

Tuning signals

Here's a reminder of some of the key things to think about when starting to figure out what your tuning signals are, and how to manage them.

What are tuning signals and how do I spot them?

- Tuning signals (or early warning indicators) are little signals your body gives you when you're close to overdoing it
- They can be subtle, often minor versions of your key symptoms - e.g. painful glands, tight throat, brain fog, shaky feeling
- Everyone's tuning signals are different - believe me, I've helped many people and no two have been the same!
- You might not have spotted your signals for three key reasons:
 - You're still pushing yourself too much and don't have enough time clear of any symptoms for early warning indicators to be a thing yet
 - You've stopped noticing them, because you've been tackling this for so long - they become like 'wallpaper'
 - You're actively ignoring them, due to previous conditioning. Let me explain: if you're used to exercising or playing sports, you'll have been conditioned to ignore any twinges or pains...if you didn't, you wouldn't have got very far! However, at the moment you can't ignore them or push through - you very much need to spot them.

Why are they important?

- It's very easy to look at tuning signals as negative - they aren't, after all, pleasant sensations
- However, I encourage you to 'reframe' that view and start to look at them as **HELPFUL**
- Because that's exactly what they are
- Our bodies are hardwired to try and keep us safe and well and will do what they can to encourage us to do the right/safe thing
- These tuning signals are early warning indicators from your body that you're close to overdoing it
- By spotting them, acknowledging them, and acting upon them, you will start to avoid triggering flare-ups and you'll be giving your body the stability it needs to restore and heal.

So what do I do when I spot one?

- Quite simply, you need to either stop or adjust whatever it is that you're currently doing - as quickly as possible
- If you're out for a walk, turn home and walk slowly back
- If you're in the middle of housework or perhaps on a work call, stop and go and rest
- If you're talking to a friend on the phone, make your apologies and leave
- **This all takes discipline!** But try to do this as often as you can, and you'll soon realise how beneficial it is - and that in itself will encourage you to act on your tuning signals more going forward.

What's the difference between a Tuning Signal and a Symptom?

My simple explanation for this is that a tuning signal is an early warning that you **could** be close to overdoing it if you're not careful; whereas it's often the case that you've already pushed yourself too far if you're experiencing an actual full-blown symptom. By full-blown symptom I mean perhaps a period of several hours/day(s) of feeling extremely fatigued, brain fogged etc.

Tuning signals can often be milder versions of our signature symptoms (e.g. a tight head, rather than an actual headache; weaker limbs, rather than actual full-blown fatigue; a loss of 'brain clarity', as opposed to heavy brain fog). But sometimes they can be completely different, such as my own experience of sensitive lymph nodes. There's no prescribed list I can share I'm afraid as it's important you tune in and identify yours without too much prompting from me.

Your tuning signals are such an important part of your fatigue recovery approach, so please start thinking about this now. Don't fixate on them, give them curious observation. They're helpful remember, not something to fear.