

ENDING THE BURNOUT CYCLE

A SUPPORTIVE GUIDE FOR
NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE





Burnout is a state of overwhelming mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion that many neurodivergent people face. It often stems from a cycle of pushing through stress, ignoring the need for rest, and reaching a breaking point. This cycle can be heightened by factors like sensory overload, masking, and the constant pressure to fit into environments that don't align with their needs.

By building awareness, understanding your unique challenges, and exploring practical tools and strategies, you'll learn to recognize early signs of burnout, manage your energy, and create a sustainable approach to well-being. Whether you're recovering from burnout or looking to prevent it, this resource offers the guidance and support you need.

WELCOME HOME

USING THIS

RESOURCE

This is your personal space to explore, learn, and grow as you move through the course. You can either answer the reflection prompts online, or print out your journal depending on what feels right for you.

Why Reflect?

Reflection helps you uncover insights, revisit lessons, and develop strategies that work for you. While optional, journaling is a powerful way to connect with the material on a deeper level.

Getting Started

After each lesson, use the prompts provided to guide your reflections. If you prefer, print the journal to create a keepsake you can revisit whenever needed.

What's Inside

The journal includes lesson-specific prompts and resources to help you recognize patterns and build strategies. There's also space for additional thoughts.

A Gentle Reminder

Be kind to yourself. Write honestly and take your time. Some insights come quickly; others take reflection. This is your journey. Your journal is a living resource. Looking back can reveal growth, patterns, and strategies to reinforce what works for you. Journaling is an act of self-care - a tool to enrich your learning long after the course ends.

Lesson 1: Welcome

Reflection Prompt: “How can I Gain a Better Understanding About My Burnout?”.

What does burnout feel like for me, and how do I recognize when I am reaching my limits?

Do I give myself permission to rest and recover when I need it? Why or why not?

What steps can I take to better understand and meet my neurodivergent needs?

Lesson 1 Continued

What would I like to achieve by the end of this course?

Lesson 2: The Burnout Cycle Explained

Reflection Prompt: “How Can I Recognise and Manage My Burnout Cycles?”.

What patterns in my life have led to burnout in the past, and how can I recognize those early?

Are there specific transitions or milestones (e.g., starting a new job, finishing school) where I’ve experienced burnout before?

Are there specific times of year or situations where burnout seems more likely for me?

Lesson 2 Continued

How do my personal expectations of productivity or achievement feed into the burnout cycle?

When I look back at past burnouts, what early warning signs did I miss at the time?

Lesson 3: The Neuroscience of Neurodivergent Burnout

Reflection Prompt: “How is Understanding the Neuroscience of Neurodivergent Burnout Helpful to Me?”.

In what ways has understanding the impact of chronic stress on my brain changed how I view my energy levels and limits?

How does the idea of neurotransmitter imbalances, like dopamine and serotonin depletion, resonate with how I’ve felt during burnout?

What aspects of the neuroscience behind burnout feel most personally relevant to me, and how can I apply that understanding to improve my self-care practices?

Lesson 3 Continued

How does learning about the brain's role in burnout help me validate my own experiences and let go of self-blame?

Lesson 4: Recognising the Early Signs of Burnout

Reflection Prompt: “What signs suggest I am starting to feel burned out?”.

How does my ability to speak or communicate change when I’m overwhelmed or approaching burnout?

How do my sensory sensitivities change when I’m under stress or nearing burnout?

In what ways does my temperament shift—such as becoming short-tempered or more irritable—when I’m feeling overwhelmed?

Lesson 4 Continued

How often do I listen to my body's signals, and what helps me notice these cues earlier?

Are there specific situations or environments where I often fall asleep unexpectedly, and what might they indicate about my energy levels?

Lesson 5: Recharging and Recovering From Burnout

Reflection Prompt: "What Measures Can I Take to Recover After Burnout?"

How can I communicate my need for rest and understanding to those around me during burnout?

How do I respond to feelings of guilt or comparison when recovering from burnout, and how can I reframe these thoughts?

What small, manageable steps can I take today to prioritize my recovery without feeling overwhelmed?

Lesson 5 Continued

What role do sensory-safe spaces play in my recovery, and how can I improve the spaces I spend time in?

What physical or mental signs tell me I need to stop pushing and focus on recovery?

Which restorative activities—like stimming, creative expression, or nature—work best for me, and why?

Lesson 6: Managing Energy Levels and Boundaries

Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Manage my Energy Levels to Help Avoid Burnout?"

How do I currently think about my energy levels, and does a metaphor like spoon theory, pebbles, or another concept resonate with me?

How do I typically respond when I notice I'm running low on energy, and is there a way to intervene earlier?

How comfortable am I with saying no to requests or invitations, and what makes it challenging for me?

Lesson 6 Continued

In what ways do I prioritize recovery time in my daily or weekly routine, and how could I improve this?

Lesson 7: Advocating for Support and Accommodations

Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Advocate for my Needs Around Burnout?"

What specific accommodations would help me reduce the risk of burnout in my work, school, or personal life?

How can I advocate for extended leave or recovery time if my burnout becomes severe, and what steps can I take to ensure this is respected?

In what ways can I educate others about how neurodivergent burnout differs from typical stress or fatigue?

Lesson 7 Continued

How do I feel about asking for accommodations, and what might help me feel more confident and empowered in doing so?

How do executive functioning challenges, like managing deadlines or staying organized, affect my burnout levels, and what supports could help?

Lesson 8: Preventing Future Burnout

Reflection Prompt: "How Can I Take Steps to Prevent or Limit Burnout Going Forwards?"

What steps can I take today to create a more sustainable approach to managing my energy, responsibilities, and self-care?

How has this course helped me identify specific accommodations that could better support my sensory, emotional, or executive functioning needs?

How has this course helped me rethink the relationship between my neurodivergence and burnout, and what aspects of that relationship do I still want to explore?

Lesson 8 Continued

What is one practical change I can make starting today to apply what I've learned and create a more supportive environment for myself?

NEXT STEPS



Congratulations on completing the Ending the Burnout Cycle Course! By exploring the causes, impacts, and strategies for managing burnout, you've taken an important step toward understanding yourself and creating a more sustainable life. This course creates a foundation you can revisit and build upon as you continue to navigate your journey.

The tools and insights you've gained here are part of a larger effort to support your growth. If you found this course valuable, consider exploring other resources to deepen your self-awareness, develop practical skills, and discover even more ways to thrive as a neurodivergent individual.

Thank you!

Thank you for prioritizing your well-being and investing in your future.

Continue moving forward with patience and kindness—each step you take is meaningful, and you're doing incredible work!