience</b>	<b>(0-100)</b>	<b>Activity/Experience</b>	<b>(0-100)</b>
<b>Total:</b>		<b>Total:</b>	
<b>Closing Balance (Debit/Credit):</b>			
<p><b>If necessary, what can I do tomorrow to compensate? How can I schedule more energy infusing activities into my day?</b></p>			