

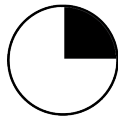
EXERCISE: ENERGY CHECK-IN

When you're living in chaos, it's easy to push yourself too hard—or to shut down completely. This exercise helps you figure out how much energy you actually have RIGHT NOW so you can choose tasks that match your capacity.

This isn't about being lazy. It's about working WITH your body and brain instead of against them. Sometimes you have energy for big tasks. Sometimes you only have energy for survival. **Both are okay.**

Time Needed

5 minutes



Energy Level

Low (this is designed to be doable even when you're exhausted)



What You'll Need

Paper and something to write with
(or you can just do this in your head)

Frequency

As needed, especially when you're about to tackle a task and aren't sure if you can handle it

How It Works

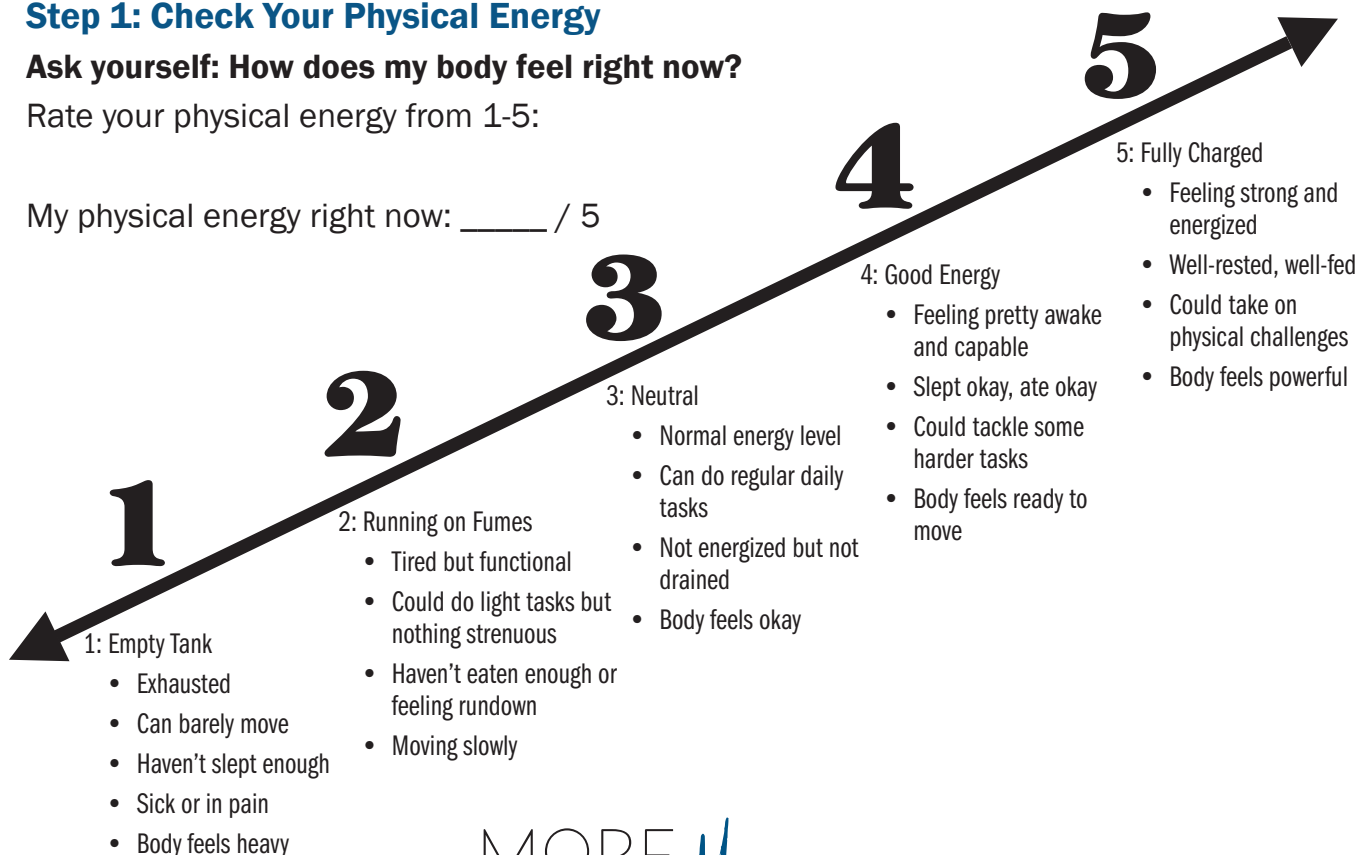
You'll check in with your physical, mental, and emotional energy levels, then use that information to choose appropriate tasks for RIGHT NOW.

Step 1: Check Your Physical Energy

Ask yourself: How does my body feel right now?

Rate your physical energy from 1-5:

My physical energy right now: ____ / 5

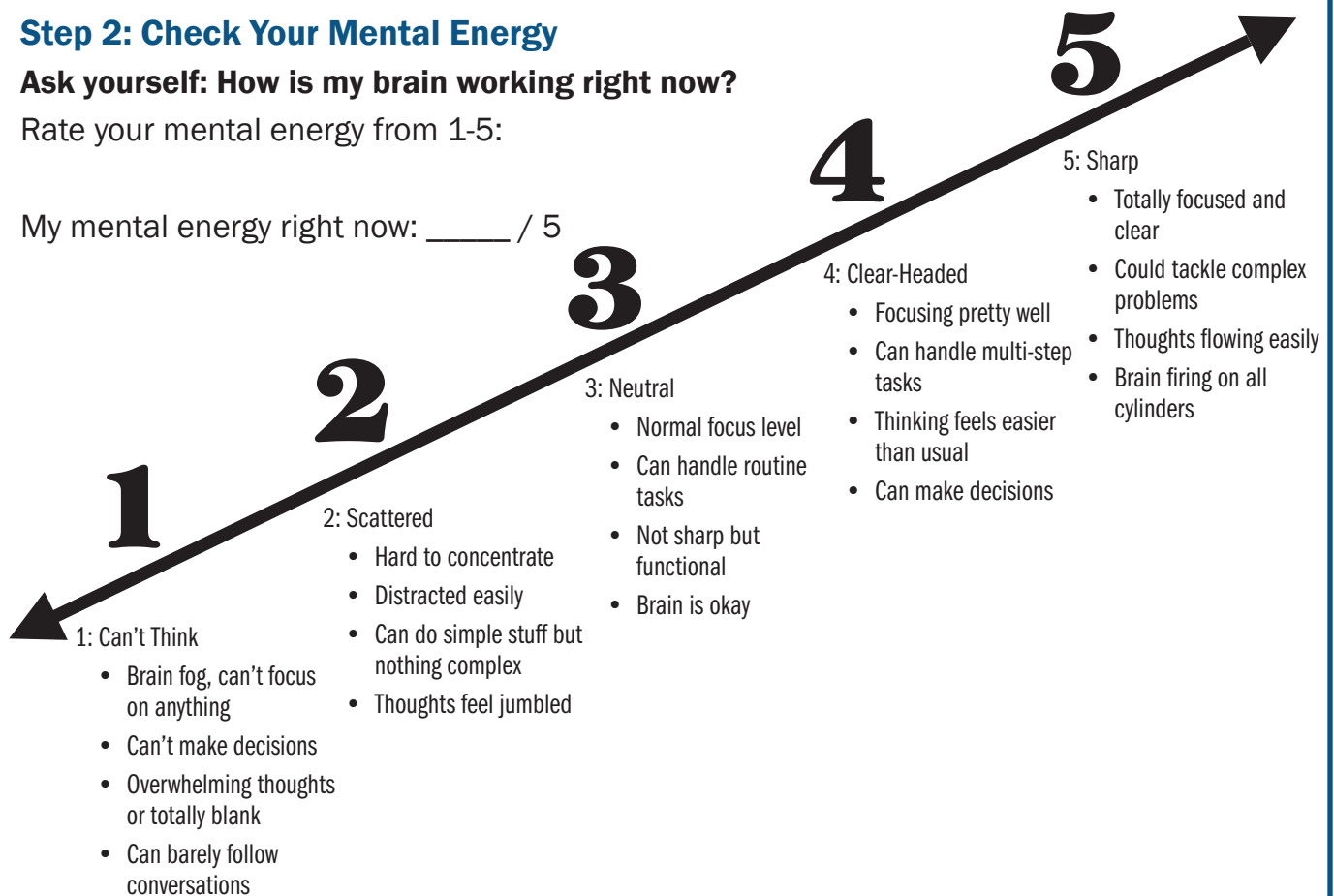


Step 2: Check Your Mental Energy

Ask yourself: How is my brain working right now?

Rate your mental energy from 1-5:

My mental energy right now: ____ / 5

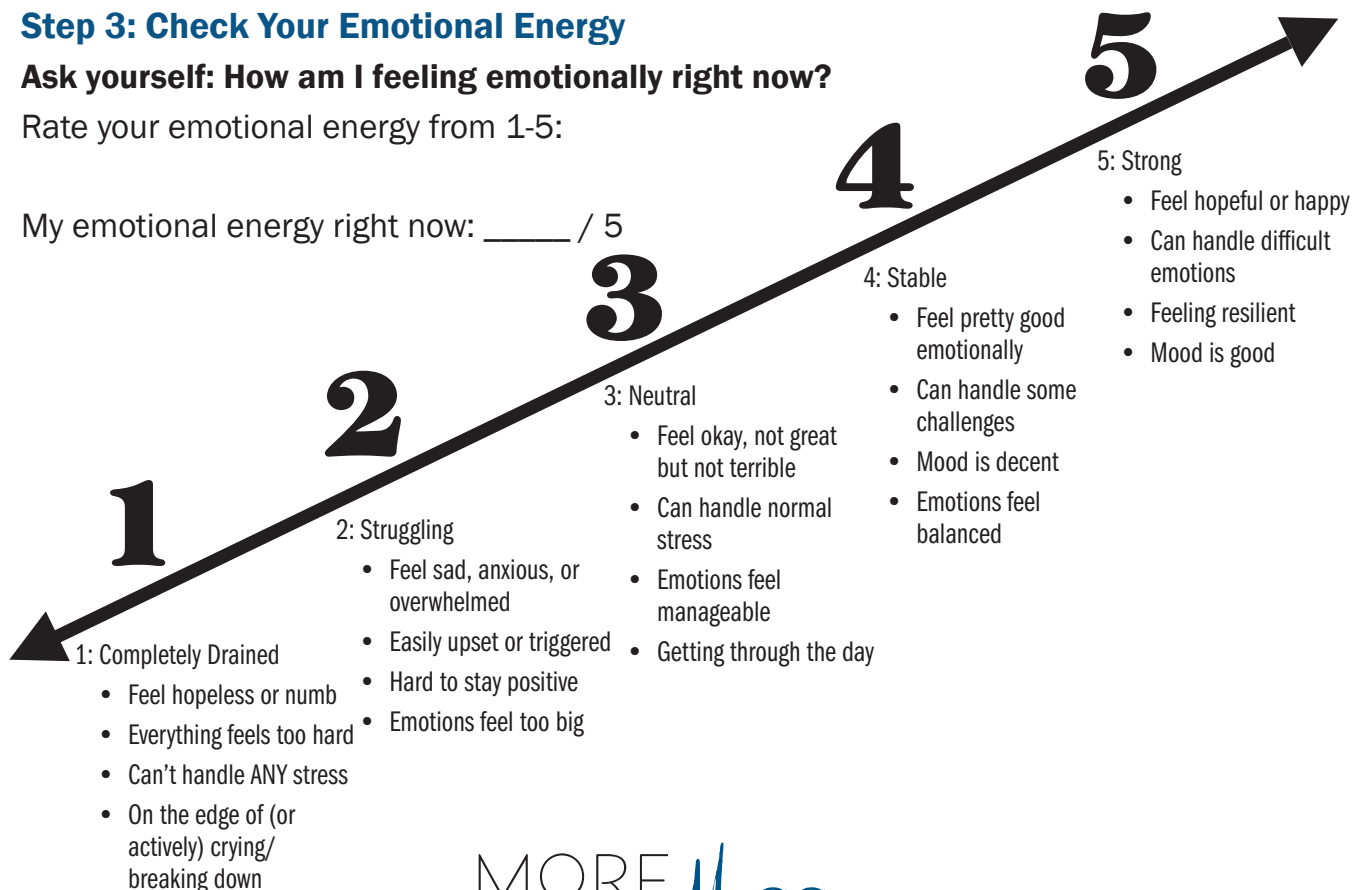


Step 3: Check Your Emotional Energy

Ask yourself: How am I feeling emotionally right now?

Rate your emotional energy from 1-5:

My emotional energy right now: ____ / 5



Step 4: Calculate Your Total Energy

Add up your three numbers:

Physical (____) + Mental (____) + Emotional (____) = Total: _____

Your total will be somewhere between 3 and 15.

Step 5: Match Tasks to Your Energy Level

Based on your total score, here's what you can realistically handle RIGHT NOW:

3-5 Points: SURVIVAL MODE

You're running on empty. This is a crisis energy level.

What you can do:

- Literally just survive this moment
- Drink water
- Eat something simple if you can
- Rest or sleep if possible
- Watch something mindless
- Ask for help if you can

What you CANNOT do right now:

- Clean or organize anything
- Make big decisions
- Deal with emotional stuff
- Tackle any goals

Your job right now: Get through this moment. That's it. Nothing else matters.

6-8 Points: LOW ENERGY

You're functioning but barely. You're depleted.

What you can do:

- Very small, simple tasks (5 minutes max)
- Pick up 5 pieces of trash
- Put dirty clothes in one pile
- Brush your teeth
- Eat a snack
- Text a friend

What you probably can't do right now:

- Clean your room
- Organize anything complex
- Deal with family conflict
- Homework that requires focus

Your job right now: Do ONE tiny thing, then rest. Don't push it.

9-11 Points: MODERATE ENERGY

You're functioning normally. You can handle regular tasks.

What you can do:

- Routine daily tasks (15-30 minutes)
- Make your bed
- Clean one small area (nightstand, corner of desk)
- Do a homework assignment
- Have a conversation
- Take a shower
- Make a simple meal
- Organize your backpack

What might be too much right now:

- Deep cleaning
- Emotional conversations
- Big organization projects
- Anything requiring sustained focus for more than 30 minutes

Your job right now: Tackle one normal task, take breaks as needed.

12-13 Points: GOOD ENERGY

You're doing well. You can handle moderate challenges.

What you can do:

- Bigger tasks (30-60 minutes)
- Clean a section of your room
- Sort through a pile of stuff
- Do a challenging homework assignment
- Have a difficult conversation
- Tackle something on your Working Toward list from the Gratitude & Goals exercise
- Try a new cleaning technique
- Make progress on a goal
- Focus on something from My Control Circle exercise: Circle 1 (full control) that you've been avoiding

What might still be too much:

- Entire room overhaul
- Multiple big tasks in one day
- Extremely emotional work

Your job right now: Use this energy wisely. Pick something meaningful and go for it.

14-15 Points: HIGH ENERGY

You're firing on all cylinders. This is rare; use it well.

What you can do:

- Major tasks or multiple tasks
- Deep clean a space
- Tackle a big organizing project
- Have tough conversations
- Work on long-term goals
- Help someone else
- Plan for the future
- Do something that usually feels impossible

What to watch out for:

- Don't burn yourself out by doing TOO much
- Don't expect this level every day
- Save some energy for tomorrow

Your job right now: Make the most of this while being strategic. This won't last forever.

Step 6: Choose Your Task

Based on your energy level, what's ONE thing you'll do right now?

I'm going to: _____

This matches my energy level because: _____

Using This Exercise

- **Make it a habit.** Before you start any task, do a quick energy check. This prevents:
 - Starting something you don't have energy to finish (which feels like failure)
 - Pushing yourself too hard and crashing
 - Wasting high-energy moments on low-energy tasks
- **Track patterns if you want.** You might notice:
 - You have more energy in the morning
 - Certain days of the week are worse
 - After school you're always depleted
 - After eating you have more energy
 - Your energy crashes after stressful interactions

Use that information to plan when you tackle harder tasks.

Accessibility Considerations

The energy scales in this exercise describe ranges relative to YOUR baseline, not a universal “normal.” If you have chronic illness, chronic pain, disability, or mental health conditions that affect your baseline energy, your “5” might look different than someone else’s “5,” and that’s expected. Rate yourself relative to YOUR typical range. If you’re never at a certain level (like never reaching physical energy of 5), that’s information too—adjust the scale to reflect your reality. The goal is understanding YOUR capacity right now, not comparing yourself to an able-bodied standard.

Important Reminders

- **Your energy level changes throughout the day.** Check in multiple times if needed. Morning, afternoon, and evening energy can all be very different.
- **Low energy doesn’t mean you’re failing.** Living in a stressful environment drains your energy constantly. Of COURSE you’re often at low energy. That’s a normal response to an abnormal situation.
- **Rest is productive.** If you’re at 3-5 points, resting IS the task. You’re not being lazy; you’re preventing complete burnout.
- **Don’t judge yourself for your energy level.** It is what it is. You can’t force yourself to have more energy by feeling guilty about it. Rest up; low energy is only temporary.
- **High-energy days are the time to tackle big stuff.** Don’t waste them on things you could do on low-energy days. Be strategic.

Real Talk

- You’re living in a situation that constantly drains your energy—physically (navigating clutter, managing stress), mentally (constant problem-solving, worry), and emotionally (shame, anger, sadness, fear).
- **It makes total sense that you’re often running on empty.**
- This exercise isn’t about fixing that or magically giving you more energy. It’s about being realistic with yourself so you don’t set yourself up for failure.
- Some days you’ll be at a 5. That’s okay. Your only job on those days is to survive.
- Some days you’ll be at a 14. That’s amazing. Use those days wisely.
- Some days you may have two different scores at any given time.
- Most days you’ll be somewhere in the middle. And that’s enough.

Work with what you’ve got, not what you wish you had.