

Dealing with Burnout — Workbook

This workbook guides you through the hands-on exercises for each module of the Dealing with Burnout course. Complete each section sequentially — each builds on the previous assessment. Set aside 30–45 minutes per section and work somewhere private where you can write honestly.

Understanding Burnout

Establish your burnout baseline using validated tools and identify your primary mismatch domain before building any recovery plan.

Worksheet: Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) Self-Scoring

Rate each statement 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). Items marked (R) are reverse-scored: enter 5 minus your rating. Total each subscale, then divide by 8 for a mean. Exhaustion mean above 2.25 and Disengagement mean above 2.10 indicate clinically elevated burnout on that subscale (Demerouti et al., 2010 cutoffs).

E1: There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work (R)

E2: After my work, I tend to need more time than in the past to relax and feel better

E3: I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well

E4: During my work, I often feel emotionally drained

E5: After working, I have enough energy for my leisure activities (R)

E6: After my work, I feel completely drained and exhausted

E7: Usually I manage to successfully cope with the demands of my work (R)

E8: When I work, I usually feel energised (R)

Exhaustion Subtotal (reverse-score items 1,3,5,7 before summing)

Exhaustion Mean (Subtotal ÷ 8)

D1: I always find new and interesting aspects of my work

D2: It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way

D3: Lately, I tend to think less at work and do my job almost mechanically

D4: I find my work to be a positive challenge (R)

D5: Over time, one can become disconnected from this type of work

D6: Sometimes I feel sickened by my work tasks

D7: This is the only type of work that I can imagine myself doing (R)

D8: I feel more and more engaged in my work (R)

Disengagement Subtotal (reverse-score items 4,7,8 before summing)

Disengagement Mean (Subtotal ÷ 8)

Stage based on scores (engagement / overextension / disengagement / burnout)

Exercise: Six Areas of Worklife — Mismatch Rating

Read the description of each area from the lesson. Rate each 1–5 (1 = severe mismatch, 5 = strong fit). Then answer the reflection prompts below for any area you scored 2 or below.

- Which area scored lowest? Describe a specific recent incident that illustrates that mismatch — be concrete about what happened, who was involved, and how it affected you.

- If you could change one thing in your lowest-scored area within the next 30 days, what would it be? Is it within your control to change, your manager's control, or outside both?

- Which area scored highest? How could you use that strength as a resource to buffer the areas where you scored lowest?

- Write one sentence that completes this: The primary driver of my current burnout is _____ because _____.

Checklist: Burnout Dimension Identification Checklist

- Completed OLBI and calculated both subscale means
- Identified which OLBI subscale is highest (most elevated)
- Rated all six Areas of Worklife and noted lowest-scoring domain
- Written one-sentence primary driver statement
- Distinguished my symptoms from clinical depression using the domain-specificity test (symptoms improve away from work context)
- Noted whether professional referral is warranted and have a name of a GP or counsellor if so

Auditing Your Energy Drains

Map all significant demands and resources in your work and personal life, then prioritise which drains to address first using an impact-effort matrix.

Worksheet: Job Demands-Resources Audit

Complete both columns as thoroughly as possible for your current role and living situation. Be specific — "long hours" is less useful than "11–12 hour days 4 days per week with no clear-off time." After listing, rate each demand for type: C (challenge) or H (hindrance). Resources must be actually accessible to count.

Demand 1 — Description

Demand 1 — Type (C/H)

Demand 2 — Description

Demand 2 — Type (C/H)

Demand 3 — Description

Demand 3 — Type (C/H)

Demand 4 — Description

Demand 4 — Type (C/H)

Demand 5 — Description

Demand 5 — Type (C/H)

Demand 6 — Description

Demand 6 — Type (C/H)

Resource 1 — Description

Resource 2 — Description

Resource 3 — Description

Resource 4 — Description

Resource 5 — Description

Resource 6 — Description

Count of hindrance demands (H)

Count of active resources

Demand-Resource balance assessment (note if demands >> resources)

Exercise: Personal Energy Drain Scoring

Score each of the five personal energy drains 0–4 (0 = not a drain at all, 4 = severely draining). Total your score and consult the key: 0–4 mild, 5–9 moderate, 10–16 severe personal depletion. Then answer the prompts.

- Sleep: How many hours per night on average over the past two weeks? How long does it take you to fall asleep? Do you wake between 2–5 am? Score 0–4 and describe your current sleep pattern.
 - Physical sedentariness: How many days per week do you get 20+ minutes of moderate movement? What has changed from 6 months ago? Score 0–4 and note when you last had consistent exercise.
 - Which of the five drains (sleep, sedentariness, nutrition, relational conflict, psychological non-detachment) would produce the biggest energy return if addressed this week? Write a specific first action you could take tomorrow.
 - Describe your current evening routine from finishing work to sleeping. Where does work thinking intrude? What is currently helping you wind down, if anything?
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Checklist: Impact-Effort Triage Checklist

- Listed at least 5 demands and 4 resources in JD-R audit
- Classified demands as challenge or hindrance
- Scored all five personal energy drains
- Identified top two quick wins (high impact, low effort to address)
- Identified at least one major structural change to plan for days 61–90
- Written the first action for each quick win with a specific day to begin
- Noted tasks in the avoid-for-now quadrant that could be dropped or delegated

Building Your Recovery Plan

Schedule specific rest and active recovery practices, rebuild restorative social connection, and draft the core of your 90-day recovery roadmap.

Exercise: Rest Deficit Identification and Scheduling

For each of the seven rest types (physical, mental, emotional, social, sensory, creative, spiritual), rate your current deficit 0–3 (0 = adequate, 3 = severely depleted). Identify the two highest scores. Then use the prompts to plan one concrete activity per deficit into this week.

- Physical rest deficit: What is your current sleep duration and quality? When did you last take a full day with no obligations? List one passive rest practice and one active rest practice you can schedule this week, with specific times.
- Emotional rest deficit: Who in your life can you speak to without performing or managing their reaction? When did you last express how you are actually doing to someone who could hold it without fixing it? Plan one such conversation this week.

• Sensory rest deficit: Estimate your daily screen time and total environmental noise exposure. What is one 20-minute daily sensory rest practice you can begin tomorrow — no screens, reduced noise, reduced stimulation?

• Which of the seven types surprised you most as a deficit? What did you previously think counted as rest in that category that may not have actually been restoring you?

Worksheet: Social Map and Reconnection Plan

List up to 12 people in your current network. Classify each as draining (D), neutral (N), or restorative (R). Then identify your trusted three and plan your first three reconnection touchpoints. Be specific about medium and timing.

Person 1 — Name (or initials)

Person 1 — Classification (D/N/R)

Person 1 — Why (one phrase)

Person 2 — Name (or initials)

Person 2 — Classification (D/N/R)

Person 2 — Why (one phrase)

Person 3 — Name (or initials)

Person 3 — Classification (D/N/R)

Person 3 — Why (one phrase)

Person 4 — Name (or initials)

Person 4 — Classification (D/N/R)

Person 4 — Why (one phrase)

Person 5 — Name (or initials)

Person 5 — Classification (D/N/R)

Person 5 — Why (one phrase)

Trusted Person 1 — Name and how they support you

Trusted Person 2 — Name and how they support you

Trusted Person 3 — Name and how they support you

Reconnection touchpoint 1 — Person, medium, date, duration

Reconnection touchpoint 2 — Person, medium, date, duration

Reconnection touchpoint 3 — Person, medium, date, duration

Checklist: Recovery Plan Week-One Checklist

- Rated all seven rest types and identified two highest deficits
- Scheduled one activity per deficit into this week's calendar with specific days and times
- Completed social map (at least 6 people rated)
- Identified trusted three and have a plan to contact at least one this week
- Written shutdown ritual for end of workday (specific cue, transition, activity)
- Set a phone curfew time for evenings and have removed email from home screen
- Chosen one active recovery practice from lesson 5 to trial for 7 days

Sustainable Prevention — Boundaries and Values

Write your DESC boundary scripts, complete the values-behaviour gap audit, and finalise your 90-day roadmap and relapse prevention card.

Exercise: DESC Boundary Script Writing

Choose the most urgent boundary you need to communicate at work or at home. Draft a full DESC script using the four-part structure. Then do a second script for a different context. Practise reading each script aloud — adjust until it sounds like your natural voice while remaining specific.

- Describe step: Write the specific, observable situation in one to two sentences with a concrete detail (frequency, duration, a specific incident). Avoid adjectives like 'always' or 'never' — use numbers and dates where possible.

- Express and Specify steps: Write your first-person experience statement and your concrete, timed request. Is the request something the other person can actually action? If not, revise until it is specific enough to be actionable by next week.

- Anticipate the objection: What is the most likely pushback to your request? Write a one-sentence response that acknowledges their concern without abandoning your request.

- What internal limit (a self-directed boundary) have you been violating most consistently over the past month? Write a specific rule you will follow for the next 30 days, including what you will do when you notice yourself about to cross it.

Worksheet: Values-Behaviour Gap Audit

List your top five values in rank order. For each, estimate the percentage of your current working week spent on tasks that express that value. Then note one specific task or responsibility that is actively in conflict with that value. The audit does not require immediate action — awareness is step one.

Value 1 — Name

Value 1 — Definition in your own words

Value 1 — Estimated % of work week expressing it

Value 1 — One task in conflict with this value

Value 2 — Name

Value 2 — Definition in your own words

Value 2 — Estimated % of work week expressing it

Value 2 — One task in conflict with this value

Value 3 — Name

Value 3 — Definition in your own words

Value 3 — Estimated % of work week expressing it

Value 3 — One task in conflict with this value

Value 4 — Name

Value 4 — Definition in your own words

Value 4 — Estimated % of work week expressing it

Value 4 — One task in conflict with this value

Value 5 — Name

Value 5 — Definition in your own words

Value 5 — Estimated % of work week expressing it

Value 5 — One task in conflict with this value

Which value has the largest gap between importance and expression?

One structural change that would close that gap by 10–20% within 90 days

Checklist: 90-Day Roadmap and Relapse Prevention Card Completion

- Completed full 90-day roadmap template (use the accompanying Excel template)
- Identified personal stress signature — listed at least 4 early warning signals in order of appearance
- Defined green / amber / red zone thresholds and wrote specific trigger criteria for each
- Named one trusted person to review progress at day-30 checkpoint
- Written relapse prevention card (wallet-sized summary of amber-zone protocol)
- Scheduled 30-, 60-, and 90-day calendar reminders to re-score OLBI and review roadmap
- Identified the structural change planned for days 61–90 and have it in writing
- Written a one-sentence commitment statement describing what sustainable work looks like for you

Your Action Plan

1. Complete the OLBI self-scoring tonight and identify your most elevated subscale — write down your score and stage so you have a baseline to compare against at day 90
2. Rate all six Areas of Worklife and name your primary mismatch domain in writing
3. Complete the JD-R demand-resource audit and identify your top two hindrance demands
4. Choose your two quick wins from the impact-effort matrix and schedule the first action for each within the next 48 hours
5. Set one consistent sleep curfew for device use and stick to it for 7 consecutive nights before adjusting anything else
6. Write and practise one DESC boundary script and identify a specific date to deliver it this week or next
7. Complete the social map, identify your trusted three, and contact at least one this week with an honest check-in
8. Try one active recovery practice from the course (nature walk, physiological sigh, or expressive writing) every day for 7 days
9. Complete the values-behaviour gap audit and name the structural change you will make in days 61–90
10. Fill in the 90-day roadmap template, set calendar reminders at days 30, 60, and 90, and share the roadmap with your trusted person

