

Questions to Ask Yourself About **Burnout**...

1. Do I experience **burnout**?

- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Never

2. How often do I experience **burnout**?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Every week
- ☐ Every month
- ☐ Less than the options above

3. What are some things or situations that lead to me having **burnout**? (e.g., a long to-do list, social interactions, masking, busy environments, working a lot)

4. When I experience **burnout**, my body feels... (slow, like I can't function, exhausted, etc.)

5. When I experience [burnout](#), I have thoughts and emotions like... (e.g., there are so many things I still need to do, I have no energy, my body needs to rest)

6. When I feel [burnout](#), it is hard for me to do... (cook, clean, do errands, reply to emails, socialize, etc.)

7. What might [burnout](#) look like to other people?

Strategies to Cope with **Burnout**

Here are some strategies for coping with **burnout** that other autistic adults find helpful:

- **Prioritize your to-do list**
 - *Others can help you create priority lists, especially if your energy is feeling low*
 - *Using a whiteboard for your calendar and/or lists can make it easier to change your plans*
- **Do an enjoyable activity before starting tasks on your to-do list**
- **Stay organized and on top of tasks to prevent feeling overwhelmed**
- **Take time to be alone**
 - *At home: schedule a day of rest to alleviate stress*
 - *At work: go to a quiet space during breaks or wear noise-cancelling headphones, not forcing yourself to talk to others*
 - *In the community: go to a low-traffic place like a bathroom and count to 50*
- **Play background music to help you focus**
 - *Change the volume to as quiet or as loud as you like*
 - *Play a song in a language you don't understand so you don't process the words*
 - *Listen to the radio*
 - *Play an automatic playlist without interruptions*
- **Learn to recognize when your personal battery is getting low**
 - *Take breaks between activities, especially in times or situations when your energy tends to get low*
- **View burnout as a protective mechanism that prevents you from going past your healthy limit**
- **Have food and drinks on hand if you have trouble noticing when you're hungry or thirsty**
- **Connect with others or spend time with animals**
 - *Talk to someone who understands you, supports your feelings, or can help you with tasks*
 - *Send a text to check in with a friend*
 - *Go for a walk with someone*
 - *Spend less time with people who do not understand you*

My Plan to Cope with Burnout

Using the strategies above and your own ideas, follow some or all of the prompts below to help you create a personalized plan for dealing with burnout.

I like to stay organized by:

Something that helps me focus is:

During breaks, I like to:

This is how much alone time I need during the week:

When I sense [burnout](#) coming on, something I can try is:

During the day, this is when I have trouble focusing most:

When I have trouble focusing, something I can try is:

During [burnout](#), these things are hard for me (see question 6 from the self-questionnaire):

Something I can do/others can do to help make these things easier for me during [burnout](#) are:

Self-Advocacy Script for **Burnout**

Below are some prompts that can assist you in creating a script for explaining **burnout**. You can use this script to tell family, friends, and other important people in your life what **burnout** is like and how they can help you.

1. Introduction (how you would start this conversation):

2. Description of the problem as you see it (what is going wrong because of **burnout** and your environment):

3. Description of what **burnout** is like for you (e.g., slow-motion, exhausted):

4. Your request - what do you think could change about the environment (physical, sensory, and social), or what could other people say and do that would help?

5. Description of what is not helpful for other people to do when you experience [burnout](#) (e.g. force you to make eye contact, ask a lot of questions):