

Burnout Checklist for Neurodivergent Adults

A gentle self-check, not a diagnosis

This checklist is designed to help you notice patterns — not to label, judge, or pressure yourself.

There are no scores. No right answers. Just information.

Instructions:

For each statement, check the option that feels most accurate *recently*.

Energy & Recovery

- ☐ Rest doesn't feel restorative, even after sleep or time off
- ☐ I feel tired before the day has really started
- ☐ My energy runs out faster than it used to
- ☐ Recovery takes longer than it used to
- ☐ I feel physically or mentally drained most days

Executive Function Access

- ☐ Starting tasks feels unusually difficult
- ☐ Planning or organizing feels overwhelming
- ☐ I avoid tasks even when I want to do them
- ☐ My working memory feels unreliable or "foggy"
- ☐ Switching between tasks takes more effort than before

Emotional & Cognitive Changes

- ☐ I feel emotionally flat, numb, or disconnected
- ☐ Small frustrations feel disproportionately intense
- ☐ My patience is much lower than usual
- ☐ I feel mentally slower or less sharp
- ☐ I'm more self-critical than I used to be

Sensory Tolerance

- ☐ Sounds, light, or textures feel harder to tolerate
- ☐ Social interaction drains me faster than usual

- ☐ I feel overstimulated more easily
- ☐ I crave isolation more than I used to
- ☐ Everyday environments feel more overwhelming

Motivation, Meaning & Engagement

- ☐ Things I care about feel distant or inaccessible
- ☐ Accomplishments don't feel satisfying
- ☐ I struggle to feel motivated even for "important" tasks
- ☐ I feel stuck or indifferent about the future
- ☐ I'm going through the motions rather than feeling engaged

Physical Stress Signals

- ☐ Muscle tension, headaches, or body pain are more frequent
- ☐ Sleep feels disrupted or unrefreshing
- ☐ I get sick more often or take longer to recover
- ☐ My appetite or digestion has changed
- ☐ My body feels constantly "on edge" or shut down

Reflecting on Your Responses

You do **not** need to check every box for burnout to be present.

Instead, notice:

- Where you answered "**Yes**" or "**Sometimes**" repeatedly
- Which sections show clusters
- Which changes feel new, worsening, or persistent

Burnout often shows up as **patterns across multiple areas**, especially executive function, energy, and sensory tolerance.

Important Reminders

- This checklist is **not a diagnosis**
- Burnout is not laziness, failure, or lack of discipline
- Burnout reflects **reduced capacity**, not reduced worth
- Skills don't disappear — **access** fluctuates under stress

Many people find it helpful to pair this checklist with:

- An **executive function checklist** to see which skills are most affected
- Low-energy or reduced-demand tools during burnout periods

- Supports that focus on regulation and recovery before productivity

What You Might Do Next (Only If It Feels Right)

You don't need a full plan right now. Possible next steps include:

- Lowering expectations temporarily
- Reducing inputs and demands where possible
- Externalizing memory and planning
- Choosing tools designed for **low-capacity days**
- Giving yourself permission to rest *without earning it*

Burnout is information.

Noticing it is already a step toward recovery.