

Burnout Recovery Plan

Recovering from burnout is possible, but might require trying new things, like asking for help, taking intentional breaks, and building new healthy habits. This worksheet is designed to help you figure out what you need in order to recover from burnout and what solutions might work best for you.

Get familiar with burnout



Burnout happens when the demands on our time and energy exceed our resources. This imbalance could happen for a variety of reasons, like increased stress at work, school, or home; personal struggles like illness, injury, or mental health difficulties; financial challenges; or a lack of support.

What are the **demands** (responsibilities) that are contributing to your burnout?

Which of your **resources** (like time, energy, health, money, support) are being challenged?

Research shows that burnout results in a variety of feelings that tend to fall into three types. Check off any of the types relevant to you:

- Exhaustion: feeling deeply tired or drained on an emotional level
- Cynicism: feeling pessimistic, negative, or insensitive about yourself, other people, or the future
- Inefficacy: feeling like a failure, or that you can't perform as well as you used to

You can also take our [free burnout quiz](#) to more deeply assess your burnout symptoms and receive recommendations based on your answers.

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*



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Consider a break and get support

Whether it's just for a day or for weeks at a time, support and breaks help us heal from burnout because they reduce the demands on us and allow our minds and bodies time to recover. And because prolonged burnout can lead to increased risk of illness, cardiovascular problems, and mental illness, asking for help and/or taking breaks are **worth it**.

Think about your demands and resources above, and consider the break and support ideas below.

For work burnout ideas, including the ones below, explore our [Work Burnout Workbook](#)

- Get support from management with your workload or other workplace problems
- Learn new time management and task prioritization techniques
- Review your paid time off (PTO) policy and schedule a break
- For burnout affected by challenging psychological or physical conditions, or those of a family member, consider solutions like short-term disability or family medical leave

For school burnout ideas, including the ones below, explore our [School Burnout Workbook](#)

- Get support with planning your education, writing and research, career prep, etc. on campus
- Get support with finances, accommodations, safety, health, feeling alone, etc. on campus
- Learn new ways to break down assignments and plan your semester

For caregiver burnout ideas, including the ones below, explore our [Caregiver Burnout Workbook](#)

- Learn about breaking down caregiving tasks and asking for support
- Get financial support, caregiving advice, or connect with specific local resources
- Learn about protecting your job and healthcare and taking unpaid family medical leave
- Learn about respite care (temporary, professional caregiving so you can focus on your own needs)

Would you benefit from more support? If so, note the supports you need and who you can ask.

Would you benefit from taking a break? If so, note how, when, and for how long.

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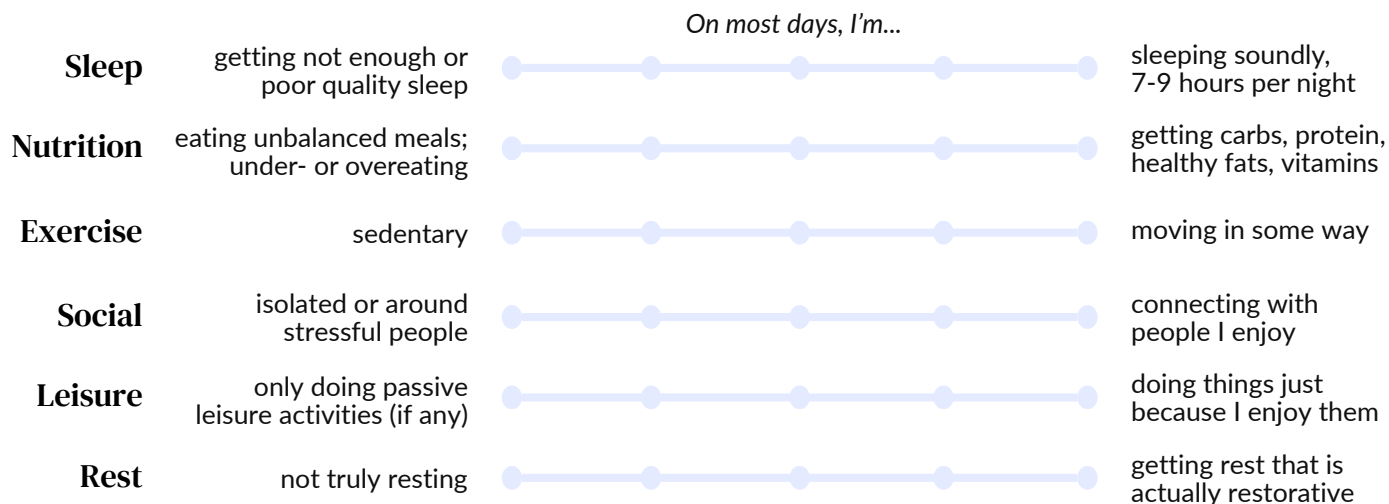


Burnout Recovery Plan

Focus on key areas of health

When we are stressed by high demands from work, school, or caregiving, healthy habits can feel much less important. But our mental and physical health are foundational. It's much harder to overcome challenging demands effectively when we are out of a healthy balance.

Below, check in with six areas of your health, and mark how you're doing from very poorly on the left to very well on the right.



Which area of health are you struggling with the most?

.....

.....

If you could improve one area of health, which would make the greatest impact on your burnout?

.....

.....

Changing habits is hard, especially when you're highly stressed. **For the most impactful area of health, pick just 1-2 habits on the next page to try**, or write your own idea. Once one habit is well-established, you can try another - but don't try to change lots of habits at once.

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Sleep

- Reduce screentime, caffeine, and alcohol before bed
- Use your bed only for sleep or sex (not for working or being on screens)
- Get out of bed and do something boring if you can't sleep
- Charge your phone away from your bed
- Aim for similar bed and wake times each day
- Other: _____

Nutrition

- Batch cook or prep on days off, so you can skip cooking on work days
- Embrace the freezer section for pre-chopped veggies, pre-cooked grains, etc.
- Try assembly-only meals (like rotisserie chicken, veggies and dip, fruit and yogurt, etc.)
- Don't skip meals - even a few minutes to fuel your body is worth it
- If cost is a major stressor or barrier to healthy eating, check out [assistance](#) in your area
- Other: _____

Exercise

- Take an active break by walking around the block or stretching
- Relieve stress with social exercise, like walking, running, biking, or pickleball with a friend
- Shake off the day and use up stressful energy with exercise after work
- Pair exercise with your favorite show or podcast
- Try bodyweight exercises for equipment-free workouts you can do at home
- Other: _____

Social

- Block your calendar by scheduling regular social time in advance
- Practice asking supportive friends and family for help when you need it
- Practice setting polite but firm boundaries
- Connect with a support group in your area
- Find online or in-person connections with people who share your interests
- Other: _____

Leisure

- Revisit leisure activities you used to love when you were younger
- Try leisure activities you can do in brief periods over time (like coloring or playing music)
- Ask to join a friend or family in their leisure activities, or invite them to join you
- Make a list of potential activities and record which you like or dislike as you try them
- Get inspired by exploring books or videos about hobbies you're interested in
- Other: _____

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Rest

- Minimize screentime while resting - screen binges are easy to slip into and are not restorative
- Switch modes: if your brain is tired, engage your body; if your body is tired, engage your brain
- Build rest time into an intentional end-of-day routine
- If you can't calm your mind, write out all your concerns and move your list elsewhere for later
- Tell a loved one of your goal to rest so they can help you stay accountable
- Other: _____

Habits can be difficult to change. Set a reminder or alarm to help make sure you engage in your new habit regularly. Use the calendar below to keep track of your progress.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Wk 1							
Wk 2							
Wk 3							
Wk 4							

Recovering from burnout might be difficult, but you can do it. Your mental and physical health are worth the effort!

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