THE BURNOUT MASK

Why rest doesn't fix the exhaustion,
and who you became to stay safe.



EWA KALINOWSKA

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Why rest doesn't fix the exhaustion, and the roles we learned in order to stay safe

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Please read this before you start.

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2. **What it is not.** It is not medical advice, therapy, counselling or a diagnosis. The four masks are descriptive patterns, not clinical categories. The quizzes are informal self-reflection tools, not validated psychological tests, and no score diagnoses anything. Reading this book, or doing its exercises, does not create a therapist-client or practitioner-client relationship between you and the author.
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6. **Difficult themes.** Some pages ask you to think about childhood and family. Skip anything that feels too heavy and come back later, or go through it with someone you trust or a qualified professional. This book describes common patterns. It does not say that anyone caused yours, and it cannot know what happened in your life.
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How to use this book

1. **Read in order.** Chapter 1 sets the scene and introduces the mask. Chapters 2 to 5 each introduce one mask and end with a short quiz. Chapter 6 is where you compare your four scores.
2. **One chapter at a time.** You do not need to finish it in a sitting.

3. **Use a pen.** Write in the margins or in a notebook. Your answers will matter later.
4. **Go with your first instinct** on the quizzes. There are no right answers, and no score is a verdict on you.
5. **Skip what feels too heavy.** You can come back later.
6. **Then go deeper.** *The Burnout Mask Workbook* picks up where this book stops. It helps you notice where your mask shows up in everyday life and take one gentle step at your own pace.

This book is for you if you are tired in a way rest does not fix, and parts of it sound like you. It is not a substitute for care if you are in crisis or unwell.

About the author

Ewa Kalinowska is a hypnotherapist and somatic practitioner based in Windsor, UK. She is the founder of Mindful Horizons, where she works with high-functioning professionals on burnout, overthinking and the survival patterns underneath them. She is a Rapid Transformational Therapy (RTT) practitioner. She works with clients in Windsor and online.

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Chapter 1: The Exhaustion Rest Does Not Fix

The 3:14 a.m. Routine

The bedroom is quiet, but your mind is running a marathon. You look at the clock: 3:14 a.m. You did everything right tonight: a warm bath, no screens, and you are exhausted to your bones. Yet the switch won't flip. Your thoughts loop through tomorrow's tasks, old conversations, and everything you're responsible for.

Morning comes, and you drag yourself up with the same tiredness you went to bed with. You tell yourself: "I just need to get through this week, then I'll rest."

But somewhere underneath, a frustrating truth is surfacing. You've tried weekends off. You've tried holidays. You've tried sleeping in. And the exhaustion keeps coming back.

When Slowing Down Feels Unsafe

Most advice treats burnout as a time-management problem: work fewer hours, take a holiday, add meditation to your calendar. Those things can help, and a break is often a good start. But many people find the tiredness returns soon after, because the habits driving it are still running.

If rest makes you anxious, guilty or restless, your tiredness may be about more than workload. Over time, your body can get used to being on alert, and slowing down starts to feel unsafe or unproductive, even when nothing is wrong.

You aren't broken, and you aren't bad at self-care. You may simply be living inside a pattern you learned a long time ago.

The Mask We Absorb

We don't start life as overthinking machines. As children and young adults, we pick up the expectations around us and step into roles that help us feel safe, accepted or valued. Think of each role as a mask: something you put on to get through, and then forgot you were wearing.

The mask isn't fake. It worked at the time. The trouble comes when you carry it into adulthood and never put it down.

You may recognise yourself in one or more of these:

- **The Inherited Achiever** carries the weight of family expectations and measures their worth by results. Underneath is the fear of disappointing the people who invested in them.
- **The Proving One** grew up feeling small or conditional, so they keep proving they belong. Underneath is the fear of being found not enough.
- **The Self-Raised One** learned to rely on themselves too early, so asking for help feels unsafe. Underneath is the fear of needing someone and being let down.
- **The Pleaser** keeps the peace and takes care of everyone else, afraid that saying no will cost them connection. Underneath is the fear of conflict, or of being left.

If two of these sound alike. The Inherited Achiever is mainly driven by loyalty to expectations: "I must not let them down." The Proving One is mainly driven by the need to establish personal worth: "I must show I am enough." Many people recognise both, and that is common.

Whichever mask is yours, the signs are often similar: poor sleep, a busy mind, guilt when you rest, feeling flat, and little joy in everyday things. That is why the quizzes ahead ask where each mask started and what it fears, not just

how tired you are.

The Question Nobody Asks

Most of us ask, "How can I do more?"

Try this instead:

What is it costing me to keep going like this?

Take a few minutes and write down the cost to:

- your body (sleep, tension, energy)
- your relationships
- your joy and sense of play
- your sense of who you are when you're not achieving

There are no right answers. Many people find the list is longer than they expected.

A Quick Check-In

Tick **yes** for each statement that is true for you. Go with your first instinct.

- ☐ 1. I feel tired even after a full night's sleep or a day off.
- ☐ 2. I lie awake replaying the day or planning tomorrow.
- ☐ 3. I feel guilty when I rest or do nothing.
- ☐ 4. I say yes when I mean no.
- ☐ 5. I feel tense in my shoulders, jaw or stomach most days.
- ☐ 6. I get irritated by small things that never used to bother me.
- ☐ 7. I feel I have to earn rest by getting things done first.

0 to 2 yes: you may be tired rather than burnt out.

3 to 5 yes: you may be noticing the early signs of a pattern. Keep reading.

6 to 7 yes: your body may be carrying a lot. This level often feels hard to shift alone, and support can help.

A One-Minute Body Check

Without changing anything, notice where you're holding tension: shoulders, jaw, stomach?

Take one slow breath out. That's it. You've just done something most people never do. You checked in.

Now breathe in through your nose for 4 counts and out slowly for 6. Many people find a longer out-breath helps them settle. If you feel dizzy, return to normal breathing.

What Is Next?

If you see yourself in these pages, you're not weak and you're not failing. You've been carrying something for a long time.

In Chapters 2 to 5 you'll meet each mask and answer a short quiz about it. Read all four, even if you're sure which one is yours. In Chapter 6 you'll compare your scores and decide where to start.

Self-reflection, not a diagnosis. If poor sleep, low mood or anxiety are severe or lasting, please speak to your GP. See the notice at the front of this book.

Chapter 2: The Inherited Achiever

The script was written before you were born

The fear underneath the mask: disappointing the people who invested in you.

For many high achievers, burnout doesn't start at the first job. It often starts much earlier, at home. In families where success is a tradition (everyone is a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher, a business owner), a child can be handed an invisible script before they've even learned to read.

In these homes, a child's own gifts and curiosities may get little room. If you quietly dreamed of being an actor, an artist or a scientist, you may have heard: "That's a lovely hobby, but it won't pay the bills," or "We didn't invest in your education for you to become a chef."

To stay accepted, a child learns to bend. They set aside what they love and take on the family's expectations. Over time, the title starts to feel heavy, and it gets hard to tell whose it is.

When Love Feels Like a Transaction

Children don't need grand plans. They need love, kindness and the feeling that they belong. But in some families, approval arrives with results, and love can start to feel earned.

This is rarely meant. Most parents and grandparents believe they're doing what's best, often because they followed the same script themselves. The pressure gets passed down along with the care.

When approval depends on performance, a child can quietly absorb a belief: "I'm only good enough when I'm achieving." In adult life it can look like:

- **Overthinking:** replaying your performance to check you haven't slipped.
- **A restless feeling** that if you slow down, everything will fall apart.
- **Guilt** for secretly wanting a different life, or feeling like you're living a career you never really chose.

A Two-Minute Pause

Try this now, before reading on.

1. **Settle.** Sit with your feet flat on the floor, hands resting on your thighs, shoulders dropping.
2. **Breathe in** slowly through your nose for 4 counts, as if breathing into your belly.
3. **Sigh out** through your mouth for 6 counts, letting your jaw soften.
4. **Pause** for 2 counts at the end and say silently: "This weight doesn't have to be mine. I'm allowed to just exist." Or use words that feel true to you.

Repeat 3 times. Notice if the band across your chest loosens, even a little. If you feel dizzy, go back to normal breathing.

The "Too Late" Thought

At some point, often in midlife, many Inherited Achievers look back and think: "I should have rebelled. I should have followed my passion. It's too late now."

It's a very tiring thought. When you're already running on empty, changing your life can feel too big, so "too late" becomes a way to stay where you are.

But it's often not too late to begin. Changing the pattern doesn't mean quitting your job tomorrow or walking away from your family. It starts inside: noticing which obligations are truly yours, and which you may have inherited. You can begin to step out of the machine and give yourself space to live as a person, not just a performer.

Try This: Whose Goal Is This?

Write down three goals you're chasing right now. Next to each, mark:

- **M** if it's truly yours
- **I** if you inherited it
- **?** if you're not sure

There are no right answers. Just notice which goals feel like yours and which feel borrowed. That is the start of an answer to the question: whose life is this?

Quiz: The Weight of Expectations

Rate each statement from **1** (not true for me) to **2** (sometimes true) to **3** (very true for me).

If you skip a statement, count it as 2.

1. Growing up, there was a path my family expected me to follow: a career, a standard, a way of life.
2. Something I loved or wanted to do was dismissed as impractical or "not a real job".
3. I worry about disappointing the people who invested in me if I changed direction.
4. When I picture a different life, I feel guilty before I feel excited.
5. I chose my work, studies or lifestyle mainly because it was expected or sensible, not because I wanted it.
6. When I make a big decision, I picture a family member's reaction before I check what I want.
7. I believe I should be grateful for the life I've been given, even when it doesn't feel like mine.

My Inherited Achiever score: _ _ _ _ out of 21. Write it down. You'll need it in Chapter 6.

7 to 11: you may recognise some aspects of this pattern.

12 to 16: you may recognise this pattern in several areas of your life.

17 to 21: you may recognise this pattern strongly and across many areas of your life. At this level it can feel hard to shift alone, and support can help.

These ranges are rough guides, not cut-offs. This is a self-reflection tool, not a diagnosis.

Check-In

Before you close this chapter, ask yourself:

1. Where do I feel the weight of expectation in my body right now?
2. If nobody was watching or expecting anything, what's one thing I'd do this week?

Write your answers down. You'll use them in your workbook.

Next

In Chapter 3, we meet the Proving One: the person who keeps showing the world, and themselves, that they belong.

Self-reflection, not a diagnosis. If anything here stirs up something heavy, pause. You can come back later, or talk it over with someone you trust or your GP.

Chapter 3: The Proving One

The fear underneath the mask: being found not enough.

If the Inherited Achiever is driven by a family script, the Proving One is driven by a quieter belief: "I'm not enough as I am."

This mask often grows in homes where rest, play or tiredness meet criticism. Words like "lazy" or "useless" may have been said in anger or in passing, and they stuck. Rest stopped being a normal part of life and became a reward you had to earn through effort.

Always measured against someone

Many Proving Ones also grew up being compared: to a "better" sibling, a more successful cousin, a neighbour who seemed perfect. The message a child takes from that can be simple and painful: "Who I naturally am isn't enough. I have to do more to be acceptable."

This usually isn't done on purpose. Many parents pass on what was done to them, often without realising. But the child still carries it.

What it sounds like as an adult

- **The voice that won't let you stop.** Sit on the sofa and it whispers that you're failing.
- **The imposter feeling.** No matter how many degrees, promotions or praise you collect, you feel one step from being found out.
- **Criticism that sticks.** One small comment can replay for days, and a good review barely registers.

A Two-Minute Pause: The Softening Breath

Because the Proving One often holds a lot of tension in the upper body, breathing can become shallow and high in the chest. This practice invites it to settle.

1. **Unclench.** Drop your shoulders, let your tongue fall away from the roof of your mouth, and let your jaw hang slightly open.
2. **Lower inhale.** One hand on your chest, one on your belly. Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts, letting only the belly hand move.
3. **Long exhale.** Purse your lips as if blowing through a thin straw and breathe out slowly for 6 counts. Let your arms and legs soften.
4. **Silent release.** At the bottom of the breath, let your muscles go soft and say silently: "I have nothing to prove at this moment." Or use words that feel true to you.

Repeat 3 times. If you feel dizzy, return to normal breathing.

The Mirage of the Next Milestone

The Proving One often tells themselves: "Once I hit this salary, buy this house, finish this project, then I'll rest."

Then they cross the line, and the relief doesn't arrive. The bar moves higher, and the cycle repeats.

That's because achievement can't answer a question about worth. A new title can't tell you that you were already enough. Your worth didn't begin with your first day's work. Learning to feel that, not just think it, is part of coming back to yourself.

Try This: Catch the Voice

Sit for three minutes with nothing to do. No phone, no list. Notice what your mind says. Then write down:

- The exact words the voice uses.
- Whose voice it sounds like. Yours, or someone else's?

You're not trying to silence it. You're just noticing whose voice it is.

Quiz: The Need to Prove Your Place

Rate each statement from **1** (not true for me) to **2** (sometimes true) to **3** (very true for me).

If you skip a statement, count it as 2.

1. Growing up, I was compared with someone else (a sibling, cousin or classmate) and felt I came up short.
2. As a child, tiredness, rest or play were met with words like "lazy" or "not trying".
3. I'm afraid that if I stop producing, people will see I'm not valuable.
4. However much I achieve, I feel one step away from being found out.
5. When I reach a goal I feel brief relief, and then I raise the bar.
6. One small criticism can replay in my head for days, while praise barely registers.
7. Deep down, I believe my worth is measured by what I produce.

My Proving One score: _ _ _ _ out of 21. Write it down. You'll need it in Chapter 6.

7 to 11: you may recognise some aspects of this pattern.

12 to 16: you may recognise this pattern in several areas of your life.

17 to 21: you may recognise this pattern strongly and across many areas of your life. At this level it can feel hard to shift alone, and support can help.

These ranges are rough guides, not cut-offs. This is a self-reflection tool, not a diagnosis.

Check-In

1. When I rest, what voice do I hear, and whose does it sound like?
2. What would "enough" look like for me this week?

Write your answers down. You'll use them in your workbook.

Next

In Chapter 4, we meet the Self-Raised One: the person who learned to rely on themselves too early.

Self-reflection, not a diagnosis. If any of this stirs up something heavy, pause. You can come back to it later, or talk it over with someone you trust or your GP.

Chapter 4: The Self-Raised One

The child who became the grown-up

The fear underneath the mask: needing someone and being let down.

If the Proving One is trying to prove they're enough, the Self-Raised One learned something different: "I can only count on myself."

This mask often grows in homes where the adults were stretched, unwell, absent, anxious or overwhelmed. Illness, money worries, addiction or a parent who struggled emotionally can all take a toll. A child notices, quickly, who is and isn't available. And often they step in: making their own meals, managing their own worries, looking after younger siblings, sometimes even looking after a parent.

For some, the grown-ups were loving but simply stretched too thin. The child learned the same lesson either way: rely on yourself. In that loneliness, independence can become less a personality trait than a way to stay safe.

If any of this stirs up memories that feel frightening or very heavy, pause. You can come back later, or take it to someone you trust or your GP.

Strong, reliable and tired

Self-Raised Ones often grow into the people everyone leans on. You handle the crisis. You stay calm. You're the manager's dream and the family's rock.

But being the one who never needs anything has a cost. If asking for help once felt disappointing or unsafe, it may still feel that way now.

What it can look like

1. **Handing things over feels like failing.** If you don't do it yourself, you worry it won't be done right, or that you'll be letting your guard down.
2. **Needing people feels risky.** Accepting support can bring a quiet fear that they'll let you down, leave you stranded, or expect something back.
3. **Rest only comes when you collapse.** You keep carrying until your body says stop, and burnout may be that moment.
4. **Coping becomes your identity.** People praise you for being strong, so admitting you're struggling can feel like breaking the deal.

A Two-Minute Pause: The Weight Transfer

Try this now, in a chair.

1. **The drop.** Sit back fully. Don't hover at the edge. Let the backrest take the weight of your spine.
2. **Feet.** Feel your feet flat on the floor and let the floor hold them.
3. **Breathe in** through your nose for 4 counts.
4. **Breathe out** slowly through your mouth for 6 counts. As the air leaves, let your hips sink into the seat and let the chair do the holding.
5. **The shift.** At the bottom of the breath, say silently: "I'm allowed to lean back. I don't have to carry everything alone." Or use words that feel true to you.

Repeat 3 times. If sitting doesn't suit you, try lying down. If you feel dizzy, return to normal breathing.

From self-reliance to interdependence

The belief behind this mask is easy to understand: "If I don't depend on anyone, nobody can let me down." That belief protected you once. But it can also leave you without the support, rest and company that recovery needs.

Changing it doesn't mean becoming helpless or dependent. It means moving towards interdependence: the idea that people do better when they can both give and receive. You can still be capable. You just don't have to be alone.

Try This: The Small-Ask Ladder

Write down three small things you could ask someone for, from easiest to hardest.

- Easiest: _____
- Medium: _____
- Hardest: _____

This week, try only the easiest. A script to start with:

"Could you help me with _____? It would only take about _____ minutes."

Notice how it feels, in your body and afterwards. You're not asking for much. You're practising.

Quiz: The Hyper-Independence Inventory

Rate each statement from **1** (not true for me) to **2** (sometimes true) to **3** (very true for me).

If you skip a statement, count it as 2.

1. Growing up, the adults around me were often unavailable (stretched, unwell, absent or overwhelmed), and I learned to manage on my own.
2. As a child or teenager, I took on responsibilities that were really an adult's job.
3. I feel uneasy when someone offers me help, as if I now owe them something.
4. I'm afraid that if I rely on someone, they'll let me down or leave me stranded.

5. I'd rather struggle alone than ask for help, even when I'm exhausted.
6. I find it hard to hand things over, and when I do, I check or redo them.
7. I believe the only person I can truly count on is me.

My Self-Raised One score: _ _ _ _ out of 21. Write it down. You'll need it in Chapter 6.

7 to 11: you may recognise some aspects of this pattern.

12 to 16: you may recognise this pattern in several areas of your life.

17 to 21: you may recognise this pattern strongly and across many areas of your life. At this level it can feel hard to shift alone, and support can help.

These ranges are rough guides, not cut-offs. This is a self-reflection tool, not a diagnosis.

Check-In

1. When did I last let someone help me, and how did it feel?
2. What's one thing I'm carrying that someone else could share?

Write your answers down. You'll use them in your workbook.

Next

In Chapter 5, we meet the Pleaser: the person who keeps the peace by putting everyone else first.

Self-reflection, not a diagnosis. If anything here stirs up something heavy, pause. You can come back later, or talk it over with someone you trust or your GP.

Chapter 5: The Pleaser

The radar that never switches off

The fear underneath the mask: conflict, or being left.

If the Self-Raised One learned to rely on themselves, the Pleaser learned to keep everyone else okay.

This mask often grows in homes where the mood could change quickly, or where love seemed to depend on keeping the peace. A child in that situation becomes very good at reading the room: a change in tone, a heavy silence, a tightened face. By noticing early, they try to avoid the storm.

Over time, they step into the role of the peacekeeper. They anticipate what everyone needs and quietly set aside their own voice, wishes and limits.

Not a flaw, a learned skill

People-pleasing isn't a weakness, and it isn't always fake. Your care for others is real. But it often began as a way to stay safe and connected, and it can run on autopilot long after the reason has gone.

As an adult, a Pleaser is often kind, intuitive and supportive. You're the fixer, the one who smooths things over, the colleague who rarely says no.

What it can look like

- **A boundary feels like hurting someone.** Saying "I can't do this right now" can bring a rush of guilt, as if you've done something wrong.
- **Resentment is the quiet alarm.** When you keep saying yes while your body says no, hidden resentment can build. It isn't a flaw. It's often a sign a limit has been crossed.

- **You stop only when you have to.** Rest comes when you're depleted, not when you need it, and burnout may be where that finally catches up.

A Two-Minute Pause: The Steady Hands

Try this now.

1. **Hands.** Place one hand on the centre of your chest and the other on your belly. Use gentle, steady pressure, enough to feel held. If touch is uncomfortable, rest your hands on your thighs, or cross your arms over your shoulders.
2. **Breathe in** through your nose for 4 counts, feeling your hands rise slightly.
3. **Breathe out** slowly through your mouth for 6 counts, keeping your hands steady. Let your jaw and tongue relax.
4. **The sentence.** At the bottom of the breath, say silently: "My energy belongs to me. I'm allowed to take up space without apologising." Or use words that feel true to you.

Repeat 3 times. If you feel dizzy, return to normal breathing.

A boundary is not a rejection

The belief behind this mask is easy to understand: "If I take care of everyone else first, I'll be safe, loved and valued."

That belief once helped keep the peace. But it's hard to recover from burnout while giving away your energy without limits.

Here is the shift: a boundary isn't a rejection, it's protection. Setting one can feel uncomfortable for a while. That discomfort doesn't mean you did something wrong. Real connection doesn't require you to disappear, and your worth doesn't depend on how useful or accommodating you are.

Try This: The Pause Before Yes

You don't have to say no straight away. Start by buying time.

Next time someone asks for something, try:

"Let me check my diary and get back to you."

Then take a breath and ask yourself:

- Do I want to do this?
- Do I have the energy?
- What would I say if I weren't afraid of the answer?

This week, use the pause once. It's a small step, and a powerful one.

Quiz: The People-Pleaser Inventory

Rate each statement from **1** (not true for me) to **2** (sometimes true) to **3** (very true for me).

If you skip a statement, count it as 2.

1. Growing up, I learned to read the mood in the room and keep things calm.
2. As a child, it felt safer to keep my own opinions or needs to myself.
3. I worry that if I set a limit, someone will be upset with me or leave.
4. When someone's mood changes, I assume I should fix it, or that I've done something wrong.
5. I say yes to favours or tasks when I have no energy for them.
6. I find it hard to say no without explaining or apologising.
7. I believe I'm valued for how helpful and easy to be around I am.

My Pleaser score: _ _ _ _ out of 21. Write it down. You'll need it in Chapter 6.

7 to 11: you may recognise some aspects of this pattern.

12 to 16: you may recognise this pattern in several areas of your life.

17 to 21: you may recognise this pattern strongly and across many areas of your life. At this level it can feel hard to shift alone, and support can help.

These ranges are rough guides, not cut-offs. This is a self-reflection tool, not a diagnosis.

Check-In

1. When did I last say yes while my body said no?
2. What would I choose if I knew no one would be upset?

Write your answers down. You'll use them in your workbook.

Next

You've now met all four masks. In the final chapter, you'll compare your scores and look at your next steps for coming back to yourself.

Self-reflection, not a diagnosis. If any of this stirs up something heavy, pause. You can come back later, or talk it over with someone you trust or your GP.

Chapter 6: Coming Back to Yourself

You've now met four masks:

- **The Inherited Achiever** learned: my worth is in meeting expectations.
- **The Proving One** learned: I have to prove I'm enough.
- **The Self-Raised One** learned: I can only rely on myself.
- **The Pleaser** learned: I stay safe by keeping everyone else okay.

The thread through all of them: for a long time, a part of you worked hard to keep you safe, accepted or valued. It isn't your enemy. It's just tiring.

Your four scores

Copy your four totals from the chapter quizzes.

Your highest score may not match the mask you expected. That is useful, not a mistake. Notice what surprises you.

Mask	My score (7 to 21)
The Inherited Achiever	
The Proving One	
The Self-Raised One	
The Pleaser	

How to read them.

- Your **highest score** is your lead mask: the one to start with.
- Your **second highest** is your supporting mask.
- If two scores are within 2 points of each other, you are probably wearing both. That is common, and it is not a problem to solve.
- If **all four are high**, that is common too. When you're very tired, almost everything can feel true. The workbook has a question that helps tell the masks apart.
- If **all four are low**, your tiredness may have more to do with workload, health or circumstances than with a pattern. A conversation with your GP is a sensible next step.

These aren't boxes or diagnoses. They are common patterns, learned for good reasons, that can leave you exhausted, wired at night, flat in the day and short on joy.

Why understanding isn't always enough

Naming a pattern is a real start, and many people feel relief the moment they can. But patterns learned early often show up in the body as well as the mind. You can know you're allowed to rest and still feel guilty or tense when you do.

For some people, reading and reflecting is enough to start shifting things. For others, it helps to have company on the way.

Three first steps this week

1. **Take a two-minute pause once a day.** Pick a regular moment: after lunch, before a meeting, before bed.
2. **Make one small change.** Try the pause before yes, ask for one small piece of help, or take ten minutes with no list.
3. **Tell one person.** Share one sentence with someone you trust, such as: "I think I've been carrying a lot."

Keep it small. Small and repeated beats big and abandoned.

You don't have to quit your job to begin

Many overachievers fear that recovery means walking away from everything. It usually starts far more quietly: noticing the pattern, and changing how you rest, how you say yes and how you speak to yourself, inside the life you already have. Whether a bigger change feels right later is a choice for another day.

Your next step: the workbook

This book helped you name your mask. *The Burnout Mask Workbook* helps you work with it. In six short steps you'll check in with where you are, see where your mask shows up in your life, understand what it's protecting you from, try one small experiment for seven days, and decide what to do next, on your own or with support.

Get the workbook: https://mindfulhorizons888.systeme.io/dd84e0ae

When to get more support

Please speak to your GP if poor sleep, low mood or anxiety have lasted for weeks, or if everyday tasks feel impossible. If you ever feel hopeless or think about harming yourself, please get help now. In the UK, call Samaritans free on 116 123 (24 hours), contact NHS 111, or call 999 in an emergency. Outside the UK, find a helpline at findahelpline.com or call your local emergency number.

Working with me

If you'd like company on this, I offer a free 30-minute Burnout Clarity Call. It's a conversation, not a therapy session, and there is no obligation. We talk about what's been happening, and I tell you honestly whether I think I can help. If I'm not the right fit, I'll point you to other options.

If we work together, my Burnout Reset Programme is six two-hour one-to-one sessions, with audio practices to use between sessions, reflection tasks and check-in calls.

Book your free call: https://www.themindfulhorizons.com/burnout-reset

A last word

You aren't broken, and you aren't failing. You've been carrying something for a long time, and it makes sense that you're tired. Coming back to yourself doesn't mean becoming someone new. It means putting down what was never yours to carry.

Thank you for reading.

Self-reflection, not a diagnosis. See the notice at the front of this book.