

Your stress and burnout timeline

Stress and burnout rarely arrive in one moment. They build, slowly, in patterns the person carrying them can recognise but cannot always describe.

A timeline can make the pattern easier to see: accumulation, recovery, and recurrence. **Seeing the shape can be a starting point**, even when the load is heavy.

i **Heavier than the other worksheets.** Best done in low-demand time. Leave blank what feels too much, and bring the partial to a clinical conversation.

WHAT THIS IS

A map of accumulation and recovery

- A way of mapping how stress and burnout have built over time
- A picture of accumulation, recovery, and recurrence
- A page to bring to a clinical conversation
- A frame for what the body has been carrying

WHAT THIS IS NOT

A complete history

- Not a diagnosis or measure of severity
- Not a self-treatment plan
- Not a complete history; partial is enough
- Not something to be done if it feels too heavy alone

WHY A TIMELINE

The body can carry a longer record than the mind.

Some researchers call the cost of sustained demand without recovery **allostatic load**: the cumulative cost on the body of running the stress response without enough room to settle in between. **For some people the load shows up later**, long after they can pinpoint when it started.

Patterns matter more than single events.

A single hard week is not the picture, even when that is what the mind remembers. The trajectory across recent weeks is the picture, and it is often less linear than it feels from the inside. A timeline lays the trajectory out, where the loops and the recoveries can become visible.

The timeline is for the body, too.

The point is not to score your stress at each marker. It is to set out what was happening externally, alongside what your body and mind were reporting. **The two columns sit side by side** because the body's record matters as much as the calendar.

“The frustration of stress that returns is not always a sign you have not managed it well enough. It may be a sign that the architecture producing it has not yet been examined.”

A GENTLE NOTE

If looking back brings up something heavier than expected, that is not a sign you have done it wrong. **Leave the page if you need to**, and bring the partial to a clinical conversation. If things feel worse, or keep getting harder, talk to your GP or clinician. In a crisis, call Lifeline on 13 11 14, or 000 in an emergency.

WHERE TO START, ON PAGE 2

Five points across the last couple of months. Two prompts per point: **what was happening, and what you noticed in yourself.**

REMEMBER What started a stress pattern and what is keeping it going are often different. A timeline can help show the two, side by side.

When the timeline is partly or fully filled, you can sit with what you notice, or bring it to a first conversation. Either is a fine next step.

Your timeline

Five points across the last couple of months.

What was happening, and what you noticed in yourself. A few words per cell. Partial is enough.



Leave blank anything that feels too much. Bring the partial to a clinical conversation.

PERIOD	WHAT WAS HAPPENING	WHAT YOU NOTICED IN YOURSELF
About two months ago <i>the starting point</i>		
About six weeks ago <i>anything that shifted</i>		
About a month ago <i>what was building</i>		
The last two weeks <i>the recent stretch</i>		
Now <i>where things sit today</i>		

WHAT PATTERN STANDS OUT

Looking across the periods, what shape does the trajectory take?

WHEN THE TIMELINE IS FILLED IN

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

A trajectory is useful information whether or not you book a session. If you would like to talk it through, the Meet and Greet is a short call to see if we are the right fit.

MEET AND GREET

- Free
- 15 minutes
- Online or in-person
- No obligation