

Energy in, energy out

Stress and burnout are not only about too much demand. They are about the balance between what depletes you and what restores you.

An audit makes that balance visible. It does not tell you what to do. It tells you where the imbalance lives, which is the first thing worth knowing.



Low risk, low pressure. This is a self-noticing tool. It does not require any changes.

WHAT THIS IS

A way of seeing balance

- Based on Sonnentag & Fritz's four recovery experiences
- A page to bring to a clinical conversation
- Permission to notice rather than to fix

WHAT THIS IS NOT

A measure of how stressed you are

- Not a diagnosis or assessment
- Not a productivity tool
- Not a list of things to do or stop on your own

HOW TO USE IT

- 1 Read the four recovery experiences**
- 2 Fill in your two columns on page 2**
- 3 Pick one item to notice**

Not all kinds of rest do the same work.

A few items per column is enough.

Choose one item to sit with, or to bring to a clinical conversation.

THE FOUR RECOVERY EXPERIENCES

DETACHMENT

Mentally away from the work

Not just physically away. The mind has stopped rehearsing the inbox, the meeting, the week ahead.

RELAXATION

Low arousal, low demand

A settled body and mind. Nothing being asked of you in that moment.

MASTERY

A challenge unrelated to the work

A creative or learning activity that produces a sense of competence outside the demand.

CONTROL

Choosing how the time is spent

Time off allocated by you, not by other people's needs.

MATCHING THE RECOVERY TO HOW YOU FEEL

WHEN YOU FEEL WOUND UP

Racing, restless, switched on

For some, detachment and relaxation land first. Mastery can feel effortful when arousal is already high.

WHEN YOU FEEL WOUND DOWN

Flat, foggy, heavy

For some, mastery and control land first. Pure relaxation can sometimes deepen the flatness.

A WORKED EXAMPLE Anika, 41, is a made-up example. She worked hard for two years on a project that finally landed. Six weeks of leave have not brought the recovery she expected. **Her ledger offers some clues.**

ENERGY IN

- Movement, when not tired
- Sleep, when it happens
- The garden
- A small number of close friendships

ENERGY OUT

- The work, even now
- Inbox at evenings and weekends
- Decisions for the family
- Her mother's medical appointments

The audit does not tell Anika what to do. It shows her the balance, and suggests that what may be missing is detachment, not more rest.

WHERE TO START, ON PAGE 2 Fill in your own two columns. The question worth taking into a clinical conversation: **where is the balance, and what kind of recovery has been missing?**

REMEMBER Rest can restore some capacity to meet demand. It does not reduce the demand. If the situation is producing more load than recovery can absorb, the work is to look at the situation.

When your two columns are filled in, you can sit with what you notice, or bring it to a first conversation. Either is a fine next step.

Based on: Sonnentag, S., & Fritz, C. (2007). The Recovery Experience Questionnaire. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 12(3), 204–221. · Bennett, A. A., Bakker, A. B., & Field, J. G. (2018). Recovery from work-related effort: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(3), 262–275.

Work that lands. Rest that restores. People. Movement. Quiet. Creativity.
Nature. The small things that genuinely add back.

The work itself. What you absorb on behalf of others. The meetings, the inbox, the commute. Situations you cannot exit. Decisions for the family.

Where is the balance, and what kind of recovery has been missing?

You can sit with what you notice, or bring it to a first conversation.

No obligation