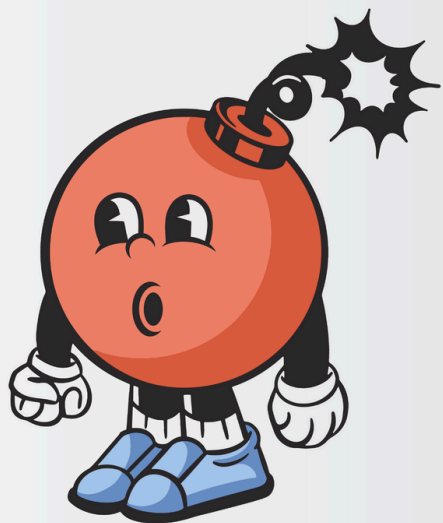


Because 'Powering Through' Isn't Actually a Wellness Strategy

BURNOUT PREVENTION GUIDE



W-COLLECTIVE

**Because
'Powering Through'
Isn't Actually
a Wellness Strategy**

**Created by women who've
been there, burned out that,
and built something better -
because your mental health
shouldn't be a casualty of your
career ambitions.**



INTRODUCTION

LET'S BE HONEST - IF YOU'RE READING THIS, YOU'RE PROBABLY RUNNING ON CAFFEINE, CHAOS, AND SHEER DETERMINATION RIGHT NOW. AND THAT THIRD COFFEE OF THE DAY ISN'T ACTUALLY FIXING ANYTHING.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE. 77% OF PROFESSIONALS REPORT EXPERIENCING BURNOUT, AND 100% OF THEM WISH THEY'D CAUGHT THE SIGNS SOONER.

THIS ISN'T JUST ANOTHER "TAKE A BUBBLE BATH" SELF-CARE GUIDE. THIS IS YOUR PRACTICAL PLAYBOOK FOR PREVENTING BURNOUT BEFORE IT TURNS YOUR BRAIN INTO AN OVERCOOKED NOODLE.



WHY THIS GUIDE EXISTS:

LOOK, WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE. THE ENDLESS TO-DO LISTS, THE "QUICK" REQUESTS THAT EAT UP YOUR ENTIRE DAY, THE FEELING THAT IF YOU JUST WORK A LITTLE HARDER, LONGER, FASTER, YOU'LL FINALLY CATCH UP. SPOILER ALERT: YOU WON'T. BECAUSE BURNOUT ISN'T ABOUT WORKING HARD - IT'S ABOUT WORKING IN A WAY THAT'S FUNDAMENTALLY UNSUSTAINABLE.

WE CREATED THIS GUIDE BECAUSE WE'RE TIRED OF SEEING BRILLIANT WOMEN RUN THEMSELVES INTO THE GROUND TRYING TO PROVE THEIR WORTH. WE'RE DONE WITH THE "HUSTLE CULTURE" THAT CELEBRATES EXHAUSTION LIKE IT'S A BADGE OF HONOR. AND WE'RE DEFINITELY DONE WITH ADVICE THAT SUGGESTS ALL YOU NEED IS A SCENTED CANDLE AND SOME POSITIVE THINKING TO FIX SYSTEMATIC OVERWORK.

WHO ARE WE?

A passionate advocate for mentorship, goal setting, and personal and professional growth, Katie is dedicated to empowering individuals and teams to drive meaningful change. She believes that clear direction, strategic ambition, and continuous development are the keys to long-term success.

Clare knows Buying & Sales having worked with and for some of UK & Eurpoe's largest Grocery Retailers including Tesco, Sainsburys, Asda, Morrisons, Aldi, Lidl, Ahold Delhaize, and ICA



MEET THE TEAM

KATIE

Director. Ex
Fashion Designer
for high street
fashion brands
H&M, M&S, ASOS,
WGSN,
MONSOON,
FASION SNOOPS



MEET THE TEAM

CLARE

Director. Ex Food
buyer &
commercial
MORRISONS,
TESCO, ALDI,
SAINSBURYS,
ASDA.



WHY WE CARE?

Katie spent 15 years in senior design roles at major fashion retailers, watching talented teams burn out from the relentless pace of fast fashion.

Clare ran a £300m turnover business by 30, learning firsthand how the pressure to perform can lead to unsustainable work patterns.

We've both been there, burned out, and built something better. Now we're here to help you avoid the same mistakes.





BURNOUT RISK ASSESSMENT

WHY THIS MATTERS:

BEFORE WE DIVE INTO SOLUTIONS, LET'S LOOK AT WHERE YOU'RE AT. THIS ISN'T ABOUT JUDGMENT - IT'S ABOUT AWARENESS. BECAUSE JUST LIKE YOU CAN'T FIX A LEAK YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, YOU CAN'T PREVENT BURNOUT IF YOU'RE IGNORING THE WARNING SIGNS.

RATE YOUR CURRENT STATE (0-5):

- ▣ TIMES YOU'VE SAID "I'M FINE" TODAY
- ▣ UNANSWERED MESSAGES GIVING YOU ANXIETY
- ▣ DAYS SINCE A PROPER LUNCH BREAK
- ▣ TIMES YOU'VE WORKED THROUGH WEEKENDS THIS MONTH
- ▣ MEETINGS THAT COULD'VE BEEN EMAILS

SCORE:

0-5: MILD EXHAUSTION (YOU'RE TIRED BUT NOT TOASTED)
6-15: HEADING FOR BURNOUT (TIME TO MAKE SOME CHANGES)
16-25: RED ALERT - TIME FOR INTERVENTION (NO, SERIOUSLY, STOP EVERYTHING AND READ THIS GUIDE)

1. THE "IS THIS ACTUALLY BURNOUT?" CHECKLIST

Ok, let's all admit, we've all googled "am I burned out or just tired?" at 2 AM. (Probably while simultaneously checking work emails and questioning all our life choices.) The thing is, burnout isn't just about being exhausted - though trust us, that's definitely part of it. It's about that deep-down, soul-level tiredness that sleep can't fix and coffee can't touch.

Think of this checklist as your personal wellness reality check. Not the Instagram kind where someone tells you to "just drink more water" (though, honestly, you probably should), but the real, honest kind that acknowledges sometimes things are properly hard.

PHYSICAL SIGNS (Or "Why Your Body's Sending You Emails in All Caps"):

- That tiredness that feels like it's settled into your bones
- Headaches that your usual paracetamol just laughs at
- The eye twitch that's become your unwanted signature move
- Sleep patterns that are basically "what is sleep?"
- An immune system that's basically given up (Hello, third cold this month!)



A photograph of two glasses of iced coffee with a waffle stick stirrer. The glasses are clear and filled with ice, coffee, and a waffle stick. The background is a light-colored surface.

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EMOTIONAL SIGNS (Because Your Feelings Are Actually Trying to Tell You Something):

- Sunday Scaries that have expanded to consume most of the week
- Finding yourself crying in weird places (bathroom, stationary cupboard, Pret)
- Feeling emotionally numb (except for that random rage at minor inconveniences)
- Unable to get excited about things that used to light you up
- Everything feels like Too Much™, even the good stuff

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS (Or "Things You're Doing That Future You Will Regret"):

- The procrastination-panic cycle is your new normal
- Lunch break? You mean that thing other people do?
- Your blood type is now officially caffeine
- Checking emails at times that would make your therapist cry
- You've forgotten what your friends look like in real life

WORK SIGNS (The Professional Edition of "This Is Fine"):

- Missing deadlines (and you used to be the deadline queen)
- Making mistakes that make you question if you've forgotten how to read
- Your memory feels like it's been replaced with a goldfish's
- Everything about work makes you want to eye-roll into another dimension
- Working longer hours but somehow getting less done

2. YOUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOL

RIGHT, LET'S TALK ABOUT THOSE MOMENTS WHEN EVERYTHING FEELS LIKE IT'S IMPLODING. WHEN YOU'RE ONE PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE EMAIL AWAY FROM EITHER UGLY CRYING AT YOUR DESK OR DRAMATICALLY QUITTING TO BECOME A GOAT FARMER IN WALES.
(NO JUDGMENT - WE'VE ALL HAD THAT FANTASY.)



This isn't just another "take deep breaths" suggestion (though breathing is, annoyingly, quite important).
This is your professional crisis kit for when things get really real.

THE 5-5-5 RESET

(Because Sometimes You Need Structure to Stop the Spiral):

- 5 deep breaths (Yes, actually do them. Right now. We'll wait.)
- 5 minute walk (Even if it's just to the loo and back)
- 5 priorities reassessed (Because not everything can be on fire)

Why this actually works: It breaks that panic spiral where everything feels urgent and terrible. It's like hitting ctrl+alt+delete on your brain.

THE "I NEED A MINUTE" SCRIPTS:

For Meetings:

"I need to step away briefly - I'll be back in 5 minutes."
(Not "sorry" - you're not apologizing for being human)

For Emails:

"I'm stepping away from my desk to handle an urgent matter. I'll respond to emails when I return at [time]."
(Professional, clear, and doesn't invite debate)

For That Colleague Who Just Won't Stop Talking:

"I need to focus on [task] right now. Can we catch up at [specific time]?"
(Boundary-setting without burning bridges)

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3. DAILY PREVENTION STRATEGIES THAT DON'T REQUIRE MOVING TO BALI

Look, we know you've probably read a million articles about "self-care" that suggest you should somehow fit a morning meditation, yoga session, journaling practice, and green smoothie into your already packed schedule. This isn't that.

These are real-world strategies for real people who sometimes eat lunch over their keyboard while on their fourth Zoom call of the day. (We see you, and we've been you.)



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THE MORNING SANITY SAVERS:

- No emails before coffee (This is non-negotiable)
- Three main priorities (Not fifteen. Three.)
- Scheduled breaks (Yes, actually put them in your calendar)
- Energy check-in (Are you running on actual energy or just spite?)
- Planned end time (Because "when I finish everything" isn't a time)

THE WORKDAY SURVIVAL TACTICS:

- 90-minute focus blocks (Your brain can only take so much)
- Movement breaks (Even if it's just walking while on calls)
- Actual lunch away from your desk (Scrolling Instagram over your keyboard doesn't count)
- Water intake tracking (Because dehydration isn't helping anything)
- Screen breaks (Your eyes are begging you)

THE EVENING WIND-DOWN:

- Clear work-home transition (Even in WFH life)
- Digital sunset routine (Email notifications off!)
- Tomorrow's priority list (So your brain can actually rest)
- Gratitude practice (Even if it's just "grateful I didn't quit today")
- Wind-down ritual (Netflix counts)



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4. BOUNDARY SETTING SCRIPTS (BECAUSE "NO" IS A COMPLETE SENTENCE)

LET'S TALK ABOUT BOUNDARIES

THOSE INVISIBLE LINES THAT SEPARATE "DOING YOUR JOB" FROM "SLOWLY LOSING YOUR SOUL TO ENDLESS DEMANDS." WE KNOW SETTING BOUNDARIES CAN FEEL SCARY, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT BEING SEEN AS "NOT A TEAM PLAYER" OR "DIFFICULT." (WHY IS IT ALWAYS WOMEN WHO GET CALLED DIFFICULT? BUT THAT'S A RANT FOR ANOTHER DAY.)

THE "ACTUALLY, I HAVE LIMITS" EMAIL TEMPLATES:

For Late Night Emails:

"Thank you for your email. I've received this outside of working hours and will address it during my next working day (9AM-5PM). For genuine emergencies, please call [emergency contact]."

PS: This is an automated response, not me working at 11PM again."

For The Scope Creeper:

"I'd love to help with this additional project. To maintain quality on both this and my existing commitments, we'll need to either:

- a) Adjust current project timelines*
- b) Bring in additional support*
- c) Reprioritise my current workload*

Which would you prefer to discuss?"

For The "Quick Favor" That's Actually A Whole Project:

"Thanks for thinking of me for this. To give it the attention it deserves, I'll need to:

- Understand the full scope*
- Assess the time requirement*
- Review my current commitments*

Let's schedule 15 minutes to discuss this properly."



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5. THE RECOVERY ROADMAP

Sometimes, despite our best prevention efforts, we find ourselves deep in burnout territory. Maybe you're there right now, reading this through exhausted eyes, wondering how you'll make it through another day of back-to-back meetings and endless demands.

**First, let's acknowledge something:
Getting to this point doesn't mean you've failed.
It means you're human in a system that often forgets that humans aren't machines.**

THE IMMEDIATE RELIEF PLAN:

Step 1: The Honest Audit

- What's actually urgent? (Hint: probably less than you think)
- What can be delegated? (Yes, other people can do things too)
- What can be delayed? (The world won't end)
- What can be dropped? (Be ruthless here)

Step 2: The Recovery Schedule

- Block recovery time in your calendar (And defend it like it's your last chocolate biscuit)
- Set auto-responses for boundaries (We've got templates for that)
- Create a "bare minimum" task list (What absolutely has to happen?)
- Plan small breaks throughout the day (Five minutes of not looking at a screen counts)

Step 3: The Support Squad

- Who can help professionally? (Mentor, colleague, manager)
- Who can help personally? (Friend, family, therapist)
- What resources does your company offer? (EAP, mental health days)
- What external support can you access? (We've got a list)

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CONCLUSION: YOUR NEXT STEPS

LOOK, WE KNOW READING THIS GUIDE ISN'T MAGICALLY GOING TO FIX EVERYTHING. (IF ONLY IT WERE THAT EASY!) BUT IT'S A START. A RECOGNITION THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN THIS, THAT FEELING OVERWHELMED DOESN'T MAKE YOU BAD AT YOUR JOB, AND THAT THERE ARE ACTUAL, PRACTICAL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAKE IT BETTER.



→ **READY FOR MORE THAN JUST SURVIVAL?**

THE BLUEPRINT GIVES YOU ACCESS TO:

- WEEKLY COACHING SESSIONS (WITH ACTUAL HUMANS WHO GET IT)
- PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS (NOT JUST THEORY)
- COMMUNITY SUPPORT (BECAUSE WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER)
- EXPERT GUIDANCE (FROM PEOPLE WHO'VE BEEN THERE)
- REAL-WORLD STRATEGIES THAT ACTUALLY WORK (TESTED BY REAL PEOPLE WITH REAL JOBS)

BECAUSE YOU DESERVE MORE THAN JUST SURVIVING YOUR CAREER - YOU DESERVE TO THRIVE IN IT.

VISIT [W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK](https://w-collective.co.uk) TO START YOUR JOURNEY TO SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS.

REMEMBER: YOUR WORTH ISN'T MEASURED IN OVERTIME HOURS, AND BURNOUT ISN'T A BADGE OF HONOR. YOU'RE ALLOWED TO HAVE LIMITS, SET BOUNDARIES, AND PRIORITIZE YOUR WELLBEING.

LET'S BUILD SOMETHING BETTER TOGETHER.

The background of the entire page is a soft-focus photograph of a person's hand with light-colored nail polish typing on a black computer keyboard. The hand is positioned in the upper left and center of the frame. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the main text.

WHAT IS *The* Blueprint

IT'S A 52-WEEK, FULLY IMMERSIVE PROGRAMME, AND HONESTLY, WE'VE LOOKED, AND THERE'S JUST NOTHING ELSE OUT THERE LIKE THE BLUEPRINT.

THE COURSE IS STRUCTURED AROUND FIVE POWER-PACKED MODULES, EACH LASER-FOCUSED ON A CRITICAL AREA OF YOUR CAREER AND PERSONAL GROWTH. THESE MODULES ARE DESIGNED TO EQUIP YOU WITH THE TOOLS TO EXCEL IN THE WORKPLACE, GROW YOUR CONFIDENCE, AND CREATE A PLAN THAT WORKS FOR YOU.

WE CREATED WHAT WE WISH WE'D HAD. A PROGRAMME THAT DELIVERS CLARITY, CONFIDENCE, AND ACTIONABLE STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU TAKE YOUR CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

THE EXPERIENCE IS HIGHLY PERSONALISED. WE'LL WORK WITH YOU TO CREATE A TAILORED CAREER GROWTH PLAN DURING A 1:1 SESSION WITH ONE OF OUR EXPERTS. YOU'LL ALSO BENEFIT FROM REGULAR CHECK-INS TO STAY ACCOUNTABLE, AND COACHING SESSIONS EVERY FOUR WEEKS TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH YOUR PROGRESS. THIS ISN'T JUST PASSIVE LEARNING, IT'S ABOUT TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR FUTURE.

THE BLUEPRINT IS CREATED BY PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATED CAREER GROWTH AND UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN WORKPLACE.

AND THE BEST PART? IT'S PRACTICAL, NO-FLUFF CONTENT DESIGNED TO SEAMLESSLY FIT INTO YOUR BUSY LIFE.

KEY BENEFITS

121 Mentorship

Kickstart your journey with tailored advice and a personalised game plan that's all about your goals and ambitions.

Online Learning & Challenges

Lessons filled with real-world strategies, paired with action-driven challenges to help you turn knowledge into results from day one

Monthly Group Coaching

Collaborate with like minded peers, tackle challenges together, and gain expert insights to keep your progress on track

Always On Community Support

Stay connected with a supportive network that's there for accountability, advice, and encouragement whenever you need it

SIGN UP AT [W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK](https://w-collective.co.uk)

LEARNING MODULES

Self-awareness and Personal Growth

Professional Skills and Competency

Networking and Mentorship

Work-Life Balance

Career Strategy and Advancement

SIGN UP AT [W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK](https://w-collective.co.uk)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

THESE RESOURCES ARE PRIMARILY UK-BASED. IF YOU'RE REACHING OUT FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY, PLEASE DON'T WORRY - WE'RE HERE TO HELP GUIDE YOU TOWARDS LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN YOUR AREA. JUST DROP US A MESSAGE AT HELLO@W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK, AND WE'LL POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

NHS Every Mind Matters: Work and Mental Health

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-at-work/>

- This section of the NHS site offers practical tips for managing mental health at work, spotting the signs of burnout, and knowing when to seek help. It's a trusted, official UK source.

Mind UK - Workplace Mental Health Support

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/>

- Provides articles, toolkits, and advice specifically for stress and burnout in the workplace. They also have employer-related info, which could help clients advocate for themselves at work.

Mental Health at Work - Toolkits and Self-Care Plans

<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk>

- Created by Mind in collaboration with other partners, this platform curates tools and self-care strategies that are UK-based and workplace-focused. It's super user-friendly and supportive for individuals and teams alike.



NEED MORE SUPPORT?

EMAIL US AT HELLO@W-COLLECTIVE.CO.UK FOR PERSONALISED SUPPORT AND TO CONNECT WITH A COMMUNITY OF WOMEN COMMITTED TO THRIVING—NOT JUST SURVIVING.

BURNOUT ISN'T JUST PERSONAL; IT'S SYSTEMIC. PRIORITISING YOUR WELL-BEING SETS A PRECEDENT FOR EVERY WOMAN WHO FOLLOWS. NO PRESSURE, BUT ALSO... PROTECT YOUR ENERGY.

Wc