

My 8 tools to help you break out of the burnout cycle:

1. Keeping a Journal, List Making and Letters to Yourself

It's very important to cleanse your mind of all the things that are churning around.

Journaling is a great way to do this. Write down whatever pops into your head, whether it's a positive or a negative feeling. It can be one word or a few sentences, whatever feels right for you. It might be enough to just get it on the page to clear your head or you might want to refer back to it at other times.

At night keep your journal by the bed. If you wake up with 4am worries, then write them all down. Maybe it's an idea or thoughts running through your head, if so write them down too. You don't want to forget that great idea!

If you have things that you need to do or remember, then make a To Do List. To avoid getting overwhelmed by the size of the list, break it down into manageable bite size chunks so that you can see that you are ticking things off. It's very satisfying.

Or you could write yourself a letter and say whatever you like. Maybe you would like to acknowledge your current thoughts and feelings, it's really comforting to read the words of somebody who really understands where you are coming from. Yes, that's you.

Make your letter conversational and don't worry about grammar or spelling mistakes, none of that matters, it's not an essay.

It's a great idea to use positive words and statements like "You are strong" rather than "You are not weak" as your subconscious mind only sees You and Weak and interprets it as "You are weak", and that's definitely not the sentiment you are after.

Keep the letter in an accessible place, make revisions when necessary and make sure you read it regularly.

2. The Achievement Diary

See last page.

3. Sometimes you have to say No

You can't always say yes to everything and everybody, because that means you often end up at the bottom of the list, with no time for yourself.

Imagine you've got yourself prepared for a cosy quiet evening, box set at the ready with some gorgeous food and then a friend calls and begs you to go out.

Before you know it, you are saying yes. Sometimes say No, as in "It sounds lovely but No, I can't".

If you don't say No enough, this can lead to you feeling resentment and then getting angry with yourself. No good can come of that.

4. Nourish your mind, body and soul

This includes eating the right food for you (well 80% of the time at least), spending time with people you love and care about, your hobbies and interests, having a good laugh, reading a book, going for a walk, having a beauty treatment, watching a film or having a good sleep.

Whatever it is that you enjoy and that makes you feel good.

It's also vital to make sure that you properly relax. It's so important that we take a break from work related things, whether that's what you do for a living or the household chores.

Also make sure that sometimes you stop doing things and just 'be'. We are called human beings not human doings.

5. Keep active

Keep moving in a way that's right for you. Anything that keeps you active is better than nothing.

It will help you maintain your energy, level your moods and strengthen your cognition so that you can continue to gain knowledge and learn. It also helps you to understand your thoughts and experiences.

6. Give yourself a break (and some credit)

Show yourself some compassion – why can we do it for others yet we can be so mean to ourselves?

Give yourself some credit for the things you are doing right and celebrate every success, no matter how small.

If things don't go to plan (and as you are human, chances are sometimes they won't), don't be hard on yourself.

Work out what needs changing or fixing and crack on.

7. Stop comparing yourself to others

One of the easiest ways to feel bad about yourself is to compare yourself or your life to other people.

Others can seem more attractive, richer, more successful and have loads more social media friends. They can look like they have life sorted and they can look so happy.

All of those things are based on your own perceptions, you cannot know how they are really feeling. The image that others put out to the world, particularly on social media, is not necessarily the truth.

It's a total waste of your energy, so please stop it now. Have role models by all means, but look at them in a positive and constructive light, rather than making negative comparisons.

8. Accept compliments

When somebody compliments you on your cooking, your latest report or says you look good, how do you react?

Do you feel a bit uncomfortable and not know how to reply?

The best way to accept a compliment is to smile, look the person in the eye and say thank you.

Being able to accept compliments is great for your confidence and overall wellbeing and also makes the other person feel good too.

So everybody wins.

The Achievement Diary

Sometimes we have days when we don't think we are good enough and we forget just how much we are capable of.

Write a list below of your achievements and accomplishments*, going back as far as you feel is relevant.

Next time you feel challenged or you are questioning your abilities, take some time to read the list back to yourself and remember how you felt each time you achieved one of those things.

This diary will flip your focus back to remind you that you are in control, you are totally capable, you are good enough, you have achieved before and you will achieve again and again.

*There is a very thin difference between the two and often two schools of thought but usually an achievement is a goal that has been reached and an accomplishment is a job or project that has been completed.

My Achievements and Accomplishments