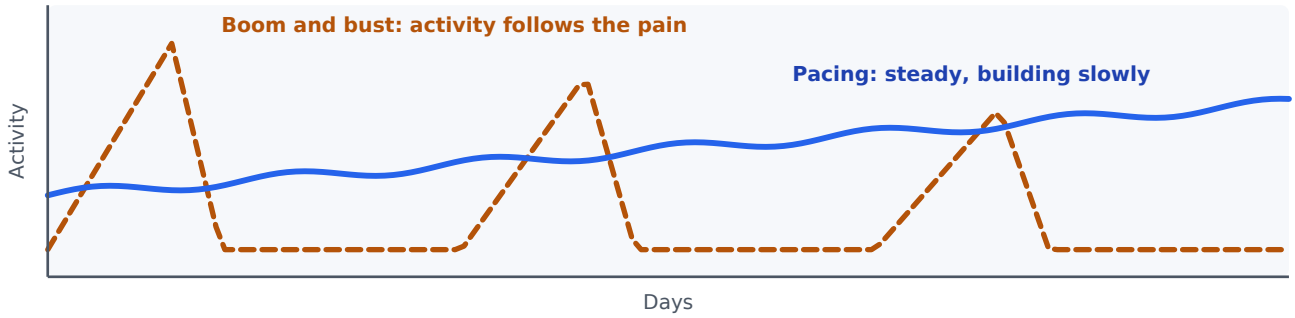
Boom and bust

Why good days can lead to bad weeks, and what to do about it.

On a good day it is tempting to catch up on everything. The next day, or the day after, pain or exhaustion hits and you are forced to rest. Then, once you recover, you push again. Over time the good days get fewer and the crashes get longer.



Why it happens

- Activity is guided by how you feel, not by a plan.
- There is a backlog, and guilt about it.
- "I must make the most of feeling OK."
- Stopping only when pain or fatigue forces you to.

The alternative: pacing

Pacing means doing a planned amount, on good days and bad days alike, and stopping before you have to.

1. **Find your baseline.** How much of an activity can you do without a flare-up afterwards, even on a bad day? Start below that.
2. **Go by the clock or the count, not the pain.** "Ten minutes of weeding" or "walk to the second lamppost".
3. **Take breaks before you need them.** Short and frequent.
4. **Switch tasks and positions.** Sit, stand, move.
5. **Build up slowly.** A small increase every week or two, and only when the current level is comfortable.
6. **On good days, stick to the plan.** This is the hardest part and the one that matters most.

> **The result**
> You do a little less on good days and a lot more on bad days. Over a month, you get more done with fewer crashes.

An activity where I tend to boom and bust

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