

Your A to Z for going from burnout to joy

These might look too simple. They work. The trick is remembering to do them, so print the list and stick it near your computer or on the fridge. Pick one letter a day. Joy your way back, one small step at a time.

A Awareness.
Most of us are too busy to notice what we're feeling, let alone name it. Notice your feelings, and other people's. They're clues to your stress levels. Observing and managing your thinking manages your feelings.

B Breathe.
When we're stressed, we breathe high and shallow. Take a deep breath in through your nose for a count of seven, hold for seven, and breathe out for seven. Do it twice, every time you notice a feeling other than peace or joy.

C Connect.
Connect with the people around you, and with your own heart. Be conscious of the choices you make, because you're making them every minute of the day.

D Daylight.
Get outside into natural light, ideally first thing in the morning or during your breaks. Anything to swap fluorescent or LED light for real daylight.

E Energy.
Do the things that give you energy. Music, a bath, a walk, a good book, a chat with a friend. Enjoy the small moments. There's a reason enjoy has joy right in the middle of it.

F Feelings and focus.
The most important thing in life is how you feel about yourself. It's the heart of confidence. And what you focus on grows, so focus on what lifts you.

G Gratitude.
Gratitude changes everything. Put on your gratitude glasses. Start your next team meeting with one question: what are you most grateful for since we last met? Watch what happens to the meeting.

H Heart.
You are an astonishing being of light and love. If a little voice says you're not, that's an old fear talking, and fears can be changed. Because you ARE an astonishing being of light inside a human body!

I Intuition.
How often have you ignored your gut and regretted it? Tap into your inner wisdom, and trust it.

J JOY: Just One You.
Find a joy buddy, someone who keeps you accountable for the small things you promised yourself you'd do. And remember there's just one you. My friend Lisa Tyree says judgment is an invitation to understand. I'd stamp it on my forehead if I could! And remember 'joy' is a verb! Go forth and JOY!!!

K Kindness.
A little kindness, to yourself and others, is transformative. Being kind to yourself gives you more room to be kind to everyone else. Choose kind over right. It works, and it's a foundation pillar for joy.

L Laugh a lot.
Laughter resets your brain and lifts everyone around you. Watch comedies, not dramas. Find the funny, even if it's only afterward. And listen, to others and to yourself. Listening is a master skill.

M Malware.
We all pick up stories in early childhood that run in the background like malware on a computer: the three core fears that we're not good enough, not safe, or that we don't belong. We wrote those stories, so we can rewrite them. Work out what really matters to you, too. It sounds easy. It's important.

N Nurture.
What really feeds your heart and soul? Five minutes of stillness, good food, a nap, time in nature. Work out what nurtures you, and do more of it.

O Observe your thoughts.
Most of the time, we're not even aware of what we're thinking, so most of our choices happen on autopilot. If you take one thing from this list, make it this: become an observer of your thoughts, and question the stories you tell yourself.

P Permission and perspective.
Give yourself permission to rest, relax and simply be. And look at every situation from three perspectives: yours, theirs, and the big picture. My mentor David Martin taught me that, and it changes how you feel almost instantly.

Q Quantum.
I've loved studying quantum physics for decades. One idea from it guides me every day: we're all connected, and our thoughts influence *everything and everyone* around us. Even if they are not close by! So think consciously. Choose your words wisely. As David says, slow down to the speed of consciousness.

R Reverence.
Reverence is awe and wonder for something precious. That's you. Treat yourself, your body and other people as precious. Feed yourself well, keep moving, and expect others to treat you with the same respect.

S Safety and stillness.
Feeling safe, physically, emotionally and mentally, is essential for getting through burnout. Be gentle with yourself. Give yourself grace. And learn to be still. It took me years to manage five whole minutes, and anyone who knows me knows I'm not joking.

T Ta-das.
Give yourself and others a ta-da, arms up, big smile, for every small win. Try it in the mirror. You'll laugh and feel better, and acknowledging people is one of the best burnout busters there is.

U Understand.
When you catch yourself judging someone, stop and ask: what do I need to understand about this person or this situation right now? And remind yourself that this person is another version of you, walking around in a different form. We're all more alike than we think.

V Victim no more.
You may be treated unfairly, and you still get to *choose how you respond*. Take responsibility for your part, look for that third perspective, and notice how much lighter you feel. The difference that makes the difference is how we think. *Everything changes with a different perspective.*

W Wellness.
Physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. You already know what healthy choices look like for you. Pick one and start today.

X The x-factor of stillness.
Deep inside you is a place of peace. Find it, feel it, and carry it with you through the busiest day.

Y You are love.
Your behaviors aren't who you are. Underneath the habits and old stories, you are pure love and light.

Z Zooties!
Zooties were my mum's gift to the world, her way of sending love, in person or in writing. Send these invisible hearts from yours to someone else's. Children adore it, and whole families have made it a tradition. The world needs more zoots!