WORKSHEET 97 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My signs of exhaustion

Recognising the three dimensions of burnout

AIM

Help the person recognise the signs of the three dimensions of burnout (exhaustion, distance or cynicism towards work, a sense of inefficacy) and track how they change.

WHO IT IS FOR

Persistent work-related tiredness, loss of meaning, irritability, feeling of not coping.

DURATION

15 min in session; weekly follow-up

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Present the three dimensions and their possible signs (physical, emotional, behavioural).
2. Ask them to rate each dimension from 0 to 10 and note concrete examples.
3. Look for personal warning signs (sleep, irritability, repeated illnesses, substance use).
4. Track the ratings every week and refer to the doctor if needed (sick leave, check-up).

POINTS TO WATCH

> The WHO describes burnout as an occupational phenomenon, not a mental illness; even so, it can go with depression or anxiety, which need assessing. A medical check-up is often needed.

REFERENCES

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World Psychiatry, 15(2), 103-111.

World Health Organization (2019). Burn-out an « occupational phenomenon »: International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). WHO.

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WORKSHEET 97 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My signs of exhaustion

Burnout isn't just tiredness. It affects three areas: exhaustion, a distancing (or cynicism) towards work and the feeling of not being effective. Spotting them early helps you act before you sink.

1. Exhaustion: do I feel empty, even after resting?
2. Distance: am I becoming cynical, detached, irritable about work or with people?
3. Inefficacy: do I feel I can't keep up any more, that I'm no good?
4. My other signs (sleep, health, substance use, mood).

Week	Exhaustion /10	Distance /10	Inefficacy /10	My signs

Which sign warns me first that I am wearing myself out?

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WORKSHEET 98 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Demands and resources

Taking stock of what weighs on me and what holds me up at work

AIM

Identify the demands of work (workload, pressure, conflicts, ambiguity) and the available resources (autonomy, support, recognition, meaning), and spot where action is possible.

WHO IT IS FOR

Risk of burnout, work stress, returning to work.

DURATION

20 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. List the main demands and their weight (0-10).
2. List the resources and their strength (0-10).
3. Spot the imbalance: high demands and low resources are associated with exhaustion.
4. Look for a realistic action: reducing a demand, increasing a resource or asking for help (manager, occupational health service, employee representatives).

POINTS TO WATCH

> Burnout depends largely on working conditions, not only on the person: avoid placing all the responsibility on them. Refer to occupational health services if needed.

REFERENCES

Bakker, A. B. & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 22(3), 309-328.

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World Psychiatry, 15(2), 103-111.

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WORKSHEET 98 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Demands and resources

Exhaustion often comes from an imbalance: many demands and few resources for dealing with them. Taking stock helps you see where to act, and not to carry everything on your own shoulders.

1. What weighs on me at work (workload, pressure, conflicts, lack of clarity), with its weight from 0 to 10.
2. What holds me up (autonomy, colleagues, recognition, meaning), with its strength from 0 to 10.
3. Where is the biggest imbalance?
4. A possible action, and whom to talk to about it: _____

Demand	Weight /10	Resource	Strength /10

What depends on me, and what depends on the organisation?

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WORKSHEET 99 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My energy budget

Seeing what drains me and what recharges me

AIM

Help the person observe, for a week, the activities that consume or restore their energy, so as to rebalance their schedule.

WHO IT IS FOR

Tiredness, burnout, feeling of never recovering.

DURATION

5 min a day for a week

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the image of a budget: some activities cost energy and others give it back.
2. For a week, note the activities and their effect (-5 to +5).
3. At the review, spot the big “leaks” and the activities that recharge.
4. Plan at least one recharging activity a day and a possible reduction of one draining activity.

POINTS TO WATCH

> In times of exhaustion, even leisure can be tiring: adjust the size of the activities.

REFERENCES

Sonnentag, S. & Fritz, C. (2007). The Recovery Experience Questionnaire: Development and validation of a measure for assessing recuperation and unwinding from work. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12(3), 204-221.

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World Psychiatry, 15(2), 103-111.

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WORKSHEET 99 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My energy budget

Your energy is like a bank account: some activities spend it and others top it up. When we are exhausted, the account is in the red. Watch where your energy goes for a week.

1. Note your activities for the day.
2. For each one, its effect on your energy, from -5 (drains me) to +5 (recharges me).
3. At the end of the week, circle what drains you most and what recharges you most.
4. One thing to reduce and one to add next week.

Day	Activity	Effect on my energy (-5 to +5)

What really recharges me?

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WORKSHEET 100 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Switching off after work

The four ways of recovering

AIM

Help the person develop the four recovery experiences described by research: psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery activities (learning, taking on a challenge) and control over free time.

WHO IT IS FOR

Difficulty switching off, thoughts about work in the evening, working from home, exhaustion.

DURATION

15 min in session; follow-up over two weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the four ways of recovering.
2. Rate each one for the person (0-10).
3. Choose concrete actions: an end-of-day ritual, notifications off, an absorbing activity, chosen time.
4. Track the effect on tiredness and sleep.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Switching off is hard when the workload is excessive: recovery cannot compensate for work that is too heavy in the long run.

REFERENCES

Sonnentag, S. & Fritz, C. (2007). The Recovery Experience Questionnaire: Development and validation of a measure for assessing recuperation and unwinding from work. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12(3), 204-221.

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WORKSHEET 100 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Switching off after work

Recovering isn't just stopping: it is also switching off mentally from work. Research describes four ways of recovering. See which ones you are missing.

1. Detaching: no longer thinking about work (an end-of-day ritual, notifications off).
2. Relaxing: a calm activity (a bath, a slow walk, music).
3. Learning or taking on a challenge unrelated to work (sport, cooking, an instrument).
4. Choosing for myself what I do with my free time.

Day	My end-of-day ritual	Did I think about work in the evening? /10	Tiredness the next day /10

Which way of recovering am I missing most?

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WORKSHEET 101 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Setting limits at work

Saying no, negotiating, protecting your time

AIM

Help the person identify situations in which they go beyond their limits (hours, availability, extra tasks) and prepare assertive responses to protect them.

WHO IT IS FOR

Difficulty saying no, over-involvement, risk of burnout.

DURATION

20 min in session; putting it into practice

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Identify the limits most often crossed and their cost.
2. Clarify the desired limits (hours, replying in the evening, tasks accepted).
3. Prepare assertive sentences (worksheet 74): refusing, negotiating a deadline, asking for tasks to be prioritised.
4. Rehearse and choose a low-stakes situation.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Setting limits also depends on the context (job insecurity, company culture): look for realistic room for manoeuvre and, if needed, the support of occupational health services.

REFERENCES

Bakker, A. B. & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 22(3), 309-328.

Speed, B. C., Goldstein, B. L. & Goldfried, M. R. (2018). Assertiveness training: A forgotten evidence-based treatment. Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 25(1), e12216.

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WORKSHEET 101 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Setting limits at work

When we always take on more, we end up exhausted. Setting limits doesn't make you a bad colleague: it is what allows you to keep going. Prepare your sentences in advance.

1. The limits I most often go beyond (hours, emails in the evening, extra tasks).
2. The limits I would like to set: _____
3. My sentences: "I can't take that on as well this week", "What is the priority?", "I'll get back to you tomorrow morning".
4. A situation to try it in this week: _____

Situation	My limit	What I said	What happened

What do I fear if I set a limit? And what really happens?

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WORKSHEET 102 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

What depends on me

Sorting what I can act on, influence or accept

AIM

Help the person sort sources of work stress into three circles (what I control, what I can influence, what doesn't depend on me) so as to direct their energy.

WHO IT IS FOR

Work stress, rumination about other people's decisions, a sense of helplessness.

DURATION

15 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. List the sources of stress.
2. Sort them into the three circles.
3. For the first circle: concrete actions; for the second: whom to talk to and how; for the third: acceptance work (worksheets 29, 82).
4. Spot where the person spends most energy.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don't push the person to "accept" an unfair or dangerous work situation (harassment): it requires action and protection.

REFERENCES

Bakker, A. B. & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 22(3), 309-328.

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 102 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

What depends on me

At work, many things don't depend on us. Going over them is exhausting. Sorting sources of stress into three circles helps you put your energy where it can be useful.

1. List what stresses you at work.
2. Place each item: what I control, what I can influence, what doesn't depend on me.
3. For what I control: an action. For what I influence: whom to talk to.
4. For what doesn't depend on me: I practise letting go (worksheets 29 and 82).

Source of stress	Control / Influence / Outside my control	What I do

Where do I spend most energy for nothing?

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WORKSHEET 103 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My values at work

Finding meaning in what I do again

AIM

Help the person clarify what matters to them in their work (contribution, learning, relationships, quality, autonomy) and identify actions that reconnect them with meaning, or changes to consider.

WHO IT IS FOR

Loss of meaning, cynicism, thinking about a career change.

DURATION

20 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explore what mattered at the start and what matters today at work.
2. Rate how much the current job allows each value to be lived (0-10).
3. Look for small actions to live these values more in the current role.
4. If the gap is too big, open up reflection on a change (without rushing).

POINTS TO WATCH

> In the middle of exhaustion, avoid big decisions (resigning, changing career): the priority is rest and recovery.

REFERENCES

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World Psychiatry, 15(2), 103-111.

Wilson, K. G. & Murrell, A. R. (2004). Values work in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: Setting a course for behavioral treatment. In S. C. Hayes, V. M. Follette & M. M. Linehan (Eds.), Mindfulness and Acceptance: Expanding the Cognitive-Behavioral Tradition (pp. 120-151). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 103 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My values at work

Burnout often goes with a loss of meaning. Going back to what matters to you in your work helps you regain momentum, or see what would need to change.

1. What mattered to me when I started this job.
2. My values at work today (helping, learning, creating, quality, the team…).
3. How much my current job allows me to live them (0 to 10).
4. A small action to live a value more: _____

Value at work	I live it today /10	A possible small action

If the gap stays large, what would need to change in the long run?

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WORKSHEET 104 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Going back to work after sick leave

Preparing a gradual return

AIM

Help the person prepare their return to work after sick leave for exhaustion: signs of readiness, conditions for returning, adjustments to request, warning signs to watch.

WHO IT IS FOR

End of sick leave for burnout, anxiety or depression.

DURATION

20-30 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Assess readiness: sleep, energy, concentration, ability to think about work without becoming overwhelmed.
2. List the conditions that led to exhaustion and what needs to change.
3. Prepare the adjustments to discuss (phased return, workload, hours) with the GP and the occupational health service.
4. Set up a monitoring plan (worksheet 97) and a support plan for the first few weeks.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Decisions about sick leave, return and adjustments are for the doctor and the occupational health service; the psychologist supports the psychological preparation.

REFERENCES

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World Psychiatry, 15(2), 103-111.

World Health Organization (2019). Burn-out an « occupational phenomenon »: International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). WHO.

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WORKSHEET 104 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Going back to work after sick leave

Returning after exhaustion needs preparing. Going back too soon, or to the same conditions, increases the risk of relapse. This plan helps you prepare your return with your doctor and your employer.

1. How I am: sleep, energy, concentration, emotions when I think about work.
2. What exhausted me, and what needs to change.
3. The adjustments to ask for (phased return, workload, hours), to discuss with my doctor and the occupational health service.
4. My warning signs, and whom to contact if it starts again.

Area	How I am /10	What would help me

What absolutely has to be different this time?

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WORKSHEET 105 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Breaks in my day

Short stops to keep my energy up

AIM

Introduce regular micro-breaks throughout the working day (moving, breathing, going outside, changing task) to limit the build-up of tiredness.

WHO IT IS FOR

Days without breaks, screen work, tiredness at the end of the day.

DURATION

A few minutes, several times a day

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Look at the current rhythm: real breaks, meals in front of the screen, hours without moving.
2. Choose simple micro-breaks (standing up, stretching, looking into the distance, a few breaths, walking).
3. Schedule them at specific times (reminders, between meetings).
4. Assess the effect on tiredness at the end of the day.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Breaks don’t compensate for an excessive workload; they are part of a broader reflection (worksheets 98, 101).

REFERENCES

Sonnentag, S. & Fritz, C. (2007). The Recovery Experience Questionnaire: Development and validation of a measure for assessing recuperation and unwinding from work. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12(3), 204-221.

Maslach, C. & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World Psychiatry, 15(2), 103-111.

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WORKSHEET 105 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Breaks in my day

Working hour after hour without stopping wears you out faster than you think. Short, regular breaks of a few minutes help keep your energy up until the evening.

1. Every 60 to 90 minutes, I stop for 3 to 5 minutes.
2. I move: standing up, stretching, walking.
3. I rest my eyes and my mind: looking into the distance, breathing slowly (worksheet 15).
4. I eat away from the screen when I can.

Day	Breaks taken	Did I eat away from the screen? (yes/no)	Tiredness at the end of the day /10

Which break does me most good?

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