

PACING: YOUR LIFESTYLE OF RHYTHM & REST

Get off the rollercoaster of the boom/bust cycle and go like a river instead! Rather than 'booming' on 'good days' with overactivity only to end up 'busting' with 'bad days' of more pain and underactivity, put in place a pacing plan that works for you and your daily life.

Here are some points based on *Your Pain Playbook* by Helen Roome

PACING POINTS:

- Pacing yourself is about setting and sustaining the right rhythm of alternating activity and rest periods for you and the different activities you need and want to do on an average day of your life.
- Start by asking this question about every activity you do on an average day: "How much of it can I do before it costs me too much?" Your answer will be in time (minutes/hours), repetitions, distance or other appropriate parameters.
- Then you could apply the general pacing ratio of 2:1 i.e. 2 'parts' activity to 1 'part' rest. Put a different way, you need half the amount of activity in the form of rest. Example: If you think you can do 30 mins of sitting at your computer and checking emails, you will plan to take 15 mins of rest break to offset the energy you used for that activity.
- But this is a general pacing ratio that you may need to personalise to suit where you are starting from: whether you tend to "push hard" or are more 'passive' every day can determine whether you need a different ratio of activity to rest to start from (Learn more in the book!)

REST REMINDERS

- The rest in pacing is *not* sleep and it is not necessarily *passive*! It can be necessary and helpful to just lie still or sit quietly for a little while in the daytime but rather do this outside of your bedroom where it can't slip into sleep or interfere with the important association your brain makes with your bed and sleep.
- "Active rest" is better in pacing. This is rest in the form of an activity you do that refreshes you enough to re-engage with more activity again, like: a movement break, sensory self-calming techniques, a creative task or a social interaction.

For comprehensive assessment, clinical care and compassionate support, get in touch with Helen at info@helenroome.co.za and www.helenroome.co.za