PATHWAYS FOR PROGRESS

10 WAYS TO
PROTECT YOUR ENERGY

10 ways to protect your energy

A workbook with an energy audit, tracker and personal plan to help you pace yourself and recognise burnout early.

A P4P WORKBOOK



REST IS PART OF THE WORK

WHY THIS MATTERS

Energy is a resource, not a willpower test

Many neurodivergent people spend extra energy every day on masking, sensory processing, planning and social demands. That cost is often invisible, so it is easy to keep going until you crash. This workbook helps you notice where your energy goes, spend it on purpose and recharge before you run empty.

ENERGY | PACING | BOUNDARIES | RECOVERY | BURNOUT

How to use this workbook

1

Read

Read one strategy at a time. There's no need to do them in order.

2

Try

Pick one that feels doable and try it for a week.

3

Write

Use the TRY IT boxes and worksheets. Messy answers count.

4

Review

Come back to the reflection page and keep what helps.

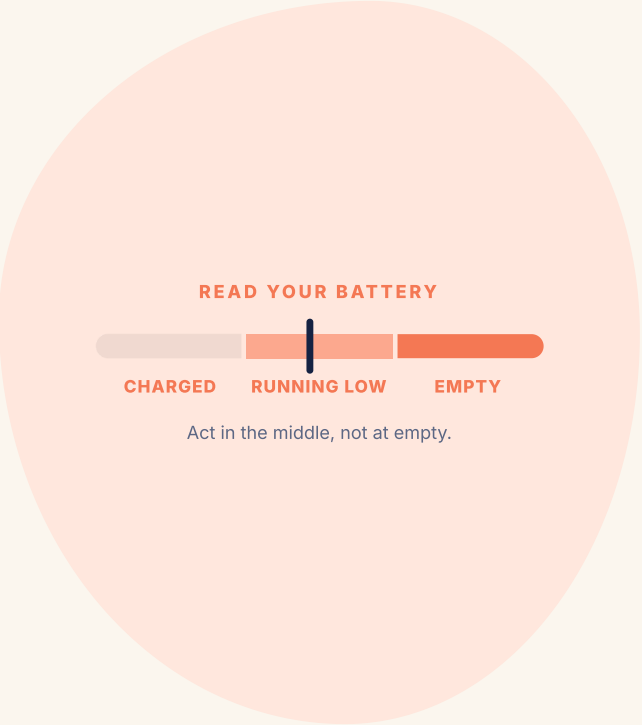
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1 Learn your energy signals

Low energy often shows up before you feel exhausted.

- Notice signs like irritability, clumsiness or losing words.
- Track when they appear in the day.
- Treat them as early warnings.

Your body gives clues before it gives up.



TRY IT **My early low-energy signs are:**

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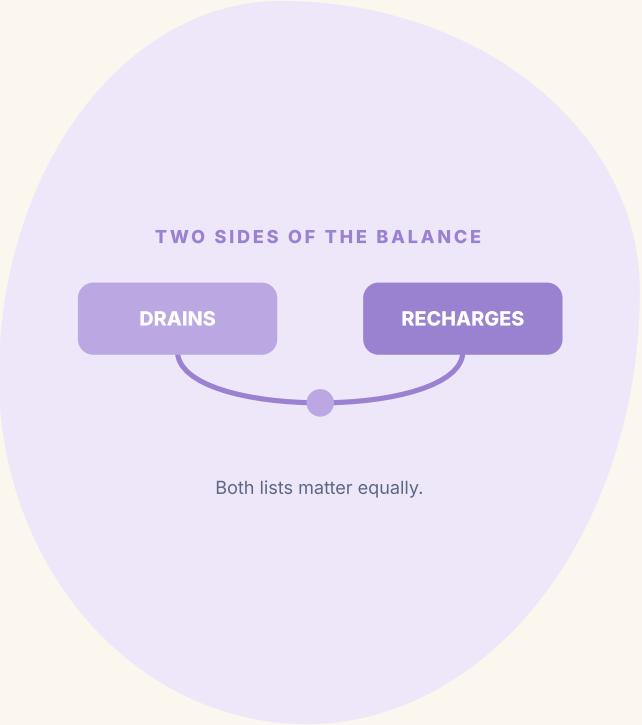
2

Do an energy audit

Some things cost more than they look.

- List activities that drain you.
- List activities that recharge you.
- Include hidden costs like travel, noise or socialising.

Knowing the cost makes choices clearer.



TRY IT **My energy audit:**

DRAINS ME	RECHARGES ME

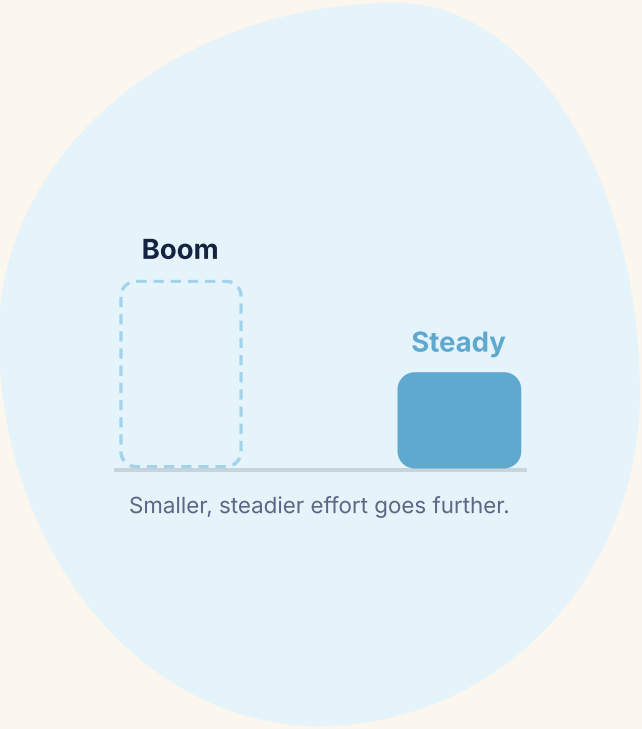
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3 Pace, don't push

Spreading effort out lasts longer than spending it all at once.

- Break big tasks across several days.
- Stop before you are completely empty.
- Alternate heavy and light tasks.

Steady pacing prevents crashes.



TRY IT **One task I could split across several days:**

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4 Protect your recovery

Rest works best when it is planned, not leftover.

- Schedule rest after demanding events.
- Choose rest that truly restores you.
- Notice 'rest' that still drains, like endless scrolling.

Real rest restores, not just distracts.



Recovery belongs in the plan.

TRY IT **Rest that really works for me:**

- [ ] Quiet time alone
- [ ] Nature or a walk
- [ ] A special interest
- [ ] Lying down or sleep
- [ ] Other: _____

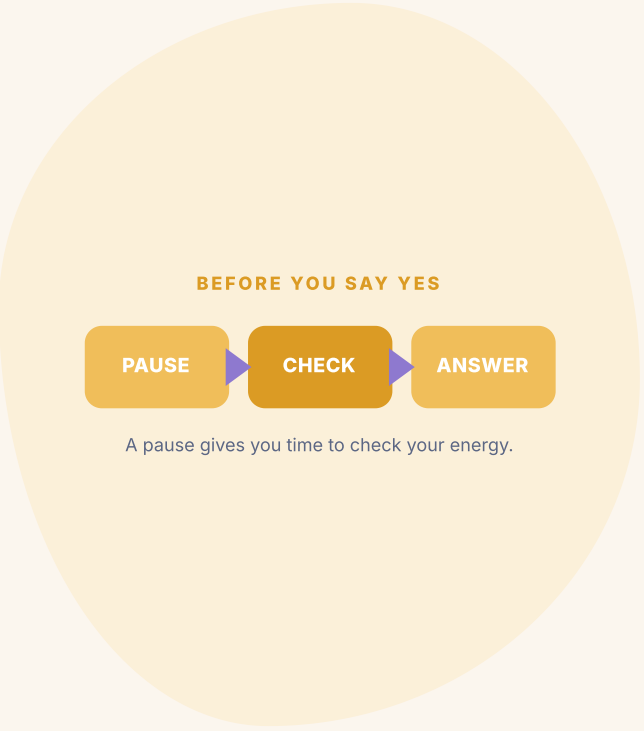
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5 Say no kindly

Every yes uses energy you might need elsewhere.

- Pause before agreeing: 'Can I get back to you?'
- Offer a smaller yes where possible.
- Use a short, honest no without over-explaining.

A boundary protects what matters most.



TRY IT **My go-to phrase for saying no or not yet:**

MIDWAY

Spend energy on purpose

When you know what drains and restores you, you can choose where your energy goes.



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6

Reduce masking where safe

Masking can quietly use a lot of energy.

- Notice where you mask the most.
- Find one place you can relax more.
- Plan recovery after high-masking situations.

Safe spaces save energy.



TRY IT **One place or person I can be more myself with:**

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7

Lower sensory load

Sensory input costs energy, even when you don't notice it.

- Use headphones, sunglasses or quieter spaces.
- Cut one sensory drain from your day.
- Notice how your energy changes.

Less input leaves more energy for you.

TURN IT DOWN

1. SOFTEN SOUND
2. DIM THE LIGHT
3. AVOID PEAK TIMES

Small changes add up across a day.

TRY IT **I will try:**

- [ ] Headphones or earplugs
- [ ] A quieter route or time
- [ ] Softer lighting
- [ ] Short breaks outdoors

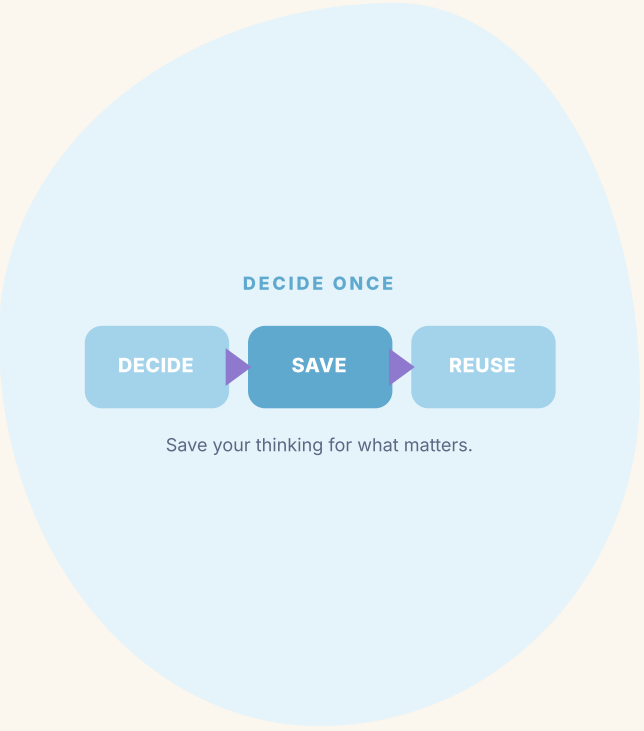
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8 Simplify daily decisions

Small decisions add up across a day.

- Repeat easy meals or outfits.
- Use routines for regular tasks.
- Decide once, then reuse the decision.

Fewer decisions, more energy.



TRY IT **One decision I can make once and reuse:**

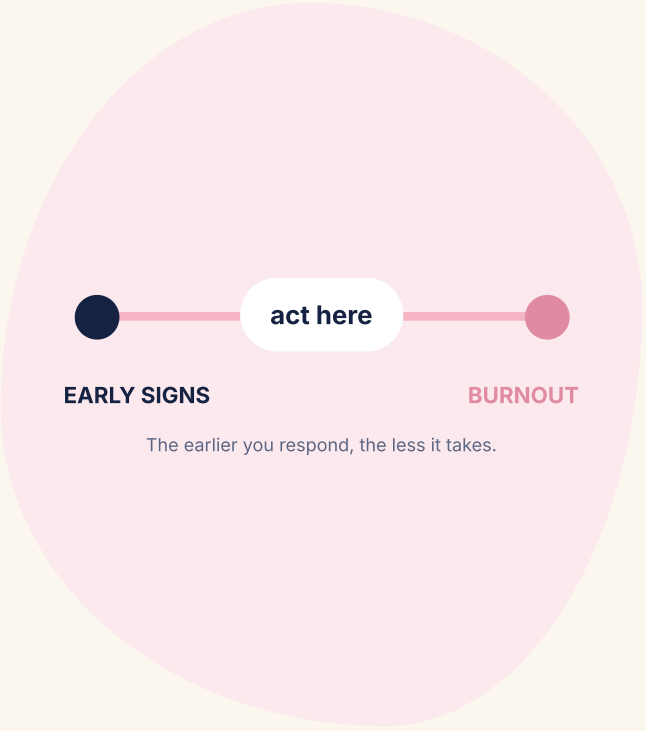
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9 Spot burnout early

Burnout builds gradually and is easier to address early.

- Watch for lost skills, more shutdowns or pulling away.
- Reduce demands as soon as you notice.
- Talk to someone you trust or your GP if it keeps building.

Early action makes recovery shorter.



TRY IT **If I notice burnout signs, I will:**

10

Make an energy plan

Write a plan on a good day for the harder ones.

- List your drains, recharges and warning signs.
- Note what you will drop first when energy is low.
- Share it with someone if that helps.

A plan holds you when energy can't.



TRY IT **The first thing I'll drop on a low-energy day:**

WORKSHEET

My daily energy tracker

Colour in each battery to show your energy. Look for patterns after a week or two.

DAY	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING	NOTES
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

WORKSHEET

My energy plan

Fill this in on a good day so it's ready for a harder one.

My early warning signs

What drains me most

What recharges me

What I'll drop first when I'm low

My boundary phrases

Who I can tell, and how

REFLECTION

My reflections

Come back to this page after a week or two. Tick the strategies you have tried.

Strategies I've tried

- [ ] 1. Learn your energy signals
- [ ] 2. Do an energy audit
- [ ] 3. Pace, don't push
- [ ] 4. Protect your recovery
- [ ] 5. Say no kindly
- [ ] 6. Reduce masking where safe
- [ ] 7. Lower sensory load
- [ ] 8. Simplify daily decisions
- [ ] 9. Spot burnout early
- [ ] 10. Make an energy plan

What worked best for me

What I'll keep doing

What I'll try next

Who can support me

How P4P can help

P4P offers a confidential, affirming space to explore energy, masking, boundaries and burnout recovery, and to plan adjustments at work or study, including through Access to Work.

- 1-to-1 Support
- Specialist Mentoring
- Strategy Coaching
- Workshops & Resources
- Access to Work
- Podcast

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