



BARNES COUNSELING COLLABORATIVE, LLC
SUPPORT • GROWTH • HEALING

Burnout Recovery Workbook

Practical exercises to recognize burnout, set healthier boundaries, and begin restoring your emotional energy.

A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This workbook is intended for educational purposes and personal reflection only. It is not a substitute for psychotherapy, medical care, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are experiencing significant emotional distress or a mental health crisis, please contact a qualified healthcare professional or emergency services immediately.

Using this workbook does not establish a therapist-client relationship with Barnes Counseling Collaborative LLC or Darla Barnes, Ed.D., LPC Associate.

Understanding Burnout

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion that builds up in response to prolonged or chronic stress — often from work, caregiving, or other sustained demands. It is not a diagnosis, but research (Maslach) identifies three core dimensions:

- Emotional exhaustion — feeling drained, depleted, or unable to cope.
- Depersonalization / cynicism — emotional distance, irritability, or detachment from others.
- Reduced sense of accomplishment — feeling ineffective, unproductive, or self-doubting.

Left unaddressed, burnout can worsen anxiety, depression, and physical health.

Self-Check: Signs of Burnout

Check any that have applied to you in the past two weeks:

- ☐ Chronic fatigue, even after rest
- ☐ Irritability or a shorter temper than usual
- ☐ Trouble concentrating or forgetfulness
- ☐ Cynicism or dread about responsibilities you used to enjoy
- ☐ Physical symptoms (headaches, GI upset, muscle tension)
- ☐ Sleep disturbance (too little, too much, or restless sleep)
- ☐ Withdrawing from friends, family, or activities
- ☐ Decreased motivation or sense of purpose
- ☐ Feeling numb or emotionally flat
- ☐ Using food, substances, or screens to numb out or cope

Identify Your Sources

On a scale of 0 (none) to 10 (severe), my current burnout level is:

What situations, roles, or relationships feel most draining right now?

Setting Healthier Boundaries

Boundaries protect your energy — they are not selfish. A boundary is simply a clear, kind limit that lets you sustain what matters most. A few starter phrases:

- "I can take this on next week, not today."
- "I need to leave by ___ to protect my rest."
- "I'm not able to commit to that right now, but thank you for thinking of me."

This week, I will set this boundary:

With whom:

What I'll say:

Restoring Your Energy

Choose one small, realistic action in each area for the coming week.

Domain	One small action this week
Physical	
Emotional	
Mental	
Relational / Social	

Weekly Recovery Plan

Name one act of care for each day — even five minutes counts.

Day	One act of care
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	

Day	One act of care
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Reflection

What is one sign that would tell you your energy is beginning to return?

Closing & Support Resources

Growth takes time, and reflection is itself a meaningful step. If any part of this workbook brought up feelings that feel too heavy to carry alone, please reach out for support.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat at 988lifeline.org (available 24/7).

Crisis Text Line: text TX to 741741 (available 24/7).

Texas Health and Human Services: dial 2-1-1 (option for mental health) to connect with your local mental health authority and crisis services.

For ongoing support, Barnes Counseling Collaborative, LLC welcomes the opportunity to connect. This workbook is a starting point — you do not have to navigate this alone.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

The concepts, frameworks, and exercises in this workbook draw on the following published sources and established clinical literature. This workbook offers original explanations and exercises inspired by this work; it does not reproduce any source's text, assessments, or materials.

- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 2(2), 99–113.
Source of the three-dimension burnout model (exhaustion, cynicism/depersonalization, reduced accomplishment) referenced in "Understanding Burnout."
- World Health Organization. (2019, May 28). Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases. [who.int/news/item/28-05-2019](https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019)
WHO's ICD-11 classification of burnout as an occupational phenomenon, not a medical diagnosis.
- Tawwab, N. G. (2021). *Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself*. TarcherPerigee.
General inspiration for the boundary-setting language and starter phrases.
- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). samhsa.gov/mental-health/988
- Texas Health and Human Services, Mental Health and Substance Use Resources (2-1-1 Texas; local crisis lines). hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use