

Work Burnout Workbook

Recognising Burnout and Restoring Your Wellbeing

Created by Safe Haven Connect CIC

Welcome

Work can bring purpose, achievement and financial security, but when demands become overwhelming and stress continues for long periods without enough rest or support, it can lead to burnout.

Burnout is more than simply feeling tired after a busy week. It is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that can affect your health, relationships, confidence and enjoyment of life.

Burnout can happen to anyone, regardless of their job, age or experience. It often develops gradually, making it difficult to recognise until it begins to affect your daily life.

The good news is that burnout can be recognised early, managed and recovered from with the right support, healthy habits and practical strategies.

This workbook will help you understand burnout, identify warning signs and develop a personal plan to protect your wellbeing at work and beyond.

Remember...

> Looking after yourself isn't a luxury—it's essential.

What You'll Learn

Throughout this workbook you'll explore:

♥ What burnout is

♥ Recognising the warning signs

♥ Understanding workplace stress

♥ Identifying your burnout triggers

- ♥ Building healthy work-life boundaries
- ♥ Developing healthy coping strategies
- ♥ Creating a personal wellbeing plan
- ♥ Preventing future burnout
- ♥ Knowing when to ask for support
- ♥ Moving towards a healthier work-life balance

Before You Begin

This workbook is designed to help you reflect on your own experiences with work-related stress and burnout.

There are no right or wrong answers.

Some activities may encourage you to think about your workload, responsibilities and wellbeing. Take your time and remember that recognising burnout is the first step towards recovery.

Progress begins with awareness.

A Thought to Remember

> "You cannot pour from an empty cup. Taking care of yourself allows you to care for everything else."

Module 1 – Understanding Work Burnout

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged or excessive stress, particularly when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained or unable to meet ongoing demands.

Burnout doesn't usually happen overnight. It often develops gradually through continued pressure, long hours, lack of rest or feeling unsupported.

Common causes include:

Heavy workloads

Long working hours

Lack of control

Poor work-life balance

High emotional demands

Feeling undervalued

Lack of support

Ongoing workplace stress

Burnout is not a sign of weakness.

It is a sign that your mind and body may have been under pressure for too long.

Learning to recognise burnout early can help you protect your health, wellbeing and quality of life.

Module 1 – Understanding Work Burnout

Burnout doesn't always happen suddenly. It often develops gradually over weeks or months, making it easy to overlook the early warning signs.

Many people continue pushing themselves, believing they simply need to "work harder" or "keep going." However, ignoring burnout can affect your mental wellbeing, physical health, relationships and performance at work.

Recognising the signs early gives you the opportunity to make positive changes before burnout becomes more severe.

Signs and Symptoms of Burnout

Tick any that you have experienced recently.

Emotional Signs

- ☐ Feeling emotionally exhausted
- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed
- ☐ Increased irritability
- ☐ Feeling detached from work
- ☐ Loss of motivation
- ☐ Feeling hopeless
- ☐ Low mood
- ☐ Feeling unappreciated

Physical Signs

- ☐ Constant tiredness
- ☐ Difficulty sleeping
- ☐ Frequent headaches
- ☐ Muscle tension
- ☐ Changes in appetite
- ☐ Feeling run down
- ☐ Low energy
- ☐ Frequent illness

Behavioural Signs

- ☐ Calling in sick more often
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating

- ☐ Reduced productivity
- ☐ Avoiding work tasks
- ☐ Working longer hours but achieving less
- ☐ Withdrawing from colleagues
- ☐ Taking fewer breaks
- ☐ Difficulty switching off after work

Reflection Exercise

Think about your work over the past month.

How have you been feeling?

What has been causing you the most stress?

Have you noticed any changes in your mood, energy or motivation?

Understanding the Burnout Cycle

Burnout often develops in stages.

Stage 1 – Increased Pressure

Work demands begin to increase.



Stage 2 – Ongoing Stress

You start feeling tired, overwhelmed or anxious.



Stage 3 – Emotional & Physical Exhaustion

Energy levels fall and motivation decreases.



Stage 4 – Burnout

Work begins to affect your health, wellbeing and daily life.

Recognising these stages can help you take action sooner.

Activity – My Burnout Triggers

What situations at work increase your stress?

Tick any that apply.

- ☐ Heavy workload
- ☐ Staff shortages
- ☐ Long shifts
- ☐ Working overtime
- ☐ Difficult conversations
- ☐ Lack of support
- ☐ Poor work-life balance

☐ Unrealistic expectations

☐ Lack of appreciation

☐ Financial pressure

☐ Other:

Remember

Experiencing burnout does not mean you've failed.

It often means you've been coping with too much for too long without enough opportunity to recover.

Recognising burnout is a sign of self-awareness and an important step towards protecting your wellbeing.

Key Takeaway

> Burnout develops over time. The earlier you recognise the warning signs, the sooner you can take positive steps to protect your health and wellbeing.

Module Summary

Burnout is a response to prolonged stress, not a personal weakness. By recognising the emotional, physical and behavioural signs and understanding your own triggers, you can begin taking practical steps towards recovery and preventing burnout in the future.

Next Module

Module 2 – Understanding Workplace Stress and Your Burnout Triggers

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Stress is a normal part of working life. Short periods of stress can sometimes help us stay focused and motivated.

However, when stress becomes constant and there is little opportunity to rest or recover, it can increase the risk of burnout.

Understanding what causes your stress is one of the first steps towards protecting your wellbeing.

Remember:

> "You can't always remove stress, but you can learn healthier ways to manage it."

Common Causes of Workplace Stress

Many different factors can contribute to stress at work.

Tick any that apply to you.

- ☐ Heavy workload
- ☐ Staff shortages
- ☐ Long working hours
- ☐ Shift work
- ☐ Unrealistic deadlines
- ☐ Lack of support
- ☐ Difficult managers
- ☐ Conflict with colleagues
- ☐ Financial worries
- ☐ Poor work-life balance

- ☐ Job insecurity
- ☐ Constant interruptions
- ☐ Feeling undervalued
- ☐ Lack of training
- ☐ Other:

Recognising Your Stress Triggers

Think about the situations that regularly increase your stress levels.

My biggest workplace stress trigger is:

How does it affect me?

Can I influence or change this situation?

What Can You Control?

When work feels overwhelming, it can help to separate your concerns into two groups.

Things I Can Control

- ✓ How I organise my day.
- ✓ Taking regular breaks.
- ✓ Asking for support.
- ✓ Looking after my physical health.
- ✓ Setting healthy boundaries.
- ✓ Speaking up when I'm struggling.
- ✓ How I respond to stressful situations.

Things I Cannot Control

- ✗ Other people's behaviour.
- ✗ Company decisions.
- ✗ Staff shortages.
- ✗ Unexpected emergencies.
- ✗ The past.
- ✗ Everything happening around me.

Focusing on what you can control often helps reduce feelings of helplessness.

Reflection Exercise

Think about your typical working week.

What part of your job do you enjoy most?

What causes you the most stress?

What could make your working week feel more manageable?

Activity – My Stress Management Plan

Complete the following.

When I begin to feel stressed, I will...

One healthy coping strategy I can use is...

One person I could speak to is...

One change I could make this week is...

Healthy Ways to Manage Workplace Stress

Tick the strategies you would like to practise.

- ☐ Take regular breaks.
- ☐ Stay hydrated.
- ☐ Eat regular meals.
- ☐ Go for a walk during breaks.
- ☐ Prioritise important tasks.
- ☐ Ask for help when needed.
- ☐ Leave work on time where possible.
- ☐ Practise breathing exercises.
- ☐ Talk to someone I trust.
- ☐ Make time for hobbies outside work.
- ☐ Get enough sleep.
- ☐ Reduce overtime where possible.

Remember

You are not expected to carry everything on your own.

Asking for support, taking breaks and recognising your limits are signs of strength—not weakness.

Looking after yourself helps you continue looking after others.

Key Takeaway

> Managing workplace stress begins with recognising your triggers, focusing on what you can control and taking small, consistent steps to protect your wellbeing.

Module Summary

Workplace stress is common, but prolonged stress without adequate recovery can lead to burnout. By understanding your triggers, developing healthy coping strategies and focusing on the areas you can influence, you can reduce stress and build greater resilience at work.

Next Module

Module 3 – Recovering from Burnout and Building Healthy Work-Life Balance

Module 3 – Recovering from Burnout and Building a Healthy Work-Life Balance

Recovering from burnout doesn't happen overnight. It takes time, patience and a willingness to make changes that support your wellbeing.

Many people believe they simply need to "push through" burnout. In reality, continuing without enough rest can make recovery more difficult.

Recovery begins by recognising your limits, looking after your health and creating a healthier balance between work and personal life.

Remember:

> "Rest is not a reward for working hard—it's an essential part of staying healthy."

Giving Yourself Permission to Recover

Recovery may involve:

- ✓ Taking regular breaks.
- ✓ Using annual leave.
- ✓ Speaking to your manager.

- ✓ Asking for support.
- ✓ Prioritising sleep.
- ✓ Spending time with family and friends.
- ✓ Doing activities you enjoy.
- ✓ Being kind to yourself.

Recovery is not about doing nothing.

It's about giving your mind and body the opportunity to recharge.

Reflection Exercise

Think about your current work-life balance.

How much time do I spend thinking about work outside working hours?

Do I make enough time for rest and relaxation?

What changes would improve my wellbeing?

Recognising What Recharges You

Different activities help different people recover from stress.

Tick the activities that help you feel refreshed.

- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Exercise
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Spending time outdoors
- ☐ Listening to music
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Spending time with family
- ☐ Seeing friends
- ☐ Meditation
- ☐ Breathing exercises
- ☐ Creative hobbies
- ☐ Time with pets
- ☐ Watching a favourite film
- ☐ Other:

Setting Healthy Boundaries at Work

Healthy boundaries help protect your wellbeing.

Consider whether you could:

- ☐ Take your full lunch break.

- ☐ Finish work on time.
- ☐ Avoid checking work emails after work.
- ☐ Say no to unnecessary overtime.
- ☐ Take annual leave regularly.
- ☐ Ask for help when your workload becomes unmanageable.
- ☐ Separate work time from home time.

Small changes can have a significant impact over time.

Activity – My Recovery Plan

Complete the following.

One thing I will do every day to support my wellbeing:

One thing I will stop doing:

One boundary I will introduce:

One enjoyable activity I will make time for:

One person I can talk to if I'm struggling:

Looking After Your Basic Needs

When we're busy, we often neglect the basics.

Tick the habits you'd like to improve.

- ☐ Get enough sleep.
- ☐ Drink more water.
- ☐ Eat regular meals.
- ☐ Exercise regularly.
- ☐ Take breaks.
- ☐ Spend time outdoors.
- ☐ Reduce caffeine if it's affecting sleep.
- ☐ Spend quality time with loved ones.
- ☐ Make time for hobbies.
- ☐ Practise relaxation techniques.

Remember

Recovery isn't about becoming the person you were before burnout.

It's about creating healthier habits that help protect your wellbeing moving forward.

Progress may feel slow at times, but every positive change matters.

Key Takeaway

> Recovering from burnout starts with giving yourself permission to rest, setting healthy boundaries and making your wellbeing a priority.

Module Summary

Burnout recovery takes time, but it is possible. By creating a healthier work-life balance, setting realistic boundaries and looking after your physical and emotional wellbeing, you can gradually regain your energy, confidence and enjoyment of life.

Next Module

Module 4 – Preventing Future Burnout and Creating Your Personal Wellbeing Plan

Module 4 – Preventing Future Burnout and Creating Your Personal Wellbeing Plan

Recovering from burnout is an important achievement, but protecting yourself from future burnout is just as important.

While you may not be able to remove every source of stress, you can develop healthy habits, recognise warning signs early and take action before stress becomes overwhelming.

Burnout prevention isn't about working less—it is about working in a healthier, more sustainable way.

Remember:

> "Looking after yourself today helps protect your wellbeing tomorrow."

Recognising Your Early Warning Signs

Everyone experiences burnout differently.

Tick any signs that usually appear before you begin to feel overwhelmed.

- ☐ Feeling constantly tired
- ☐ Becoming irritable
- ☐ Losing motivation

- ☐ Difficulty sleeping
- ☐ Feeling anxious
- ☐ Headaches
- ☐ Muscle tension
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating
- ☐ Working longer hours
- ☐ Skipping breaks
- ☐ Feeling emotionally drained
- ☐ Withdrawing from others
- ☐ Other:

My Personal Wellbeing Checklist

Tick the habits you want to maintain.

- ☐ Get 7–9 hours of sleep.
- ☐ Drink enough water.
- ☐ Eat regular meals.
- ☐ Exercise regularly.
- ☐ Take regular breaks.
- ☐ Use annual leave.
- ☐ Spend time with family and friends.
- ☐ Make time for hobbies.
- ☐ Set healthy boundaries.

- ☐ Ask for help when needed.
- ☐ Switch off from work after hours.
- ☐ Celebrate small achievements.

Reflection Exercise

What helps me feel calm and recharged?

What habits improve my wellbeing?

Which habit would I like to improve first?

Creating My Personal Wellbeing Plan

My biggest wellbeing priority is:

One change I will make this week:

One boundary I will protect:

One healthy habit I will continue:

One person I can speak to if I'm struggling:

My Work-Life Balance Goals

This month I will:

- ☐ Leave work on time where possible.
- ☐ Take my lunch break every day.
- ☐ Avoid checking work emails after work.
- ☐ Make time for exercise.
- ☐ Spend quality time with loved ones.
- ☐ Schedule time to relax.
- ☐ Practise mindfulness or breathing exercises.
- ☐ Get enough sleep.
- ☐ Reduce unnecessary overtime.
- ☐ Be kinder to myself.

Looking Back

Take a few moments to reflect.

What have I learned about myself?

What are my biggest burnout triggers?

Which coping strategy will help me most?

What is one promise I want to make to myself?

Final Thoughts

Burnout can leave you feeling exhausted, overwhelmed and disconnected, but it does not define you.

Recovery is possible, and every positive step you take towards looking after yourself matters.

Remember that your health and wellbeing are just as important as your work.

You deserve rest.

You deserve support.

You deserve balance.

By recognising your limits, setting healthy boundaries and making your wellbeing a priority, you can build a healthier and more sustainable future.

> "Success means little if it comes at the cost of your health. Your wellbeing will always be worth protecting."

Congratulations!

Well done on completing the Work Burnout Workbook.

We hope this workbook has helped you understand burnout, recognise the warning signs and develop practical strategies to protect your wellbeing both at work and at home.

Take what you've learned, revisit the exercises whenever you need them and remember that asking for support is a sign of strength.

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Safe Haven Connect CIC is dedicated to improving mental health and wellbeing through free educational resources, self-help workbooks, peer support and community initiatives.

Our mission is to make mental health support more accessible, reduce stigma and help people build happier, healthier lives.

Explore more free workbooks and wellbeing resources at:

 www.safehavenconnect.org

Safe Haven Connect CIC

Building stronger communities through connection, support and wellbeing.

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