

Burnout reset planning worksheet

Overview

This worksheet helps individuals plan their recovery after burnout (or anytime they're coming down from a high-stress period and need to reset. It's not just about rest) it's about rebalancing energy, rethinking habits, and rebuilding a sustainable work rhythm.

Going back to feeling 100% does not take a week! It requires reflection, boundaries, and small but consistent behavior shifts. This worksheet provides space and structure for that process.

Use this worksheet when:

- You're coming out of a period of chronic stress or overwork
- You've been off due to burnout, illness, or mental health challenges
- You're returning from leave and want to set healthy foundations
- You notice persistent signs of exhaustion, disengagement, or emotional depletion
- A manager, coach, or HR partner is supporting your recovery journey

How to use it

- You can complete this alone for personal reflection, or with a manager, coach, or HR support
- Treat it as a living plan, as you don't need all the answers now
- Be honest and self-compassionate; this is not about productivity, but about health and sustainability
- Revisit the plan weekly and adjust based on how you're feeling

1. Reflect on what you've learned from your recent burnout

What did your reflections reveal about the patterns behind physical, mental, or emotional strain (as well as the positive points that helped you stay grounded)?

Prompts:

- What did you notice about why certain tasks or situations drained you?
- What helped you feel focused, effective, or supported?
- Which expectations (yours or others') felt misaligned with reality?
- What clarified your needs, boundaries, or working style?
- What positive habits or moments of ease would you like to build on?
- How can these insights inform your next step forward?

Drainers (tasks, dynamics, or situations)	Notes

2. How can you spot it ahead next time?

What internal or external signs told you it was time to pause, step back, or make a change?
Can you put some boundaries or systems in place to spot it earlier?

Prompting categories:

- Physical (e.g. fatigue, headaches, sleep issues)
- Emotional (e.g. irritability, apathy, sadness)
- Behavioral (e.g. procrastination, withdrawal, overworking)
- Cognitive (e.g. brain fog, indecisiveness, negative self-talk)

Burnout indicators you've experienced	Notes

3. Clarify what supports your recovery

What genuinely helps you feel grounded, re-energized, and mentally clearer?

Prompting areas:

- Physical: movement, sleep, nutrition, breathwork
- Emotional: therapy, journaling, talking with friends
- Cognitive: unplugging, reading, creative expression
- Social: supportive people, quiet time, boundaries

Recovery activities or habits	Frequency or timing

4. Set boundaries and remove friction

What changes to your work habits, routines, or environment will help protect your energy?

Examples:

- Start/stop times and screen limits
- Saying “no” or pushing back on non-essential work
- Managing meeting load or notification overwhelm
- Clarifying job scope and expectations

New boundaries or adjustments	Who needs to know/support this?

5. Map out your first 30 days of recovery

Recovery isn't linear – but having a short-term plan creates momentum and clarity. Focus on *sustainable, gentle progress*.

Goals should be restorative, not performance-based.

Week	Recovery focus	Key actions	Notes
1	Grounding	E.g., shorter hours, log off on time, walk daily	
2	Energy rebuild	E.g., prep for meetings in advance to reduce stress	
3	Re-engagement	E.g., learn how to best collaborate with the team, share ideas	
4	Checkpoint	E.g., review boundaries and energy levels	

6. Identify your recovery allies

Who can support or advocate for your recovery plan?

This may include:

- Your manager
- A trusted colleague
- HR or mental health support
- Friends or family

- A mentor or coach

Ally or support person	Role in your recovery

7. Define success (without the hustle)

What does a *healthy* version of work look like for you?

Prompts:

- How do you want to feel at the end of a workday?
- What does “engaged but not overwhelmed” look like?
- What habits or mindsets do you want to keep going forward?

Write 2–3 short statements:

I'll know I'm recovering well when...

→ _____

→ _____

→ _____

Tips for managers and HR (if supporting someone using this)

1. Don't rush the person back to “full capacity” – instead, support phased re-engagement
2. Focus on building psychological safety for honest check-ins
3. Respect new boundaries or limits they're experimenting with
4. Use this worksheet as a coaching tool – not a performance review
5. Celebrate small wins and signal that recovery is as valid as productivity