

The Burnout Recovery Guide

7 questions to understand where you are, and small steps to help you recover

A MOMENT OF HONEST REFLECTION

How to read this guide:

There are no right answers, only the opportunity for self-reflection.

High-achieving women are particularly good at pushing through and rationalizing their own depletion.

We're trained to.

I created this guide to give you a quiet moment to look underneath performance and ask: *what's actually going on?*

Read each question slowly.

Notice what comes up before the problem-solving kicks in.

A suggestion: Find a quiet five minutes, away from your desk if you can. Have something to write with.

Answer each question with the first thing that comes to mind.

At the end, we have a reflection prompt to help you untangle what your answers are telling you, and what kind of support might actually help.

01. When did you last feel genuinely energized by your work, not just satisfied that you'd ticked something off?

If you're struggling to remember, that's information

Theme: Meaning

02. How often do you end the day feeling like you gave everything, but can't point to something that felt meaningful?

Notice whether this is occasional, or whether it's become the norm.

Theme: Emotional Exhaustion

03. Are there physical symptoms you've been half-ignoring: disrupted sleep, persistent tension, getting sick more than usual, a low-grade exhaustion that rest doesn't fix?

The body speaks before the mind.

Theme: Physical wellbeing

04. When you think about work, is your dominant feeling engagement or dread?

Listen to your inner voice.

Theme: Emotional Exhaustion

05. Has your capacity for small decisions shrunk? Do things that used to be easy, like a quick reply, feel heavier than they should?

Decision fatigue is one of the quieter signs of energy depletion.

Theme: Physical wellbeing

06. When someone asks what you do for yourself, not for your career, not for your family, what's your honest answer? And when did you last actually do it?

Notice the difference between 'I like to read' and 'I read last week.'

Theme: Identity

07. If you removed your job title, how solid does your sense of self feel?

This one can be uncomfortable. I invite you to sit with it.

Theme: Identity



WHAT YOUR ANSWERS MAY BE TELLING YOU

There's no score here. Burnout isn't binary, and recovery isn't a checklist. Instead look for patterns.

If Questions **3 or 5** stood out to you...

Your body may be asking for physical recovery.

Prioritize:

- sleep
- movement
- regular meals
- time outdoors

If Questions **2 or 4** stayed with you...

You may be experiencing emotional exhaustion.

Ask yourself:

"What can I stop carrying?"

If Question **1** felt difficult to answer...

You may experience loss of meaning. Burnout often disconnects us from the reasons we cared in the first place.

Try asking yourself:

"What would make this week feel meaningful?"

If Questions **6 or 7** felt uncomfortable...

You may have become so focused on succeeding that you've lost touch with the parts of yourself that exist beyond work. Recovery may start by reconnecting with people and habits that bring you joy.

Your 7-Day Burnout Reset

Seven tiny commitments.

Day 1

Go outside for a 20-minute walk without your phone.

Day 2

Go to bed 30 minutes earlier.

Day 3

Say “no” to one thing that isn't yours to carry.

Day 4

Eat lunch away from your desk.

Day 5

Call someone who makes you feel calm.

Day 6

Spend one hour doing something with no outcome attached.

Reading.

Gardening.

Painting.

Walking.

Day 7

Ask yourself "What do I need more of this week?"

STRATEGY	WHY IT HELPS
Sleep	Restores cognitive function and stress regulation
Walking – Preferably in Nature	Reduces stress hormones and improves mood
Breathwork	Activates the parasympathetic nervous system
Morning daylight	Supports circadian rhythm
Social connection	Buffers chronic stress
Magnesium glycinate	May support sleep quality (speak to your healthcare provider first)

Continue Your Journey...

The Life I Love Career Library 

✓ Guide No. 1

Salary Negotiation Scripts for Women

Learn exactly what to say during salary reviews, promotions and job offers.

✓ Guide No. 2

Burnout Reflection Guide

Reflect on where you are and take your first evidence-based steps towards recovery.

✓ Coming soon...

Difficult Conversations

Navigate conflict, give feedback and protect your relationships with confidence.

One final thought...



If you're reading this because you recognized yourself...

please remember this:

The goal isn't to become someone who can tolerate more.

The goal is to build a life that requires less recovering from it.

Take one small step today.

Then another tomorrow.

That's how recovery begins.

About the Author

I'm a Senior Manager with more than 15 years of global corporate experience leading international teams and large transformation programmes.

Through The Life I Love Career Series, I translate research and real-world leadership experience into practical tools that help ambitious women navigate their careers with confidence.

If you found this useful, I'd love to hear from you. You can reach me at hello@violetamincu.com, or find me at violetamincu.com

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