

THE ENERGY INVENTORY

CAVEAT: Before We Begin

The purpose of this exercise is to take stock of your energy levels, under six headings. What we are NOT doing is creating new conditions for your relationship with yourself. Let's be aware of that risk, even before we begin. If you think this exercise is just going to create new conditions for valuing yourself, you might be better off just going for a walk instead!

Considering the bullet points underneath each numbered section below, score each section 0-5, where 0=Low (or Not at all True) and 5=High (or Totally True).

FIRST SOURCE: Physical Energy

The basic fuel for our days, physical energy is important for wellbeing. Even if, strictly speaking, it's not essential for self-worth, it sure helps.

1.1 Food

Score (0-5) ____

"Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es." ["Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are"], written by French doctor Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, 1826.

- I eat a healthy balance of carbs, protein and fibre
- I don't abuse sugar, chocolate or comfort-eat
- My weight is stable and reasonable for my age/build
- I take vitamins daily

1.2 Drink

Score (0-5) ____

"If you drink, don't drive. Don't even putt." – Dean Martin

- I drink at least 2L of water per day
- My caffeine intake is limited to breakfast only
- I do not drink sugary drinks e.g. Cola
- My alcohol consumption is within healthy limits

1.3 Exercise and Movement

Score (0-5) ____

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started" – Agatha Christie

- I walk at least 30mins most days
- I take cardiovascular exercise at least twice per week, to a level that suits me
- I enjoy dance, yoga or stretching exercises to keep muscles supple
- I take a physical break at lunchtime, even 10 minutes

1.4 Sleep, Rest & Play

Score (0-5) ____

"A field that is rested gives a beautiful crop" – Ovid

- I rise early, at my ideal time, which is ____
- I relax for at least an hour before bedtime, avoiding work or mental effort
- I don't drink caffeine after 15h
- I go to bed at my agreed time, which is ____ and get a good night's sleep
- I take exercise early v. late, ideally before 4pm
- I have several sources of pleasure in my life: things / activities that I enjoy for their own sake

Physical Energy Subtotal: _____ (max 20)

SECOND SOURCE: Environmental Energy

The energy and confidence that comes from how we interact with the world around us, including how we organise our daily life.

2.1 Self-organisation

Score (0-5) ____

"The nicest thing about not planning is that failure comes as a complete surprise, rather than being preceded by a period of worry and depression." – Sir John Harvey-Jones

- I practice an "email-diet" i.e. there is some focus-time in each day when I am not reading emails or being interrupted by messages
- For any one day, my task list does not exceed seven items; I have delegated (or dropped) everything else
- I can work efficiently, in 15-min time blocks (or less)
- I carry a buffer-list of things I can do while waiting for meetings to start, or while stuck in travel
- I consistently plan for the day, week and month ahead. Life doesn't just "happen to me"
- I am usually punctual, with some reserve of time when I can do tasks from my buffer-list

2.2 Physical environment

Score (0-5) ____

"Space-management is even more important than time-management" – Thomas Leonard

- My working area is clean, with adequate space, light and air
- My computer is adequate for the job, i.e. no crashes, or "hanging". IT is reliable
- My car is reliable and clean; insurance and tax is up-to-date
- I feel good in my home / office: I'm happy for anyone to visit now
- My papers and bills are up-to-date and filed away
- There is beauty in my life

2.3 Support

Score (0-5) ____

"None of us is as smart as all of us" – Ken Blanchard

- At work, I/we have in place a reliable form of IT support, accounting, administration, legal, web, etc., so that I can devote myself 100% to my core job
- When I get stuck, I can usually ask for help
- I have a contact-management system that enables me to keep in touch with all the people I need to
- There are no tax-, legal- or residency clouds hanging over me
- I have adequate insurance
- Beyond prudent planning, I am not worrying about money at other times

2.4 Work environment

Score (0-5) ____

"No one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it" – H E Luccock

- I have considerable autonomy over how I spend my time
- My objectives are reasonable
- When I express my point of view, I am listened to. The culture of the organisation encourages ideas and initiatives
- If I disagree with a course of action, it is safe to express this
- There is flexibility to attend to family and health issues
- I can take my full holiday allowance (If self-employed, I can take at least four weeks holiday per year)
- I am not unduly distracted by office politics
- I enjoy coming to work on a Monday morning
- Rewards: I am reaping high financial or professional rewards
- Recognition: I am recognised by my peers

Environmental Energy Subtotal: ____ (max 20)

THIRD SOURCE: Mental Energy

The energy that comes from mental agility, a sense of mental aliveness and the ability to manage our attention.

3.1 Focus

Score (0-5) ____

"Obstacles are things a person sees when he takes his eyes off his goal" – E Joseph Cossman

- I have short-term goals (for this day, week) that keep me motivated
- I can manage my attention and prevent distractions
- I feel I am making progress
- My goals are realistic and achievable (at least most of them!)
- I feel I have something to look forward to every day, other than just finishing work
- I'm not struggling with decisions that I should already have made

3.2 Learning

Score (0-5) ____

"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions" – Oliver Wendell Holmes

- I don't create excuses to avoid learning; I can tolerate the imperfections that go with being a student. I'm able to make mistakes as part of a learning process, without embarrassment
- I can place myself in the position of "student": I don't always have to be "teacher"
- I'm learning something now that stretches my understanding, memory or awareness
- My self awareness includes increasing awareness of my levels of personal energy and self-confidence, and the circumstances in which these may fluctuate

3.3 Dealing with Change

Score (0-5) ____

"To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often" – Winston Churchill

- When plans change, I can deal with that without becoming angry or depressed
- I can support change rather than being critical or resenting it
- There is variety in my life
- I demonstrate flexibility in my day-to-day dealings with people
- I can courteously deal with interruptions, traffic jams and unexpected obstacles

3.4 Influence & Communication skills

Score (0-5) ____

"The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority" – Ken Blanchard

- I am able to say No, when necessary to defend my wellbeing or my plan for the day
- I am not postponing a dreaded conversation
- I can introduce myself with reasonable confidence
- My communication skills are constantly improving, including my ability to influence others
- I am able to make requests: to say what I want or need
- I can deal with refusal or rejection
- I constantly develop problem-solving skills

3.5 Curiosity

Score (0-5) ____

"Variety's the spice of life / That gives it all its flavor" – William Cowper

- I have adequate variety in my life
- My self-care routine is healthy, not boring
- I am constantly learning and discovering new things
- I can see new professional challenges ahead, to which I look forward
- I find my work interesting

Mental Energy Subtotal: _____

FOURTH SOURCE: Emotional Energy

The energy that comes from a sense of feeling good inside, appropriate boundaries with others and a positive outlook on the future.

4.1 Letting Go

Score (0-5) ____

"I found the GOOD in Goodbye" – Beyoncé Knowles

- When I fail to stick to my plan, I can accept the failure and let-go. Yesterday's failure does not cause me to give up today
- I choose my battles: I don't get involved in affairs that don't concern me
- I accept my own imperfections; I don't get discouraged by my own flaws and mistakes
- I can tolerate the fact that others are imperfect, so I don't waste energy on getting angry with people or situations that I cannot change
- I can let go of impossible objectives, without excessive self-reproach
- I don't live life in a constant state of guilt; I don't suffer from self-flagellation or remorse
- I can let go feelings of envy or jealousy

4.2 Optimism

Score (0-5) ____

"Pessimism leads to weakness, optimism leads to power" – William James

- Even in dark times, I can hope for a better future
- I look for the opportunity in every change
- I actively cultivate an attitude of gratitude in the present, even in tough times
- I am usually drawn to positive people

4.3 Awareness of strengths and talents

Score (0-5) ____

"A really great talent finds its happiness in execution" – Goethe

- I can recall times when I have been successful
- I can list at least five positive qualities that have enabled me to be successful
- I can take stock honestly, identifying weaknesses without drifting into negative thinking about myself
- I don't suffer from guilt, nor constantly beating myself up
- I can take feedback – even unfair criticism – without being consumed by anger, bitterness or fear

4.4 Self discipline

Score (0-5) ____

"Because of their size, parents may be difficult to discipline properly" – P. J. O'Rourke

- I can delay gratification until a task is done or it's time e.g. for food
- I don't depend on a deadline to get a job done
- I don't abandon self-care (e.g. exercise) for convenience or just "I don't feel like it" reasons
- I can do things that I don't want to do

4.5 Self care

Score (0-5) ____

"Smile, breathe and go slowly" – Thich Nhat Hanh

- Self-nurturing: In tough times, I take even more care of myself
- I know what my emotional needs are, and I take care of these
- Appearance: I feel confident in how I look (clothes, hair, shoes, accessories)
- I can spend moments with myself, with perfect peace and ease
- I do not comfort-eat, (or drink), as a substitute for emotional "food"
- I do not suffer from addictions (e.g. alcohol, food, sex, gambling, internet, video games etc)

Emotional Energy Subtotal: _____

FIFTH SOURCE: Social Energy

The energy that comes from supportive and stimulating interaction with friends, family and community: particularly people who help us to see ourselves.

5.1 Connection to others

Score (0-5) ____

"A true friend never gets in your way, unless you happen to be going down" – Arnold H. Glasow

- I feel safe with my work colleagues: there is not a culture of gossip, nor cloak-and-dagger politics
- I feel supported and encouraged by close friends and family members
- I have let go of people (or events) that drag me down
- I have people whom I can talk to, that inspire me

5.2 Asking for help

Score (0-5) ____

"Remind yourself that it's OK not to be perfect." - Anon

- I'm able to ask for help, rather than struggle alone
- I can overcome my reluctance to talk about my issues or the decisions I need to make
- I can make requests without obligating, blaming or manipulating other people

5.3 Healthy inter-dependence

Score (0-5) ____

"The victim mindset dilutes the human potential. By not accepting personal responsibility for our circumstances, we greatly reduce our power to change them." – Steve Maraboli

- I take responsibility for my own life, including my energy levels and self-esteem
- I am not overly dependent on a spouse, parent or any other one individual
- When I think about low energy or confidence, I do not find myself blaming others
- I do not regard myself as responsible for the happiness or welfare of another adult
- I am not trying to rescue "problem people" as a means to provide meaning in my own life

5.4 Regular interaction

Score (0-5) ____

"There are no strangers here, only friends you have not yet met" – William Butler Yeats

- Every week, I am meeting and conversing with someone who inspires me
- I have friends whom I trust and whom I interact with regularly
- For relaxation, I am not dependent on video games, TV or solitary leisure activities
- When I'm with friends, I don't feel bored, nor do I need to role-play
- When I come away, I feel energised and not drained

Social Energy Subtotal: _____

SIXTH SOURCE: Purposeful Energy

The energy that comes from a sense of *significance* in one's life, whether than comes from humanistic, spiritual or other sources.

6.1 Purpose

Score (0-5) ____

"Life is without meaning. You bring the meaning to it" – Joseph Campbell

- I know why I come to work; and even on days that this objective is not being fully realised, it's still worth it.
- I can see the value I bring, and I do not define my work-satisfaction simply by how many tasks I get done. I accept that I won't get it all done, and I have come to terms with that
- My personal values (e.g. inspiration, freedom, excellence, etc.) are fully expressed in the work that I do
- There is something that really interests me, that I can always turn to for inspiration

6.2 Integrity

Score (0-5) ____

"Integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is watching." – C. S. Lewis

- I'm not doing anything that is out of integrity with my values
- I do not lie or exaggerate. In particular, I am honest with myself
- I don't have any personal habits that diminish my self-esteem
- My actions are congruent with my words

6.3 Sense of contribution

Score (0-5) ____

"Aim above morality. Be not simply good, be good for something." – Henry David Thoreau

- I'm using my talents in a way that's useful to others
- I have a purpose beyond my own self-interest
- I know that I'm contributing, so I'm not dependent on the applause of others
- My attitude to life includes prioritising self-care as high as my care for others

6.4 Development and Growth

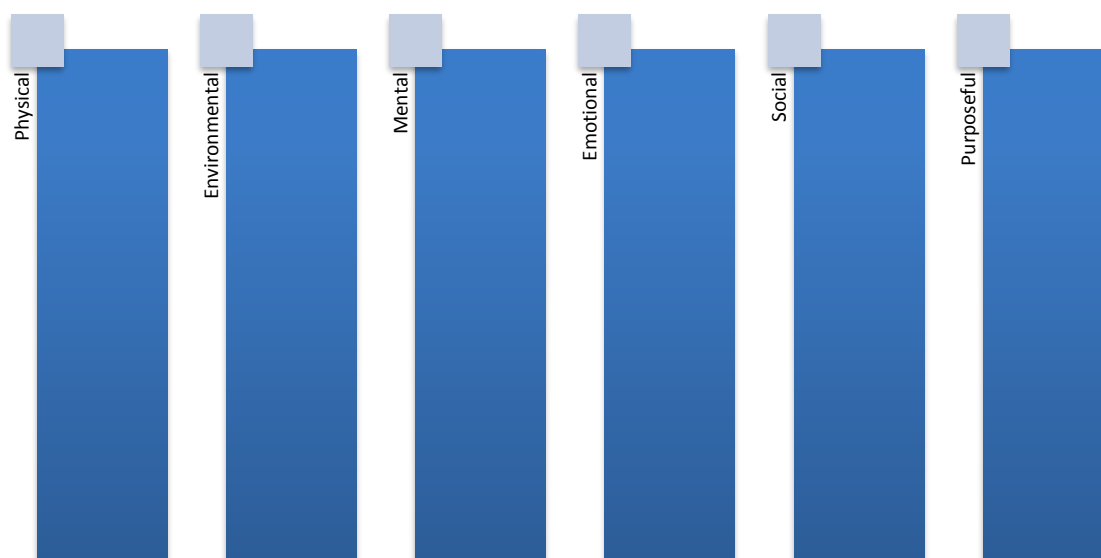
Score (0-5) ____

“Constant development is the law of life, and a man who always tries to maintain his dogmas in order to appear consistent drives himself into a false position.” – Mahatma Gandhi

- I am choosing my path in life/work
- I attend to my spiritual practice
- I am learning from my experience and growing in self-esteem
- I value the contribution of others and I express this regularly to them
- I look forward to the future

Meaningful Energy Subtotal: _____

OVERALL TOTAL: _____



SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

1. Decide to make energy (and self-worth) your core personal project, as opposed to weight-loss, diets or anything else. Create a journal (electronic or paper) as evidence of your decision.
2. Using your self-worth journal, complete each of these sentences 6-10 times. Do so quickly, without thinking, ideally when you are very relaxed e.g. after meditation or in the evening after eating.
 - “If I were to boost my energy level by just 5%...”
 - “If I were 5% more friendly towards myself...”
3. Choose three of the six Energy Sources above that you would enjoy improving, and that would boost your self-worth, too.